

**Annual Conference 2002 – A new venue, a new format**

Following proposals contained within our previous newsletter, and taking account of the PHEE sectoral group discussions during last Easter's EPC congress at Strathclyde, the committee has agreed to a new format and new venue for next year's Annual Conference. In making these changes the committee felt that it wanted to improve the level of discussion, communication and networking among members within a more relaxed and congenial atmosphere.

Next January's conference will be held at the **University of Surrey on 8-9 January 2002**. Delegates are invited to arrive on the evening of Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> for registration, opening presentations, and the conference dinner. There should be plenty of time for networking and informal discussions. The theme for the following day, Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup>, will be the merging of Electronics and IT and the issues and concerns that we all have over the way our discipline is evolving. Presentations from academics in both Electronic Engineering (EE) and Computer Science (CS) together with industrialists should provide a rich context for debate. In many Universities, EE departments have already undergone mergers with other engineering disciplines and some have experience of collaborations across the EE - CS boundary. Developments in industry challenge our traditional thinking on the classification of cognate subject areas.

Our local host will be Prof. Bernard Weiss and further information on the conference programme, together with registration and accommodation information, will be circulated in October. In the mean time please make a note in your diary.

**PHEE Annual Conference 2002**  
**Venue: University of Surrey, Guildford.**  
**Date: 8 - 9 January 2002**

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**PHEE Easter Conference 2002.**

Next year the University of Hertfordshire will host our Easter Conference. Arrangements are in the capable hands of Profs John Senior and Reza Sotodeh and further details will be available in the autumn. The exact date is yet to be finalised but it is likely to be some time between 8-12 April.

**PHEE Easter Conference 2002**  
**Venue: University of Hertfordshire**  
**Date: to be confirmed**

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## News In Brief

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In April the EPC Strategy was published. Its three key aims are defined as:

- To make excellence in engineering higher education more widely known
- To enable engineering higher education to excel in research, and in learning, teaching and assessment
- To secure adequate resources for engineering higher education.

A full breakdown of EPC aims and objectives can be found on their web-site at:  
<http://www.engprof.ac.uk/>

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An initial analysis recently published by **hefce**, of RAE submissions indicate that, comparing 1996 and 2001, there was an increase in the number of submissions to General Engineering (UoA 26) of 30% and a corresponding decrease in the number of submissions to Electrical and Electronic Engineering (UoA29) of 31%. A fuller analysis will not be available from hefce until after the current RAE exercise is complete.

In view of recent re-organisations within many engineering schools and departments perhaps this percentage change is not surprising.

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Assessment was the theme of **last Easter's conference**, hosted by the University of Glamorgan. The influence of assessment on the retention of students provided a lively debate and is worthy of consideration at a future course development conference. One of the main items concerned the mapping of 'threshold', 'good' and 'excellent' attainments in benchmarks onto degree classifications. It was clear that among conference delegates there was a very broad interpretation of the benchmarking process and some further guidance and clarification was needed. Conference was sympathetic to both QAA and EPC approaches but agreed that the best aspects of both must be converged.

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If you have any comments on this issue, or indeed on any other topic, please contact any of the PHEE committee. Committee membership for the current session is:

Dr Donard de Cogan (East Anglia)	Prof Paddy Farrell (Lancaster)
Prof Emmanuel Ifeacher (Plymouth)	Rev Stuart Poole ( <i>Treasurer</i> )
Prof David Lidgate (Napier)	Prof John Senior (Hertfordshire)
Prof Ed Powner (Sussex)	Prof Garth Swanson (King's College London)
Prof Carson Stewart (Queens Belfast) ( <i>Chairman</i> )	Prof Bernard Weiss (Surrey)
Dr Ray Thomas (Brighton) ( <i>Secretary</i> )	Prof Phil Witting (Glamorgan)
Prof Don Whitehead (Hull)	

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