

## No lack of confidence for engineering grads

TWO thirds of engineering graduates are still reasonably or very confident about finding a job, a recent survey has found.

This makes engineering students much more confident than their peers from other disciplines – the UK's National Union of Students says that only 20% of all graduates across all disciplines were as upbeat.

Engineering graduates are also much more prepared to move house or even country to find work. Results from the survey by the careers website gradcracker.com show that 93% of the engineering students said they would be willing to relocate to find work, compared with 66% in a broader survey by the recruitment marketing agency TMP Worldwide. This should be seen as an illustration of the global nature of engineering, Gradcracker says.

The site's head of student communication, Annie Greenfield-Edwards, says that while many engineering employers have frozen or reduced their graduate programmes, a good number have continued to recruit. "We were a little concerned that potential engineers might have simply given up hope in the light of generally negative news. We were pleased to see that this is not the case."

## Queensland Uni wins water recycling centre

THE UNIVERSITY of Queensland will host the new Australian National Centre of Excellence in Water Recycling.

The will be run by Western Corridor Recycled Water, a subsidiary of the Queensland government agency WaterSecure, which will work with researchers from Queensland, Griffith University, the University of New South Wales and the research organisation CSIRO. Industrial partners are Veolia Water and the engineering firm GHD. Australia's government will provide A\$20 (\$16.5m) of funding over five years.

Australia's minister for climate change and water, Penny Wong, says the centre would help develop and commercialise new water recycling technologies.

## UCL and Imperial scoop equality award

CHEMENG departments at University College London and Imperial College have been recognised for their commitment to advancing the careers of women in science, engineering and technology higher education and research under the UK's Athena Swan scheme. Both departments received silver awards. They were the only chemical engineering departments to be named among this year's recipients.

# Manchester looks forward to new chemeng building

£30m investment boosts facilities and student space

CHEMICAL engineering students at the University of Manchester, UK, can look forward to a brand new state-of-the-art building to house the School of Chemical Engineering and Analytical Science.

The proposed five-storey building will accommodate research facilities and teaching laboratories for post graduates and undergraduates, as well as enquiry-based learning facilities (EBL) and academic offices, and house 70 members of staff. The investment is part of a £650m (\$1.08b) construction programme across Manchester University.

The building will occupy the corner of Booth Street East and Upper Brook Street, a short distance from the current chemical engineering building. Construction will take place in two phases. Work on the £11.5m first phase, which will include pilot-scale laboratories for teaching and research, undergraduate teaching laboratories, enquiry-based learning facilities, and workshops, will start in May 2010 and is scheduled for completion in summer 2011. The £18.5m second phase is due to be finished in 2015. The building is designed with sustainability in mind, and among other things includes a ground source heat pump which will be instrumented and monitored through the pilot plant's Delta-V control system.

Head of school Mike Sutcliffe says that the new building will offer a range of new facilities, particularly state-of-the-art laboratories for teaching and research, as well as modern enquiry-based learning teaching facilities. He tells *tce*: "The chemical engineering pilot plant in the Morton laboratory [the current home of chemeng at Manchester] was originally designed for traditional chemical engineering processes, such as distillation and heat transfer. The new pilot-scale facilities will be designed to suit a modern chemical engineering school, offering more flexibility with facilities suitable for research and pilot-scale teaching experiments in topics such as structured fluids processing



An artist's impression of the new building

and environmental processes, and will enable the development and testing of process instrumentation."

The new building will also give Manchester greater flexibility in its annual intake of undergraduates, masters students and PhD students. "We had a bumper year of undergraduates this year, 25% above 2008 levels, which is our highest intake ever – and they're good quality students, too," says Sutcliffe. "That means that we are at capacity in our existing building."

As well as more space for students, once the second phase of construction is complete the new building will offer increased research laboratory space, allowing the school to accommodate some 40% more researchers, he adds. Sutcliffe says that his school's strong performance in the recent UK Research Assessment Exercise – Manchester's chemical engineers tied with Cambridge and Imperial College for the top slot in the discipline – is partly due to its cross-disciplinary ties with bioscience, chemistry, mathematics, and analytical and measurement science, and that the new building will help it further dissolve the barriers between related disciplines.

## Surrey adds part-time downstream MSc

THE UK's University of Surrey is collaborating with process engineering consultancy KBC to deliver a part-time MSc in downstream petroleum technology.

The three-year modular programme will be taught on campus, using a mixture of university and KBC teaching resources. Students will learn how to become an effective leader and decision maker in the petrochemical, refining,

and downstream process industries. The course involves a research project requiring the student to apply what they have learnt back at their place of employment.

The first module, *Energy optimisation and hydrocarbon loss minimisation*, will run from 4 January 2010. The course aims to address the shortage of fresh engineers with relevant skills in the sector.