

# NR & NEW INTERNATIONAL SELECTION DOCUMENTATION MINIMUM FICHE

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Newcastle Technical College - Trades Classroom Block

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Hunter Institute of TAFE (former Newcastle Technical College), Main façade of Trades Classroom block (1940)  
(Source: Webber, G.P., 1982, *E. H. Rembert, The Life and Work of a Sydney Architect, 1902-1966*, Sydney: University of Sydney/Department of Public Works, p.37)

## 1 Identity of building/group of buildings/urban scheme/landscape/garden

1.1	current name of building	Hunter Institute of Technology	3
1.2	variant or former name	Newcastle Technical College	4
1.3	number & name of street	Maitland Road	5
1.4	town	Mayfield (Newcastle)	6
1.5	province	New South Wales	7
1.6	zip code	2304	8
1.7	country	Australia	9
1.8	national grid reference		10
1.9	classification/typology	Education (technical college)	11
1.10	protection status & date	No statutory protection	

## 2 History of building

Newcastle Technical College comprises a complete campus of buildings designed for New South Wales' second-largest and premier industrial city, Newcastle. The master plan for the site was prepared by Harry Rembert of the NSW Government Architects Branch (GAB) of the Public Works Department (PWD) in about 1934.

The first building of the complex, the Sir Edgeworth David Science Building was constructed in 1936. The next building was the H.G. Darling Engineering Building which was commenced in 1938. The third and largest building to be constructed was the semi-circular Trades Classroom Building which was commenced in 1940. This building showed the strong design influence of the work of Willem Dudok and is similar in detail to the Sydney Technical College School of Automotive Engineering which was built slightly earlier.

Later buildings were designed and constructed by other architects after World War 2. The earliest three buildings began to exhibit major cracking in the 1970s due to the corrosion of the steel beams supporting brickwork over the long window openings.

On 28 December 1989 a major earthquake measuring 5.6 on the Richter Scale struck Newcastle. The earthquake caused damage to 50,000 buildings, destroyed 300 buildings and caused the death of 13 people. The brickwork of the Newcastle Technical College was seriously damaged and the subsequent repairs to the buildings were not as sympathetic as could have been expected, given the importance of the buildings; especially the brickwork repairs which were carried out in modern, standard-size bricks which differed in size to the bricks used in the pre-war buildings.

The complex continues to be used for its original purpose.

2.1	original brief/purpose	Secondary college for technical (trades) training	13
2.2	dates: commission/completion	1934/1940 (excluding later post-WWII buildings)	14
2.3	architectural designers	NSW Government Architect (E.E. Smith & C. Parkes), design architect: Harry Rembert	15
2.4	others associated with building		16
2.5	significant alterations with dates	Repairs following Newcastle Earthquake of 1989	17
2.6	current use	Secondary college for technical (trades) training	18
2.7	current condition	Good	19

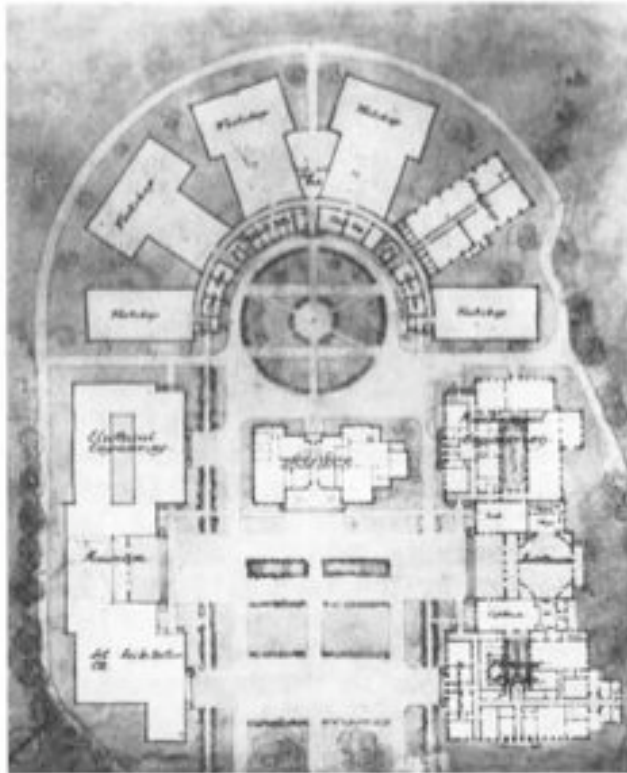
## 3 Description

### 3.1 general description

The separate buildings of the campus are arranged symmetrically around an axis passing through the centrally-located Science Building and terminating with the large, semi-circular Trades Classroom Building. The other buildings are arranged on either side of the Science Building to create an enclosed campus which has the overall shape of the end of a church nave and apse.

