



University of Newcastle

School of Chemical Engineering and Advanced Materials

Merz Court, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU

PACT
IGDS

Partnership in Automation and Control Training

Integrated Graduate Development Scheme

Jonathan Love, Director of IGDS in Process Automation

email: jon.love@ncl.ac.uk web: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/pact>

PACT News (emailed to the PACT community on 23rd March 2005)

Hello

How the time flies: tempus fugit and all that. It doesn't seem like three months ago since I was sending out Xmas cards. Amongst other things, Yasmin has come back from maternity leave and is up and running again!

- **Statistics.** You may be interested to know of some statistics about the scheme. There are 24 alumni, of whom 20 were awarded the MSc and 4 the Diploma. There are currently 39 persons registered for the MSc/Diploma. Of these 23 are active of whom 8 are working on their industrial projects with another 4 who are ready to start on their projects.

Also, of the 39 registered, 16 are suspended. That is because they are unable to continue for the time being for reasons such as change of job, no training budget, having been sent to do commissioning in Siberia, etc. The suspensions are nothing to do with unseemly behaviour at course dinners or having been caught misbehaving behind the Merz Court bicycle shed.

There are 17 persons progressing on an occasional basis: that is, have done one or more modules in the last 18 months and taken the exams etc, of whom a significant proportion can be expected to register at some stage. Also in the last 18 months there have been 8 persons who have done a module on an ad-hoc basis (not assessed).

- **Accreditation.** Alleluia. At last. The MSc in Process Automation has been accredited by the IChemE as 'meeting the requirements for further learning to Masters level accreditation under the UK-SPEC guidelines for chemical engineering BEng graduates'. Accreditation is retrospective with effect from 1st September 2004. Thus, subject to significant and relevant industrial experience, and a position of responsibility,

BEng + MSc (Process Automation) \Rightarrow CEng

This does not address the needs of delegates who obtain the Diploma, have an HND/HNC rather than a BEng, or whose primary qualification is in a discipline other than chemical engineering. Hopefully these constituencies will be addressed by the InstMC and IEE to whom applications for accreditation have also been made.

- **Marketing.** To raise the profile of the Scheme I have started to promote parts of modules as short courses alongside the modules themselves. This only makes sense where there is sufficient material of an appropriate nature to package together as a short course within a module. For the rest of this year there will be short courses offered as follows:

17/18 May	Heat and Mass Balances
11/12 July	Costs and Benefits Analysis
13/14 Sept	Statistical Process Control
11/13 Oct	Distillation Control Schemes and Strategies.
12/13 Dec	Process Measurements
14 Dec	Valve Characteristics and Sizing.

There will be leaflets produced for each of these short courses and circulated via the PACT mailing list some 1-2 months beforehand. I would very much appreciate it if you would think of colleagues or acquaintances who could potentially benefit from the short courses and pass on the leaflets.

- **Audit.** Newcastle University has recently been subject to audit by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). This is something of a cross between an Ofsted inspection to which schools are subjected and ISO 9000 against which companies' quality procedures are assessed. The QAA audit was essentially of the University's governance, management structures, academic procedures, quality monitoring, etc, and was not about teaching quality or technical content. However, as a basis for carrying out the audit, it was necessary to have some discipline audit trails (DAT) and four were selected as representative of the University. You've guessed it: the QAA specified that one DAT would be Chemical Engineering and the IGDS was singled out within that. This meant a certain amount of additional paper work in preparation for the audit which took place last week. The IGDS sailed through with flying colours and the Scheme can now claim to be QAA audited.
- **Process Control Lab.** An irresistible offer. The rig Dolly (desorption of dissolved oxxygen in an agitated vessel under cascade control) is now fully operational and Sally (dilution of saline stream under multivariable control) should become operational in the next few weeks. Molly will come on stream later in the summer. Any delegate who has done modules in which these rigs could have been used for practical work, who would like to do so retrospectively, is welcome to do so free of charge. Just give me a ring to make some arrangements.
- **Summer School.** It just gets better. It was suggested last year that there be a 'summer school' for the IGDS. The idea is that there will be one week set aside during the summer when, if delegates are willing to come to Newcastle, I will be available in person to help with outstanding assignments, project work etc. This would be in addition to the normal support via email and phone: the rock bottom level of JL service agreement. To make this work I need to gauge the amount of interest and to attempt to schedule a week in and amongst holiday commitments etc. If this is of interest then give me some feedback please.
- **Welcome.** Welcome to the following delegates who have all done their first module in the Scheme since the last PACT News: Andy Smith (Huntsman Petrochemicals), Ifor Griffiths (RWE npower) and Derege Worku (Conoco Phillips).
- **Motivation.** And finally, details about a meeting organised by the Process Management & Control Subject Group of the IChemE. The meeting is titled '*Motivating People to Improve Control*' and is being hosted by BOC European Operating Centre at Brinsworth near Sheffield on *Thursday 28th April*. It is an all day meeting and includes a tour of the new BOC control centre from which 12 plants are controlled remotely. Further information at:
<http://www.icheme.org/enetwork/mainframeset.asp?AreaID=981>

Hope you manage to get a few days off and switch off over Easter.

Cheerio, Jon