

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING
QUALITY ASSURANCE OF UNITS**

Report by Unit Co-ordinator

Unit code: ELE3IES	Year: 2008	Campus: BUN
Unit coordinator: Paul Junor		
Teaching staff: Paul Junor		

SECTION A: NUMERICAL INFORMATION

Number enrolled: 51

Number completing the QAU questionnaire: 30

Grade distribution: A: 14 B: 13 C: 10 D: 3 E: 0 N: 7 NS: 4

Other (Please list): NIL

SECTION B: STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

(a) Please complete the following table (with previous year's results if available)
The unit, in its current form, had not been surveyed previously (see below). Last year's survey responses for the two units ELE3ACD and ELE3INS, that were merged to form the new unit, are shown for comparison.

Core Questions	Current mean /5.0 (ELE3IES)	Last year's mean (ELE3ACD)	Last year's mean (ELE3INS)
a.	3.3	3.5	3.3
b.	3.3	3.4	4.6
c.	3.4	3.5	4.2
d.	3.2	2.9	3.8
e.	3.1	3.3	4.0
f.	2.9	3.2	3.8
g.	2.6	2.6	3.4
1.	3.0	2.7	4.3
2.	3.1	3.0	4.1
3.	3.1	3.3	4.2
4.	3.3	3.3	4.1
5.	3.7	3.5	4.3
6.	3.4	3.4	4.3
7.	3.2	2.7	4.2
8.	3.3	3.6	4
9.	3.2	3.4	3.9
10.	2.2	2.9	3.9
11.	3.0	3.3	4.1
12.	3.1	2.9	4.3

- a. The unit helped me develop my ability to work as a team member
 - b. Work in this unit enhanced my analytic skills
 - c. Learning in this unit helped me develop my problem-solving skills
 - d. I have developed my skills in written communication in this unit
 - e. The unit has helped enhance my confidence in tackling unfamiliar problems
 - f. The unit helped me develop my capacity to plan my work
 - g. I have improved my oral communication skills
1. The aims of the subject are clear at the start
 2. The teaching staff put a lot of time into commenting on my work
 3. I was generally given enough time to understand the things I had to learn
 4. The staff made a real effort to understand difficulties I might be having with my work
 5. Appropriate forms of assessment were used in this unit
 6. The teaching staff gave me helpful feedback
 7. My teaching staff were extremely good at explaining things
 8. The workload was manageable
 9. The teaching staff worked hard to make this unit interesting
 10. I was able to access the learning resources
 11. The teaching staff of this unit motivated me to do my best work
 12. Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of this unit

(b) Summary of student comments on best aspects

There were positive open-ended responses in relation to the lectures and lecturer, the lab program and in particular the lab demonstrator in 2008 (postgraduate student Mr. Tony de Souza-Daw).

(c) Summary of student comments on needed improvements

There were a number of responses to open-ended questions which apart from referring to unsatisfactory timetabling and lecturing venues, mostly expanded on the responses to questions Q10: the issue that students expressed most concern about was the availability of teaching resources. Despite the careful choice of as suitable as possible (and cost-competitive as possible) a textbook for the merged course, students were reluctant to purchase this from the bookshop so I made extra copies available from the library. The students do expect to rely on LMS as a major resource and due to teething troubles with its introduction and the lack of university support *at critical time*, the lecture slides (for which hard copies were distributed at each lecture) were uploaded late. Moreover, it was difficult consolidate the material of the two forerunner units into a coherent set of lecturers.

The concern of students that they had not improved their oral communication skills (Qg) is explainable in part because in this unit there is little time nor necessity for oral presentation (mostly problem-solving and diagrammatic conceptual depiction), though more emphasis could be placed on *listening* as a major part of communication.

The negative response to Qf, regarding the unit helping to develop capacity to plan work, is curious because at this stage of the overall course one would expect the students to have cultivated a mature approach to work planning, and perhaps this suggests they are being progressively more spoon-fed in earlier years.

SECTION C: UNIT COORDINATOR'S COMMENTS

(d) Last year's suggested improvements

The unit, in its current form, had not been surveyed previously (see below).

(e) Unit coordinator's comments on the unit this year

The unit ran for the first time in 2008 as an amalgamation of the former subject ELE3INS (Instrumentation & Sensors) elective and the core subject ELE3ACD (Analog Circuits & Devices), the latter subject already suffering from syllabus overload due to the incorporation of the former subject ELE32ACA Analog Circuit Applications, a situation that was not completely resolved.

The survey responses were disappointing but not unexpected: a slight improvement on overall satisfaction (3.1) over ELE3ACD/4FAC in 2007 (up from 2.9), and a significant drop in satisfaction from ELE3INS/4FIN in 2007 (down from 4.2/4.5).

The analog circuits component remaining in this unit, arguably one of the hardest topics to teach in the whole course at this level, is very challenging for students, and their general preparedness for this unit remains heterogeneous. Typically an inordinate amount of revision work is required and this year again I ran quite a number of extra tutorial classes for exam preparation after this survey had been run, and thus managed to maintain a healthy legitimate progression rate: it would be interesting to run the student "quality assurance" survey again after the examinations had been conducted and the results lodged, and also five years post-graduation, to see the benefit of hindsight in the workplace.

(f) Unit coordinator's suggestions for improvements next year

Now that the teething problems of LMS have been addressed, there will be fewer barriers to early loading of the lecture material. Attention will be given to the suitability of bundled e-books as a cost-effective resource, assuming the library and the bookshop will assist with this. In the meantime there will be vigilance to ways of careful further integration and consolidation of the syllabus.

In the face of declining entry level, essential fundamental prerequisites topics from feeder units in the earlier years of the course need to be thoroughly consolidated and it is hoped that the Department and individual teaching staff involved with the junior years will genuinely address the problem rather than making cosmetic quick fixes. Because of the expansion of second- and third-year units from 10 to 15 credit points in 2008, some topics previously covered in third year are supposedly to be introduced in second year from 2008. Obviously that cannot relieve this third subject in particular until 2009, and we wait to see whether the appropriate outcome can be achieved.

SECTION D: COMMENTS BY HEAD OF SCHOOL OR NOMINEE

The analogue material is challenging for many students. The lecturer will now have addressed the issues of material from the two "donor" 10CP units and have an appropriate material relevant to 2nd year teaching. Lecturer has now come to terms with LMS.

Signed

(Head of School)

Date