3.2	construction	Reinforced concrete floors, steel and timber framed flat roofs and loadbearing brick walls.	21
3.3	context	The college is built in a park-like campus on the upper reaches of Throsby Creek which flows into the Hunter River (around which Newcastle was established). The main road connecting Newcastle to the town of Maitland located upstream on the Hunter River passes in front of the site giving a picturesque view of the campus buildings as the road turns through two 90 degree bends to pass over Throsby Creek and to skirt the college site on two sides.	22
<b>4</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>		
4.1	technical	The buildings were constructed using modern construction techniques including a concrete frame, face brick facades, steel framed windows.	23
4.2	social	The complex was an acknowledgement of the importance of well-trained artisans and tradespeople in the state's premier industrial city. The building continues to be used as an educational facility, the purpose for which it was originally designed.	24
4.3	cultural & aesthetic	The buildings are significant examples of the work of the NSW Government Architect's branch under the Government Architect Cobden Parkes and the design architect Harry Rembert. The buildings are significant aesthetically as modern buildings constructed within an inner Newcastle suburb that largely dates from the nineteenth-century. The complex of buildings retains many of its original details. The materials used and the character of the interior spaces clearly shows the influence of European modernism, particularly the work of Wilhelm Dudok in the Netherlands.	25
4.4	historical	An important example of the work of the NSW Government Architects branch in the 1930s, and an important example that shows the influence of Dutch modernism which was much admired, and visited, by Australian architects during the 1930s.	26
4.5	general assessment	Newcastle Technical College is significant for its skilful assembly of masses and materials which reflect the important and strong influence of Dutch Modernism (as practised by architects such as Dudok).	27

