



NEWSLETTER No. 15

October 2007

## Foreword

As I write this, we are nearing the end of the work of preparing submissions to the Research Assessment Exercise. For many of us, a great deal depends on the outcome and, although we are confident that the UoA24 sub-panel, chaired by Professor Steve Williamson of Manchester will ensure that the research in our discipline gets the best possible report, the greatest uncertainty for many of us are the financial consequences of the RAE. Although we would all like to see the back of it, HEFCE has declared that the RAE will continue in a new guise, assessed more frequently and driven by "metrics". I'm sure that we will be anxiously modelling a variety of possible outcomes!

Between PHEE conferences, the committee has been working on many of the issues which concern us and have provided responses to the Engineering Professors' Council (our parent body) amongst others. Recruitment and admissions continue to be high on the agenda. The continuing decline in overall applications to Electronic and Electrical Engineering and Computing is a cause for concern, although some departments have bucked the trend. We are contributing to the discussions about the teaching of mathematics and physics in schools as well as expressing our views on the Engineering Diploma aimed at 14-19 year olds. The impact of the Bologna declaration on UK engineering degrees, especially the MEng programmes, remains to be seen but we continue to argue that the MEng, as an 'integrated Masters' is fully compatible with a second cycle qualification since we operate accreditation based on output standards rather than on 'time served'.

This month has also seen the publication of the Sainsbury Review. Many of us involved in engineering higher education have read it, especially Chapter 7 on 'Educating a new generation of scientists and engineers' with great interest and will continue to make our case that the definition of strategically important, high-cost subjects are not confined to the physical sciences! You can read the full review at [www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent\\_reviews/sainsbury\\_review/sainsbury\\_index.cfm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/sainsbury_review/sainsbury_index.cfm).

I'm sure that you will be aware of the opportunities generated by the creation of the new IET (Institution of Engineering and Technology) from the merger of the IEE and IIE. PHEE strongly supports a strong and effective professional institution that can speak on behalf of the profession and advance its interests. We have, however, expressed our concerns about the loss of many activities such as the professional groups and colloquia which, through personal contact, we crucial for the development of younger engineers. You will find a PHEE position paper on this issue on our website ([www.phee.org](http://www.phee.org)) and Robin McGill, the Chief Executive of the IET, has accepted our invitation as the keynote speaker at our 2008 Conference. As ever, PHEE is grateful to the IET for its support in hosting this and other PHEE activities.

It is with regret that we record the retirement from the Committee of colleagues who have made great contributions over many years, most notably Eddie Powner and Hugh McCann who served with distinction as Chairmen, but we are happy to welcome several new members who we hope will find their participation in the work of PHEE productive and fulfilling.

I close by inviting you to come to the PHEE Conference in January (and encourage colleagues; attendance is open to anyone with an interest in Electronic, Electrical and Computing education) and wishing you a successful 2007/8 academic session. As always, comments and suggestions are welcome.

*Professor Roger D. Pollard, FREng*  
Chairman

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## **Annual Conference 2008**

The next Annual Conference will be held on **Wednesday 9th January 2008** at the IET, Savoy Place, London the focus being on the challenges we face in the coming year.

The new academic year brings with it some key issues:

- The Implementation of Bologna – how does the MEng qualification sit within the accord?
- The evolving role of the IET – accreditation and the support of young professionals
- The number and quality of applicants to Electrical and Electronic Engineering courses

All of these topics will feature in the event and your committee is seeking to secure knowledgeable and eminent speakers to inform you and provoke lively debate. Our traditional format will include adequate time for discussions. Tea, coffee, lunch and copies of presentations are included. As ever the success of the conference depends on your active participation, so please make a note in your diary now. Registration and booking details are enclosed; please pass copies to your colleagues.

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**PHEE Website:** [www.phee.org](http://www.phee.org)

The PHEE website continues to evolve. It includes all previous newsletters and information on previous conferences including copies of most of the presentations. If you have any comments on the new design or suggestions for additional features, do please forward them to me or to one of the committee.

Details of the January 2008 conference together with the registration forms are available on the website.

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Committee membership for the current session is:

Ms Jane Black / Mr Dan Canty (IET)  
Prof Brian Culshaw (Strathclyde)  
Prof Roger Green (Warwick)  
Prof Stephanie Haywood (Hull)  
Prof Emmanuel Ifeakor (Plymouth)  
Prof Dik Morling (Westminster)  
Prof Roy Perryman (East London)  
Prof Roger Pollard FRENG (Leeds) (*Chair*)  
Rev Stuart Poole (*Treasurer*)  
Dr Lee Jones (Glamorgan) (*Secretary*) - email: [dljones@glam.ac.uk](mailto:dljones@glam.ac.uk)

Prof John Senior (Hertfordshire)  
Prof Roy Perryman (East London)  
Prof Ken Hurst (Manchester Met)  
Prof Alistair J Sambell (Northumbria)  
Dr Michael Shaw (Liverpool John Moores)  
Prof John F Watson (Robert Gordon)  
Dr Sean Wellington (Southampton Solent)  
Prof Moofiq Al-Tai (Staffordshire)

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