

Engineering Research and Development at the University of the West Indies (UWI): A Personal Perspective

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Abstract

The year 1998 marks the 50th Anniversary of the University of the West Indies, and notwithstanding the fact that it is only the 38th year of the Faculty of Engineering, it is appropriate to reflect on a number of issues. One of the major issues and one which is crucial to the future of the Faculty is that of the approach which it takes to its research agenda. The aim of this paper is to reflect on some of the issues and to propose relevant strategies for improving its performance in the future. In doing so, it is fully recognised that the research and development work of the Faculty must be towards assisting in regional development; this being clearly stated in its Mission Statement. In fulfilling the aim of the paper, a brief historical perspective of the work of the Faculty is initially presented as background. This is followed by an analysis of the external environment which the Faculty serves, together with relevant background in respect of recent developments within the University. This then leads to a series of proposals in respect of future strategies, together with an evaluation of the problems which the Faculty has to solve in order to move ahead.