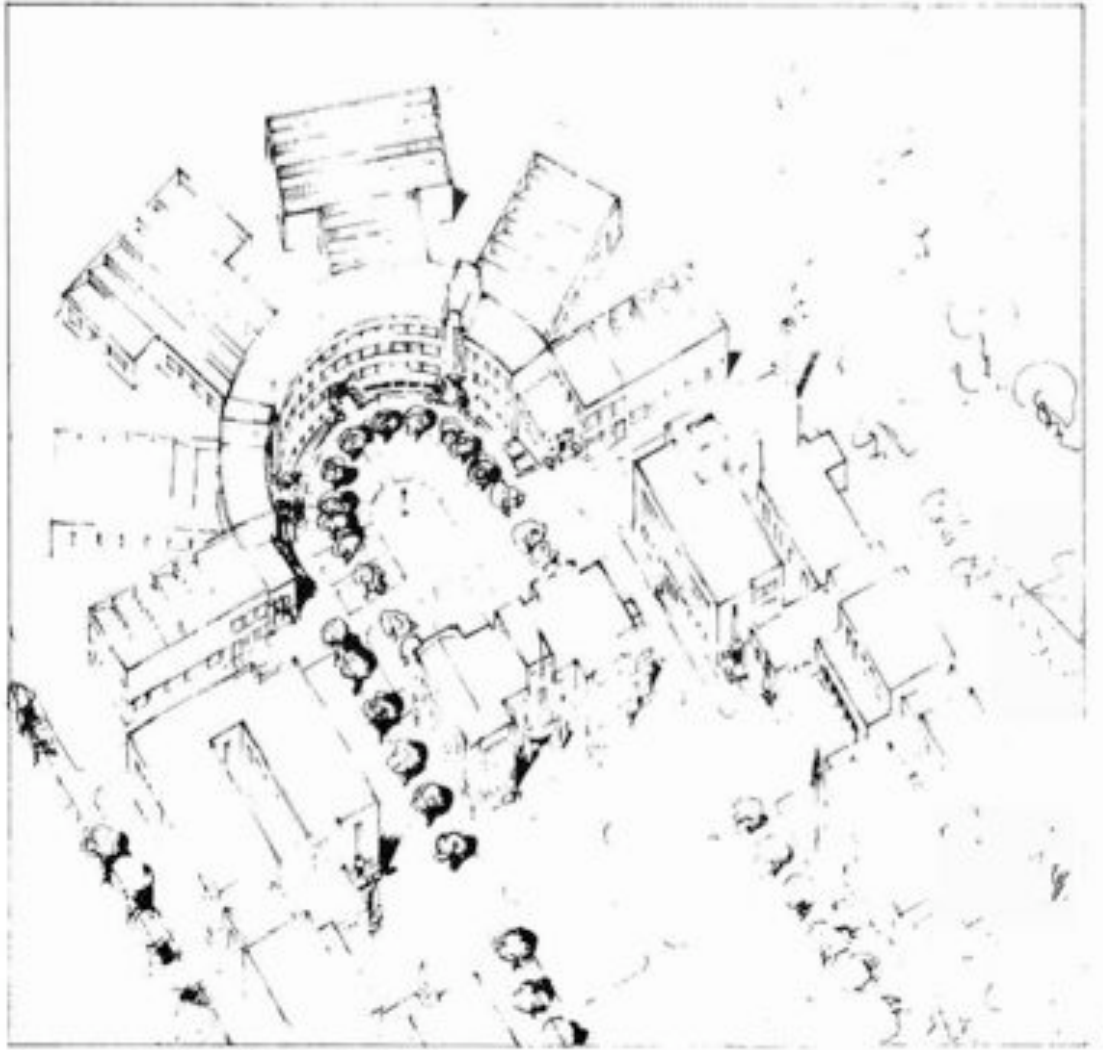
## 5 Documentation



**Master Plan**

Hunter Institute of TAFE (former Newcastle Technical College), Master Plan, 1934 (Source: Webber, G.P., 1982, *E. H. Rembert, The Life and Work of a Sydney Architect, 1902-1966*, Sydney: University of Sydney/Department of Public Works, p.28)

5.1	principal references	Webber, G. Peter, 1982, <i>E. H. Rembert, The Life and Work of a Sydney Architect, 1902-1966</i> , Sydney: University of Sydney/Department of Public Works	28
5.2	visual material attached	B&W images from: Webber, G.P., 1982	29
5.3	rapporteur/date	Scott Robertson, August 2008	30



Axonometric of Master Plan

Newcastle Technical College - Rembert's original sketches

Hunter Institute of TAFE (former Newcastle Technical College), Axonometric, 1934 (Source: Webber, G.P., 1982, *E. H. Rembert, The Life and Work of a Sydney Architect, 1902-1966*, Sydney: University of Sydney/Department of Public Works, p.28)



