
Guest Editorial

The first international conference of the Caledonian Centre for Engineering Education (CCEE), adopting the theme *Life-Long Learning and Continuous Professional Development*, was held at Glasgow Caledonian University from 22 to 25 May 1999. The Conference, co-sponsored by the UNESCO International Centre for Engineering Education (UICEE), was attended by thirty delegates from many countries, including Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Canada, Turkey and Oman.

The opening ceremony was addressed by Dr I. Johnston, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Glasgow Caledonian University, and A/Prof. Z.J. Pudlowski, Director of the UICEE, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia. Dr Johnston spoke of the British Government's initiatives to promote life-long learning and continuous professional development, and A/Prof. Pudlowski spoke of the importance of the Conference's theme to the mission of the UICEE to aid developing countries and countries in political, social and economic transition. Both speakers congratulated the delegates on the range and standard of the activities described in the papers to be presented and encouraged all delegates to continue their work in this important area of engineering education. During the opening ceremony, A/Prof. Pudlowski presented Dr G.R. Burns with the *UICEE Silver Badge of Honour* for contributions to engineering education.

The purposes of the Conference were to stimulate developments and research into life-long learning, resulting in the delivery of creative and innovative models for engineering and technological education in the workplace and, at the same time, to promote the values of life-long learning in developing countries. The Conference placed particular emphasis on aspects of life-long learning and continuous professional development that could assist institutions in developing countries to address the essential issues in restructuring and revising their engineering education for the 21st Century.

The choice of the Conference theme reflects the position of the CCEE as a leading Centre for the provision and development of work-based learning systems both in the UK and globally. Life-long learning and continuous professional development are key issues for practising engineers which can be addressed by work-based learning systems. In developing and economically emerging countries, this aspect of engineering education gives the opportunity for engineers to update their skills. The papers presented at the Conference and included in this Special Edition of the *Global Journal of Engineering Education* (GJEE) describe the range of research and development that is taking place internationally by engineering educators in developing provision for practising engineers to maintain their professional standards. The papers also clearly establish that taking engineering education off-campus and into the workplace environment can provide the basis for widening access to life-long learning for engineers. It is clear from this Conference and others that the development of distance and work-based learning that can be delivered and mediated using modern technology is now a key methodology in the provision of life-long learning and continuous professional development.

As we all know, organising a conference is not an easy task and depends on the help of colleagues and the patience of family. The Conference organisers would like to take this opportunity to thank the delegates who contributed such excellent papers, staff at Glasgow Caledonian University for their assistance and, in particular, A/Prof. Pudlowski and the UICEE for invaluable help and guidance.

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