

# MOULTON COLLEGE

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the Academic Standards Committee Meeting Held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2010

**Present:** Mr J Gaggini (in the Chair), Mr C Alderson-Smith, Mr C Barney, Mrs J Charlton-Jones, Mr P Heygate, Mr G Patrick, Mr R Thompson

**In Attendance:** Mr R Chapman, Mrs S Field, Mr M Wilkinson, Miss S Edmans, Miss D Smith, Miss C Whitworth, Miss M Coleman, Mr S Crane

The Chairman welcomed Sophie Edmans and Danielle Smith to the meeting.

**10/1 Apologies for absence (agenda item 1)**

Apologies were received from Mr A Ellis, Mr B Knight, Mr M Thomson, Mr N Dellar and Prof P Bush. Ms L Johnson would be arriving later.

**10/2 Minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2009 (agenda item 2, paper A)**

The minutes were accepted as a true and correct record.

**10/3 Matters Arising (agenda item 3)**

There were no matters arising.

**10/4 Self-Assessment Report 2009-10 (agenda item 4, paper B)**

Karen Mackaness joined the meeting.

**a) Landbased Faculty**

**i) Agriculture**

The subject area had graded itself as 2 for overall effectiveness of provision and 1 for capacity to improve. The strengths and areas for improvement were discussed. The proportion of good or outstanding teaching observation grades had declined to 68% although a larger number of staff had been observed and many were new to teaching. Additional support for staff had been put in place for 2010-11. The attendance of learners on the second year of the National Diploma in Agriculture had been poor in 2009-10. It was currently improving through an increased adherence to the attendance monitoring procedures. Timely success rates on advanced apprenticeship programmes was being addressed by more frequent workplace visits by staff and earlier completion of key skills and additional qualifications. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

Lindsey Johnson joined the meeting.

**ii) Animal Welfare and Veterinary Health**

The subject area had graded itself as 1 for overall effectiveness of provision and 1 for capacity to improve. The strengths and areas for improvement were discussed. Attendance and retention on HE programmes had been below

target in 2009-10, often due to learners' personal problems. Improved tutorial support and tighter monitoring of absence were in place for 2010-11. Student satisfaction on programmes at satellite centres was being addressed by improved tutorial support and enhanced access to extra-curricular activities. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

**iii) Horticulture**

All main grades were unchanged at 2 this year. The strengths and areas for improvement were discussed. Support within the area was being provided for staff who had received a low observation grade last year, and good practice was being shared across all staff. Initial advice and guidance was being improved and absence followed up stringently, especially with part-time and 19+ learners to help to improve success rates. SMART targets were being set and regularly reviewed for all apprentices to help improve timely success. Floristry provision was being reviewed to ensure it met the needs of industry and to improve recruitment. It was reported that success rates in a sample of Landex member colleges were lowest in horticulture and floristry, possibly due to a higher proportion of adults on these courses. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

The Chairman thanked Claire Whitworth, Mel Coleman and Steve Crane for their contribution and they left the meeting. Tony Basham joined the meeting.

**b) Management Centre**

The subject area had graded itself as 2 for overall effectiveness of provision and 2 for capacity to improve. The strengths and areas for improvement were discussed. Measures to improve timely framework completions focused on improved target setting and monitoring for students by some partner organisations, revised structures and planning of waste management qualifications and better use of individual learning plans. The speed of conversion from initial contact to an employee starting a programme of learning was being improved. The role of the Management Centre was discussed. The demise of Train to Gain would probably bring more opportunities for full-cost work and it was important to develop appropriate programmes to meet employers' needs. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

The Chairman thanked Tony Basham for his contribution and he left the meeting. Syed Mohyuddin and Harriet Lukens joined the meeting.

**c) Building and Construction Faculty**

**i) Construction Services**

The subject area had graded itself as 2 for overall effectiveness of provision and 2 for capacity to improve. The strengths and areas for improvement were discussed. More rigorous monitoring and follow-up of absence had been implemented to improve retention. Improved initial assessment and guidance had been put in place to help improve retention of learners on long level 1 part-time and long level 2 programmes and better preparation for progression from level 1 to level 2 implemented. Increased support for part-time staff had already resulted in an improvement in observation grades compared to last year. Attendance had been a problem on some HE courses. These contained a high proportion of mature students who often found it difficult to commit

time to study but success rates were still good. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

Geoff Nichols joined the meeting.

