

## **Association of Lecturers in Colleges of Education in Scotland (ALCES)**

For a time in the 1970s and 1980s the Association played an important role negotiating on behalf of its members at a time of unprecedented change in the college of education sector. National ALCES was formed soon after the establishment of the colleges in 1959. It aimed to further the professional work of the colleges of education and to support the interests of its members with membership open to all academic staff and librarians. At first it operated in parallel to the Staff Councils that had been set up in some colleges. The Staff Council at Moray House acted as a forum for issues to be raised and discussed with the Principal.

The passing of the Industrial Relations Act in 1971 meant that organisations such as ALCES could be formally involved in national and local negotiations on matters related to salaries and conditions of service. National ALCES was registered under the Act in 1972 thereby having the rights and immunities of a trade union. In recognition of this change ALCES's constitution was amended in 1973 enabling individual college's to establish local branches. College branches sent elected representatives to national Council meetings where policy matters were decided.

The Moray House Branch of ALCES succeeded the Moray House Staff Council in November 1972 and was formally recognised by the Board of Governors for local negotiating purposes. Some 72% of academic staff were members of the Moray House Branch in 1972 rising to a peak membership of over 90%. A reason for the high level of membership lay in the issues that faced the colleges of education during the 1970s and 1980s particularly as this was a period of contraction. Another reason was the increase in the number of staff appointed in response to increasing student numbers in the 1960s This expansion is reflected in the number of lecturing staff in post at Moray House:

1960/61	78
1965/66	113
1968/69	142
1970/71	163
1975/76	254
1977/78	260

1977/78 was to be the peak for the number of lecturing staff at Moray House, with a contraction occurring thereafter:

1978/79	249
1980/81	199

Numbers increased later because of the mergers with Callendar Park and Dunfermline Colleges of Education.

For many Moray House staff a major concern in the early 1970s was the way the college was managed and the perceived lack of consultation. In 1972 a staff Symposium was held providing staff with an opportunity to discuss issues relating to the governance and organisation of the college. In a paper Warwick Taylor summarised the feelings of many staff: '... many decisions in the colleges are arrived at and implemented without consultation of staff. The present machinery

for college government imposes a model of administrative control inappropriate for the change in size, complexity, function and multiplicity of purpose which is beginning to characterise the larger colleges ...'. The general view expressed at the Symposium was that there needed to be more democracy at Moray House and greater participation by the whole college community.

By the middle 1970s the government, through the Scottish Education Department (SED), was intent on closing some of the colleges of education thereby reducing the number of student teachers being trained. The SED's case was based both on the government's need to cut back public expenditure and on the falling birth rate: the number of live births in Scotland in 1965 had been 100,660 but by 1975 this had fallen to 67,943.

In **1976** Moray House was thrown into crisis when over 600 students voted for the first **Student Occupation** of the college, a decision endorsed by the subsequent General Meeting attended by over 1000 students. On the 12 May the Main Building (now Paterson's Land) was occupied and its doors padlocked as was the Regent Road building where community education and social work students were then based. These moves had been precipitated by the local education authority interviews: 'The cattle market of interviews in the morning when hundreds [of students] were turned away without interviews brought out the anger that had been seething just below the surface for the past fortnight.' At the time some 250 Primary and 200 Secondary student teachers had no jobs to go to because of government cutbacks. The students argued for changes at local and national level: for no cuts at Moray House and no staff redundancies; for a job for every graduating student; for public expenditure cuts to be reversed; and a right to work. The students were well organised with links being quickly established with the STUC and Education Authorities and extensive media coverage being achieved. Soon the majority of the colleges of education in Scotland were occupied followed by other higher education institutions; by early June 125 higher education institutions had been occupied across the UK. Moray House ALCES played an important role in responding both to the need to maintain the academic work of the college and in taking forward the general case being argued by the students and others in the education service. The occupation continued over the summer but eventually full access to the buildings was agreed.

