Accreditation of School's BEng Course by the IEE

The School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering was visited in September 2002 by a panel from the UK's Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE). The purpose of the visit was to assess the School's BEng (Electrical and Electronic Engineering) course, in accordance with the criteria for the accreditation of degrees, set by the Engineering Council of the UK. The School is pleased to announce that this IEE has decided that accreditation for five years, from the 2002 to the 2006 intakes to the BEng course, will be awarded at MEng level. Accreditation at MEng level implies that the School's graduates will be considered to have fully satisfied the basic educational requirement for Chartered Engineer status in the UK.

The visiting panel consisted of six eminent members of the IEE. The Chairman of the panel was Professor Rob E. Massam, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of Essex. The other members of the panel were Professor Victor A. J. Maller (Loughborough University), Professor Erik L. Dagless (University of Bristol), Mr Frank Everest (Nildram Ltd), Dr Susan Pulko (University of Hull) and Mr Jonathan G. Ling (Head of Accreditation, IEE).

The IEE's accreditation procedure was very thorough and involved a considerable amount of work. Before the visit, each panel member received for scrutiny, documentation containing detailed information about the course under review, background information on the staff conducting the course, entry requirements for the course, laboratory and library facilities available for supporting the course, etc. During the visit, both formal and informal discussions were held with the teaching staff of the School. During laboratory visits the panel quizzed the students on the work they were doing. A private discussion with a representative group of students was also an important item on the panel's agenda.

In its report, the IEE listed the following commendable features of the school:

- The recruitment of students of a very high standard from both national and international sources.
- The very high standard of the programmes in terms of both technical breadth and depth.
- The impressive industrial attachment in which all students participate.
- The nature of the programme which demands, and achieves a very high level of work and commitment from students, which they fulfill with cheerfulness and manifest enthusiasm.
- The excellent standards being achieved across the breadth of key skills activities, especially in oral presentations, and the technical writing seen in the project reports.
- The very substantial in-feed of academics' industrial and research activities into teaching and project activities.
- The excellent coverage of subject-specific expertise in the broad range of core and specialist topics that make up the degree programmes.
- The excellent qualifications held by the staff.
- The very high level of staff morale.
- The excellent provision of computing, laboratory and library facilities.

One of NTU's aims is to ensure that its courses compare favourably with engineering degree programmes elsewhere in the world. Outside review by an independent body such as the IEE, which has a well-established review procedure, is a means of obtaining useful feedback on the extent to which the University is attaining this aim. In the present instance, the School has good reason to be pleased with the outcome.

In 1998, Associate Professor Chua Hock Chuan was voted by the then final year cohort as the deserving winner of the 1998 Teacher of the Year. Five years down the road, he again receives strong affirmation from the current final year students for his dedication and professionalism as a teacher when he was voted the 2003 Teacher of Year.

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