

Chief Executive Principal of South Staffordshire College Graham Morley has today announced that the Department for Education has confirmed that the college can establish an academy for 14 – 19 year olds studying land-based, rural, environmental and sustainability subjects at its Rodbaston Campus.

The school, to be established in direct response to parental and industry demand, will be known as The Rural Enterprise Academy and will open in September 2012.

Graham said: “We are absolutely delighted by this news which endorses the quality of learning available at South Staffordshire College and underlines the opportunities in the rural sector available to the young people at our Rodbaston Campus.”

Rodbaston was part of the four-site merger which accompanied South Staffordshire College's launch in January 2009 as a 'Super College' and has a history of many decades involved in rural and horticultural education.

Since its formation the new college has achieved outstanding performance including many awards and accreditations, student successes at regional, national and international competitions, the development of new innovative buildings for learning and more recently it was recognised as being the most successful College in Staffordshire, according to figures from the Data Service.

The Rural Enterprise Academy is one of 33 new secondary schools which will be opened in 2012.

Education Secretary Michael Gove said: “The people who are driving Free Schools are true pioneers. They are leading a revolution in the education system.

These new schools allow talented and experienced people to be imaginative and bold in creating great new schools. They will offer more choice to parents in the type of education their child receives, and will raise standards in many communities where the need is great.”

The decision by South Staffordshire College to embark on a new chapter of learning for 14-19 year olds who are interested in careers in the land-based, rural, environmental and sustainability sectors, demonstrates an educational model that is innovative in its approach. Graham continues: “The Rural Enterprise Academy will provide a powerful combination of academic and practical skills to equip more youngsters for the workplace and help secure their future.”