A semi-automatic, dual wheel, bench polisher/grinder was recently installed and commissioned at the Department of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering. The polisher has a variable operation speed in the range 0 to 500 rpm and can polish up to eight samples simultaneously. It in cooperates a timer, enabling the user to set the polishing time from 30 seconds to 10 minutes. A polishing head is provided so the force applied to the samples can be controlled by the user.

The polisher was supplied by Leco Africa (Pty) of South Africa. Mr Jacobus Van Wyk, the Leco Sales Engineer/Manager for Africa was on hand to install the machine and train the users on its proper use. Attending the commissioning were Prof G O Rading and Dr Thomas Mbuya (academic staff); Messes John Aduol, S Njue, A Okoth and J Kahiro (Technical staff) and postgraduate students Timothy Ngeru, Sammy Rotich, Johnson Ngugi, Kelly Mutonga, Edmond Nyaigoti and Anthony Nzoka.

The machine was acquired through the African Materials Science and Engineering Network (AMSEN). With this acquisition, AMSEN continues in its quest to modernize the metallurgical laboratory at the Department of Mechanical Engineering. Other equipment/software already installed as part of this effort are: several optical microscopes equipped with digital cameras, a microstructural characterizer software (capable of automatic determination of grain sizes and structures), a Vickers micro/macro hardness tester, a slow speed diamond saw (for preparation of TEM specimens), etc.