Faculty of Science & Engineering

Curtin
University of Technology

Department of Mechanical Engineering

Level 4, Building 204
GPO Box U1987
Perth Western Australia 6845

Telephone +61 8 9266 7047
Facsimile +61 8 9266 2681
Email kim.yap@curtin.edu.au
Web mech-eng.curtin.edu.au

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TO WHOME IT MAY CONCERN

Academic reference for Dr Sam Cubero

I write this academic reference as the Head of Mechanical Engineering Department at Curtin University where Dr Sam Cubero Sam was formerly employed as a lecturer until June 2007. I was his immediate line manger and assessed work performance in view of university academic expectations.

Dr Cubero was one of the four staff members involved in the Mechatronic Engineering programme of the Department where he undertook both teaching and research activities. He was actively involved in the courseware development for this newly launched degree programme at Curtin (Perth) as well as its overseas campus at Sarawak, Malaysia. While being the unit controller, he enthusiastically taught the core units Mechatronic Project 234, Mechanical Design 321, Engineering Graphics 232 and Mechatronic Automation 331 in this course.

Dr Cubero introduced several up-to-date teaching tools and problem-based learning (PBL) methods that gave the mechatronic engineering programme a modern outlook. He was very natural with specialised software and keenly adopted such aids for effective teaching. Through PBL approach, he addressed varying student learning needs for which he received high level of student satisfaction feedback for his teaching units. His contributions and initiatives not only improved the public image of this new course but also significantly helped Curtin to stay ahead of competition in similar teaching programmes in Western Australia.

Dr Cubero carried out very innovative and applied research in machine vision, instrumentation development and mobile robotics. He received international acknowledgements for his work on machine vision. He received invitations to share his wealth of knowledge at international forums, and attracted international recognition and industry partnership. He regularly published outcomes in journals and conferences. In his research involving innovative and novel development work, Dr Cubero attracted industry funding, sponsorships and a whole range of industrial links for collaborations.

With commitment, he supervised and successfully completed many higher degree research and undergraduate student projects involving numerous innovative ideas. He undertook many professional development activities with hands-on training experience useful for mechatronic research and teaching.

As the Enrolment Officer for the mechatronic engineering stream, Dr Cubero advised students on their study plans and handled special enrolment issues. In addition, he showed leadership qualities through organising Open Day activities, Curtin promotional presentations for prospective high school students and international conference organisation.

Dr Cubero is a capable academic who has proven expertise in the mechatronic discipline area, in particular machine design, computer control, embedded microcontrollers, robotics and machine vision. As demonstrated at Curtin, he is very competent in technical skills and possesses necessary experience for developing new courseware for an accredited mechatronic engineering course. In my opinion, he can also adopt himself to teaching within traditional mechanical engineering discipline. His research spans from fundamental developments to industry applications warranting external partnerships and funding support. He showed good interpersonal skills with peers, superiors and students.

I am confident that, given the appropriate employment opportunity, Dr Sam Cubero will continue to be successful in his pursuit of academic excellence while contributing to the progress of his workplace.

Yours faithfully

Associate Professor Tilak T. Chandratilleke
PhD(Cambridge), BSc, MASME, MIEAust. CPEng

Head - Department of Mechanical Engineering
Curtin University of Technology
GPO Box U1987
Perth WA6845
Australia
Tel. +61 8 9266 7047, Fax. +61 8 9266 2681
Email: T.Chandratilleke@curtin.edu.au