

PhD student presents polymers and packaging in Pattaya

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In December 2012, the 28th international conference of the Polymer Processing Society (PPS-28) was held in Pattaya, Thailand. Earlier in the year I had submitted an abstract exhibiting research from my PhD and was delighted to be accepted for my first international oral presentation.



The conference was held in the Pattaya Exhibition and Conference Hall situated in the Royal Cliff Hotel. Over 500 participants from 42 countries attended the conference, with oral and poster presentations throughout the five days. There was a real mix of participants; most were from Asia, but there were also representatives from Europe, North America and Australia.

My research involves blending two biodegradable polymers in order to produce one with improved properties. This subject area is very popular and prevalent in current polymer research, with applications such as supermarket food packaging. Presenting at an international conference was a great experience and I have since received significant interest in my research, with new contacts and relationships established.

The conference provided two site visit choices to its participants: a natural rubber plantation and a petrochemical complex. I attended the petrochemical site visit to PTT Global Chemical company in Rayong. It is Thailand's largest, and Asia's leading, integrated, petrochemical and refining company. The trip included a research and development site visit and plant tour including a warehouse of high density polyethylene. It was a highly educational day, learning new information within my research area.

The conference was of excellent standard and the overall experience was an unforgettable one. Without financial aid from the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining, Dr Gary Leeke from Chemical Engineering and the EPSRC, this would not have been feasible. The opportunity and the subsequent experience is something I am incredibly grateful for.

More information can be found on the [PPS-28 conference website \(http://www.mtec.or.th/pps-28/\)](http://www.mtec.or.th/pps-28/).