

# MOULTON COLLEGE

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the Academic Standards Committee Meeting Held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2009

**Present:** Mr J Gaggini (in the Chair), Mr C Alderson-Smith, Mr C Barney, Mr A Ellis, Miss D Humberstone, Mrs K Mackaness, Mr G Patrick, Mr M Thomson, Mr R Thompson

**In Attendance:** Mr R Chapman, Mrs L Furness, Mr M Wilkinson, Mr R Dewing, Miss C Whitworth, Miss S Wilkin, Mr S Crane, Mr M Wallington

**09/1 Apologies for absence (agenda item 1)**

Apologies were received from Mrs J Charlton-Jones, Mr A Merriman, Prof P Bush, Mr R Priddle and Mr C Moody.

**09/2 Minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008 (agenda item 2, paper A)**

The minutes were accepted as a true and correct record.

**09/3 Matters Arising (agenda item 3)**

There were no matters arising.

**09/4 SAR Quality Improvement Plan (agenda item 4)**

**a) Landbased Faculty**

**i) Agriculture (paper B)**

This area had graded itself as 1 in the SAR. Progress with the required actions was outlined and discussed. A joint project between ND Agriculture and HE students had raised the awareness of HE opportunities amongst the ND students, resulting in the 25% target for UCAS applications being exceeded. Closer monitoring of student progress during tutorials had raised retention rates above benchmarks in 5 out of the 9 programmes identified for improvement. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

**ii) Horticulture (paper C)**

This area had graded itself as 2 in the SAR. Progress with the required actions was outlined and discussed. Measures to improve attendance and retention had resulted in improvements on all courses except the First Diploma in Horticulture. Measures to increase WBL recruitment had resulted in increased applications, although not all applicants had yet secured work placements. Assessment processes at Peterborough had been brought into line with the Main Site, resulting in a good report from the External Verifier. Revisions to assessment methods and individual target setting for students had been implemented to encourage more students to attempt Merit and Distinction outcomes. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

**iii) Animal Welfare and Veterinary Health (paper D)**

This area had graded itself as 1 in the SAR. Progress with the required actions was outlined and discussed. Only 22% of ND students had progressed to HE last year. Progression talks and a taster experience had been arranged for this year's cohort. A lack of knowledge and understanding of the financial implications of studying at higher level had been identified as a barrier to progression and had been addressed through the Progression talks. 71% of the current ND students had completed UCAS applications. Measures to increase recruitment onto WBL courses had resulted in an increase from 2 to 8 students. Further increases had been targeted for next year. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

The Chairman thanked Claire Whitworth, Sharron Wilkin, Mark Wallington and Steve Crane for their contribution and they left the meeting. Neil Dellar and Harriet Lukens joined the meeting.

**b) Building and Construction Faculty**

**i) Furniture and Design Studies (paper E)**

This area had graded itself as 2 in the SAR. Progress with the required actions was outlined and discussed. Attendance on the HND course had improved to 80%. This was still not considered to be high enough and further improvements had been targeted for next year. Attendance on part-time courses had generally improved. Measures had been put in place to improve success rates on some part-time level 2 courses. Full-cost options were being offered to meet the needs of students who did not want to complete a qualification. Also, students on part time funded Furniture making courses were now being given enhanced tutorial support and more formal taught sessions to support the assignment work. All were likely to pass this year. On the ND Design course, clearer assignment briefs and improved written feedback had been implemented and further improvements were planned for next year. Increased flexibility of attendance had been introduced on the ND Design course. Marketing activity had increased significantly and there had been a slight increase in FE applications. The marketing activity had also been extended across the region. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

The Chairman thanked Harriet Lukens for her contribution and she left the meeting. Lindsey Johnson, Sean Maxwell and Craig Jackson joined the meeting.

**c) Sport, Equine and General Education Faculty**

**i) General Education (paper F)**

Richard Dewing reported on behalf of Louise Ball. This area had graded itself as 1 in the SAR. Progress with the required actions was outlined and discussed. Attendance rates had improved on all entry level part-time courses. Target setting for Pathways to Progress students had been improved. Improved assessment planning on the NPTC Horticulture courses had resulted in less reliance on end point assessments in favour of assessments spread throughout the programme. Better communications between Heads of Faculty and Subject Mangers and sampling of internal

verification records had resulted in a successful external verifier visit. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**ii) Equestrian Studies (paper G)**

This area had graded itself as 1 in the SAR. Progress with the required actions was outlined and discussed. 10 out of 28 National Diploma students were undertaking Key Skills at level 3 this year, helped by individual action plans. This was in line with a government recommendation that ND students who wished to progress to HE should attempt at least 1 Key Skill at level 3. Actions to increase the diversity of students continued. This was a national issue and was common to some other subject areas within the College. It was agreed that statistics showing students with disabilities, learning needs and from areas of rural isolation could be analysed for inclusion in the next SAR and appropriate action. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**iii) Sports Studies (paper H)**

This area had graded itself as 1 in the SAR. Progress with the required actions was outlined and discussed. Measures to improve retention on the First Diploma and some National Award courses had resulted in significant improvements. A mentoring programme using successful second year students to mentor first years had proved a benefit with some minority groups and the project was being extended across the College. Increased use was being made of Moodle by all courses. Whilst it was difficult to measure the impact of this, there had been a higher pass rate on first submissions of assignments this year. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

The Chairman thanked Richard Dewing, Craig Jackson and Sean Maxwell for their contribution and they left the meeting. Geoff Nichols joined the meeting.

**d) Building and Construction Faculty**

**i) Building Studies (paper I)**

This area had graded itself as 2 in the SAR. Progress with the required actions was outlined and discussed. Better attendance monitoring had resulted in some improvement in attendance rates, but evening courses were still a problem. Greater monitoring during tutorials had improved retention rates in some roofing and stonemasonry courses but full-time courses were still a cause for concern. Attempts to improve the gender balance of students continued. Female students appeared to be more attracted to plumbing and painting and decorating disciplines. The possibility of strengthening actions on gender imbalances were discussed, particularly the possibility of some cross-college activity. Progression talks had been given to all level 3 groups and it was hoped that 6 would progress to HE in 2009-10 compared to 3 this year. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**ii) Construction Services (paper J)**

This area had graded itself as 2 in the SAR. Progress with the required actions was outlined and discussed. Attendance on FE construction courses had improved but HE was still below target. Where attendance had improved, students were on target for timely achievement. Results to date on

teaching observations showed a similar profile to last year, but with a greater variety of delivery methods being used. In Plumbing, an increased number of assessors and verifiers, a greater number of on-site assessments and better target setting were improving the number of WBL students completing in a timely manner. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

The Chairman thanked Geoff Nichols and Neil Dellar for their contribution, Lindsey Johnson, Linda Furness, Dawn Humberstone, Geoff Nichols and Neil Dellar left the meeting.

**e) Management Centre (paper K)**

This area had graded itself as 2 in the SAR. The structure of the Management Centre had changed radically this year to be able to better respond to the needs of employers. Progress with the required actions was outlined and discussed. The improved infrastructure and better monitoring had improved retention on the majority of programmes although there were some areas which still needed to improve. The area was hoping to move to a grade 1 next year. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**09/5 Withdrawals 2007-8 (agenda item 5, paper L)**

The analysis of the reasons for withdrawals was discussed. The number in the "not known" category had decreased significantly due to positive action by the College. Further analysis of the "other" category was required. A more detailed analysis would be circulated. Following discussion, *the report was noted*

**09/6 Date of next meeting (agenda item 6)**

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at 4.00pm.

**09/7 Any other business**

There was no other business.