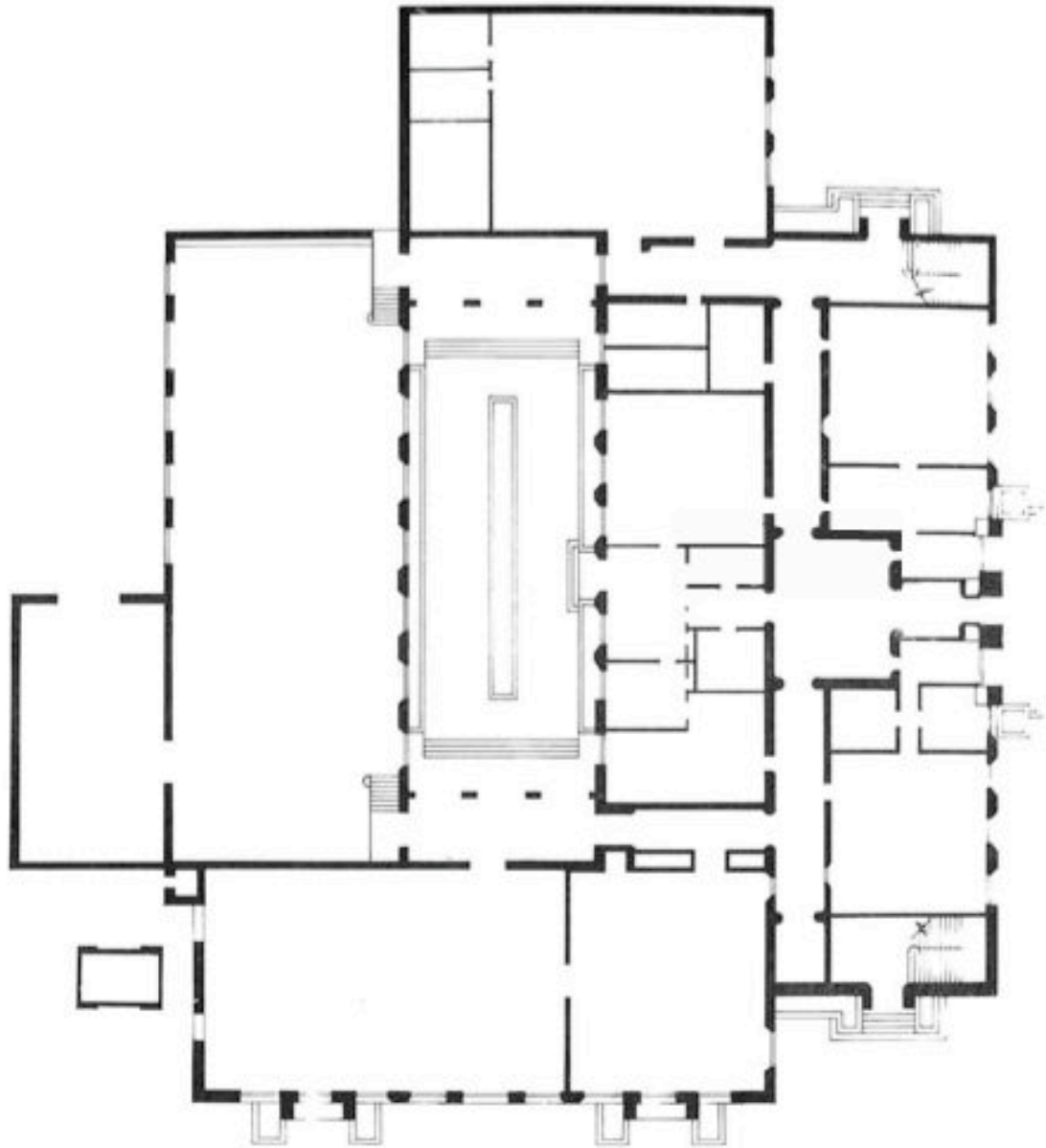
**Trades classroom block-corridor**

Hunter Institute of TAFE (former Newcastle Technical College), Main corridor of Trades Classroom block (1940)  
(Source: Webber, G.P., 1982, *E. H. Rembert, The Life and Work of a Sydney Architect, 1902-1966*, Sydney: University of Sydney/Department of Public Works, p.36)



**Newcastle Technical College - Trades Classroom Block**

Hunter Institute of TAFE (former Newcastle Technical College), Stairwell of Trades Classroom block (1940)  
(Source: Webber, G.P., 1982, *E. H. Rembert, The Life and Work of a Sydney Architect, 1902-1966*, Sydney: University of Sydney/Department of Public Works, p.378)

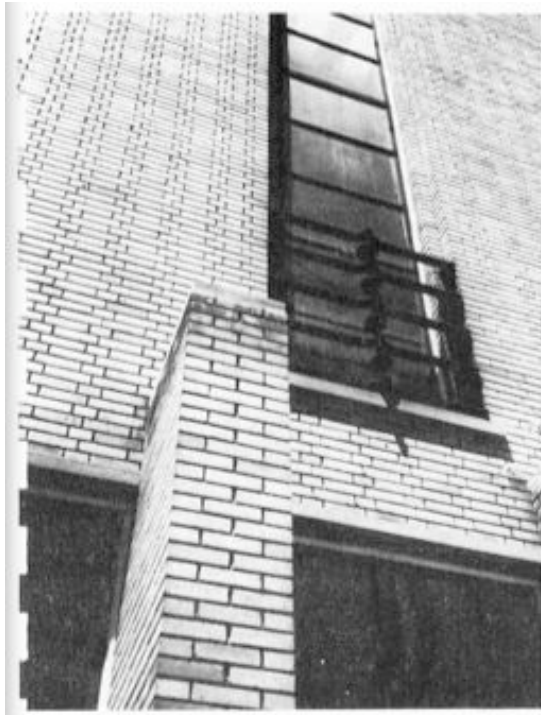


Hunter Institute of TAFE (former Newcastle Technical College), Mechanical Engineering Building (1938)  
(Source: Webber, G.P., 1982, *E. H. Rembert, The Life and Work of a Sydney Architect, 1902-1966*, Sydney: University of Sydney/Department of Public Works, p.36)