Moray House Branch ALCES also played an active role in discussions on educational issues. For example, in 1979 the Branch initiated a debate about the most appropriate body for validating Moray House's courses, through a seminar: **A Degree of Change**. Professor Ruthven argued for a 'mixed economy' model with some courses validated by Edinburgh University and others by the Council for National Academic Awards. Sister Margaret, Principal of Notre Dame College of Education, spoke about her institution's experiences with the CNAA; she argued that there were positive benefits to be had from the partnership model of validation being developed by the CNAA.

The Labour government's unsuccessful attempt in 1977 to bring about the closure of one or more colleges of education was followed by a more determined effort by the Conservative government elected in 1979 to reduce teacher training places. In 1977 ALCES had, despite potential conflicts amongst its members, played a significant role in marshalling the educational case against the SED's arguments and in contributing to the political campaigns organised at national and local levels. However, in 1980 when it became clear that college closures couldn't be prevented ALCES began negotiations to ameliorate the effects of any such closures, for

example, by the application of the 'Crombie' code to college staff. Donald Mackay of Moray House played a significant role in the national negotiations on this issue.

Many staff during the 1980s considered that the actions of government were leading to a 'deprofessionalisation' of their work. The economic policies being pursued at national level were in the name of 'savings', 'efficiency and effectiveness'; a new 'managerialism' was being imposed and accountability and transparency became core elements of the SED's practices. For lecturers this was exemplified by the SED's insistence that colleges account for all the hours worked by their academic staff with summary data reported to the Department. The college's AC0 (forward planning) and AC1 (retrospective accounting) forms became a symbol of this new mode of working. In response to developments such as these Moray House Branch EIS / ALCES undertook a survey of the views of lecturing staff and the first **Stress at Work** report was published in 1991. The report concluded that staff were most concerned about the way the college was managed and administered and about excessive workloads. Other issues raised included the need for better resources and for an improved physical environment particularly for teaching. It was agreed that the AC 1 monitoring forms should be discontinued at the end of session 1990/91.

In 1988 ALCES became a self - governing part of the Educational Institute of Scotland: EIS / ALCES and in 1992 EIS / ULA was formed: the University Lecturers' Association.

## **Chairs and Secretaries of Moray House Staff Council and Branch ALCES**

### **Chairs**

### **Secretaries**

#### **Moray House Staff Council**

George Barclay, Vice Principal (...1966)  
Sandy Fulton (1966 – 1967)  
George Keith (1967 – 1968)  
Margaret Law (1968 – 1969)  
George Grieve (1969 – 1971)  
Jessie Ball (1971 – 1972)

Miss Hay (...1966)  
Marjory Cowe (1966 – 1967)  
Fraser Paxton (1967 – 1968)  
Alex Brown (1968 – 1972)  
  
Alex Peden (1972)

#### **Moray House Branch ALCES**

Jessie Ball (1972 – 73)  
Ian Currie (1973 – 1974)  
Willie Provan (1974 – 1978)  
Hugh Perfect (1978 – 1982)  
Nancy Ovens (1982 – 1986?)  
Sandy Morrison (1986? – 1988)  
Gwynedd Lloyd (1988 – 1989)

Alex Peden (1972 – 1974)  
  
Nan Anthony (1974 – 1978)  
Laurie Taylor (1978 – 1982)  
Warwick Taylor (1982 – 1984)  
Bob Thornton (1984 – 1988)  
Marianna Buultjens (1988 – 1989)

#### **Moray House Branch EIS- ALCES**

Alan Bell, President (1990 – 1992)

Brian Cosford (1989 – 1997)

#### **Moray House Branch EIS - ULA**

Alan Bell, Convener (1992 – 1997)  
Brian Cosford, Convener (1997 – 2002)

{ Elspeth Crawford (1997 – 1998)  
{ Liz Elkind (1997 – 2000)