**ii) Furniture and Design Studies**

The subject area had graded itself as 2 for overall effectiveness of provision and 3 for capacity to improve. The actions taken in the quality improvement plan for 2008-9 to improve recruitment had not resulted in the required improvements and this had affected the grades. Recruitment to some courses was good but in interior design at FE level it remained weak. A significant amount of recruitment activity was planned for 2010-11. Measures to improve attendance were also in place. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

Paul Heygate left the meeting.

**iii) Building Studies**

The subject area had graded itself as 2 for overall effectiveness of provision and 2 for capacity to improve. The strengths and areas for improvement were discussed. Retention on some level 1 courses, particularly evening groups in Brickwork and Carpentry, had been poor. More rigorous chasing of absence on the day or evening it occurred was now in place and this should help to improve retention. A programme of staff development and sharing of good practice was under way to help to improve teaching observation grades. Success rates on the level 2 Diploma in Stonemasonry were discussed. This was a 2 year programme and there was no interim qualification available at level 1 to allow success in year 1. A series of additional qualifications were being provided to ensure students remained motivated. The fall in the number of key skills achieved per student was also being addressed. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

The Chairman thanked Geoff Nichols, Syed Mohyuddin and Harriet Lukens for their contribution and they left the meeting. Richard Dewing, Craig Jackson, Sean Maxwell and Louise Ball joined the meeting.

**d) Equestrian, Sport and General Education Faculty**

**i) Equestrian Studies**

The subject area had graded itself as 2 for overall effectiveness of provision and 1 for capacity to improve. The strengths and areas for improvement were discussed. Measures to improve retention on full-time courses included better advice and guidance at the interview stage and closer monitoring of students at risk of not being retained. More rigorous following up of absence should also help to improve retention. Individual action plans to achieve higher grades were now being set for National Diploma students and their module tutors were being tasked to ensure they hit their targets. A change of funding mechanism for work based learning together with increased contact with employers was helping to improve recruitment to these courses. Commercial experience on the College Yard was now more structured and differentiated. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**ii) Sports Studies**

The subject area had graded itself as 1 for overall effectiveness of provision and 1 for capacity to improve. The strengths and areas for improvement were discussed. Rigorous following up of attendance and early identification of students at risk were in place to improve retention on the full-time level 1 and 2 courses. In HE, pass rates on some modules taught at the University had been poor last year. These modules were now being delivered at Moulton to smaller groups and increased support for students provided. Efforts to improve recruitment to work based learning included targeted marketing and increased contact with industry. Access to IT was discussed. Laptop banks in some classrooms had allowed greater use of IT during lessons. Volunteering experience was discussed. This was important in building up a student's CV and all students were encouraged to gain experience in this way. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**iii) General Education**

The subject area had graded itself as 1 for overall effectiveness of provision and 1 for capacity to improve. The strengths and areas for improvement were discussed. Termly auditing of the internal verification file for the 6217 Construction Award was now in place and should lead to the required improvements in the quality of assessment procedures. The change to the Qualification and Credit Framework now allowed more flexibility in assessment and should lead to an improvement in success rates for part-time learners as it was now possible to achieve an award by gaining 3 units rather than 8 previously. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

The Chairman thanked Richard Dewing, Craig Jackson, Sean Maxwell and Louise Ball for their contribution and they left the meeting.

**10/5 Withdrawals 2009-10 (agenda item 5, paper C)**

The analysis of the reasons for withdrawals was discussed. There were no distinct trends in the figures. Withdrawals were monitored closely as they occurred during the year and action would be taken if unusual trends developed. Following discussion, *the report was noted*

**10/6 Committee Self-Assessment Report (agenda item 6, paper D)**

Proposed changes to the report were discussed. Concern was expressed about the level of attendance at 75%. A strength was added relating to the good quality of questioning by the Committee when reviewing the subject area self assessments. An area for improvement was added relating to a requirement to place greater emphasis on areas for improvement in considering the self-assessment report. Following discussion, *the Committee graded its work as 2 and it was also agreed to improve the information presented to future meetings*.

**10/7 Date of next meeting (agenda item 7)**

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at 4.00pm.

**10/8 Any other business**

There was no other business.