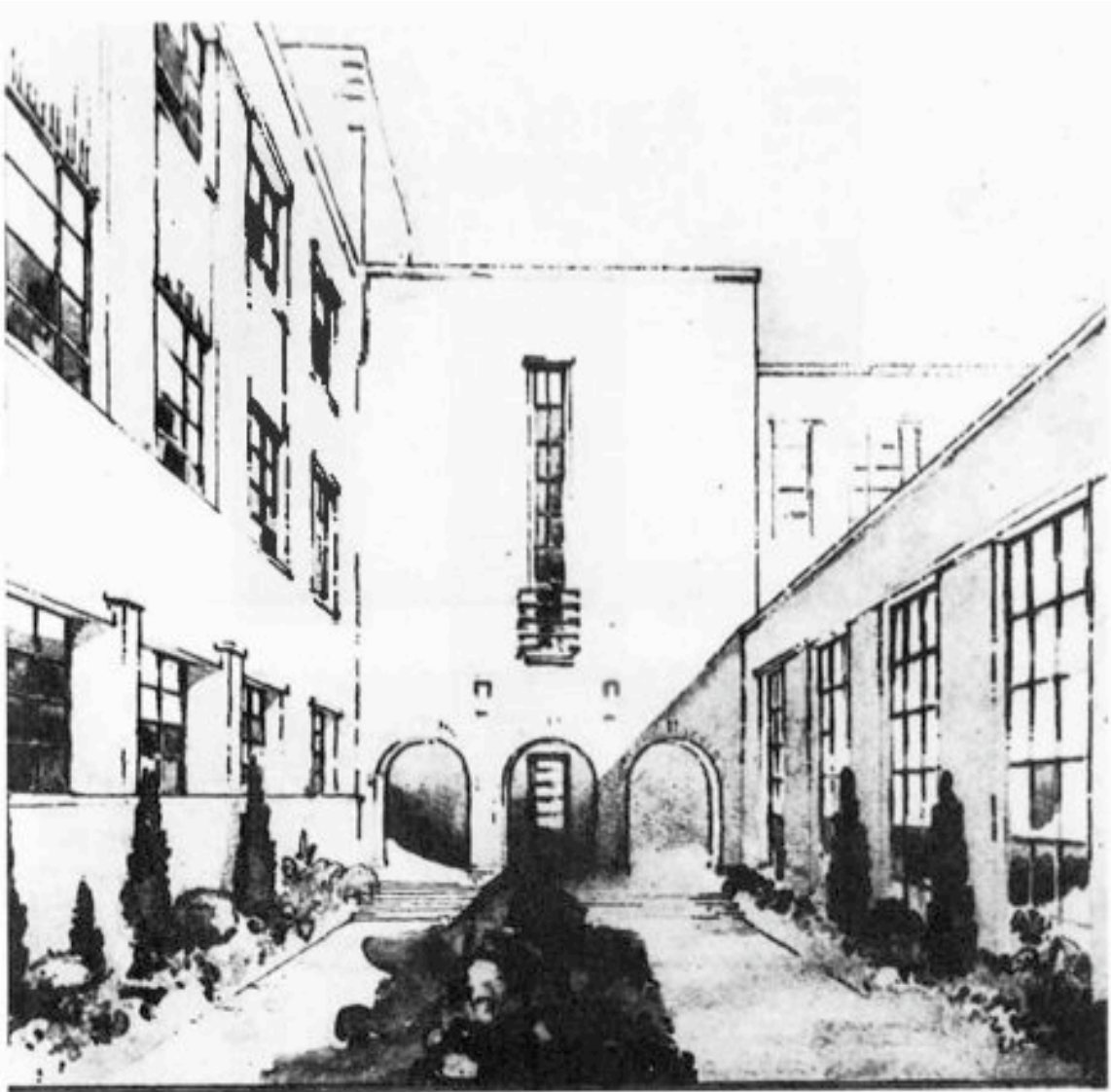
**Mechanical Engineering Building 1938**

Hunter Institute of TAFE (former Newcastle Technical College), Mechanical Engineering Building (1938)  
(Source: Webber, G.P., 1982, *E. H. Rembert, The Life and Work of a Sydney Architect, 1902-1966*, Sydney: University of Sydney/Department of Public Works, p.36)



Hunter Institute of TAFE (former Newcastle Technical College), Stair shaft of Mechanical Engineering Building (1938) (Source: Webber, G.P., 1982, *E. H. Rembert, The Life and Work of a Sydney Architect, 1902-1966*, Sydney: University of Sydney/Department of Public Works, p.31)





• NEWCASTLE • TECHNICAL • COLLEGE •  
MECHANICAL ENGINEERING BUILDING  
INTERNAL COURT

Sketch of courtyard (artist not identified)

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Hunter Institute of TAFE (former Newcastle Technical College), Perspective of Mechanical Engineering Building (1938) (Source: Webber, G.P., 1982, *E. H. Rembert, The Life and Work of a Sydney Architect, 1902-1966*, Sydney: University of Sydney/Department of Public Works, p.34)