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# Bedford College

(University of London)

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9th November, 1982.

Professor Baroness McFarlane of Llandaff,  
Department of Nursing,  
University of Manchester,  
Stopford Building,  
Oxford Road,  
Manchester M13 9PT.

Dear Jean,

I was sorry not to have been able to meet with you yesterday to discuss the Bedford situation. Since you expressed an interest, I take the liberty of putting pen to paper to advise you of the position as I see it - which by definition is a personal view, and as such I'd like you to consider it.

As you know, Bedford is planning to move its site to Egham to merge with Royal Holloway by 1984 and it is planned to have a new nursing student intake by 1985. The nursing students who are already registered with Bedford College have been given the guarantee to finish their course in the centre of London with the Middlesex. Bedford will find a temporary home for the nursing students and some postgraduates who will not move out to Egham.

I am involved with the day-to-day running of the present course: 1st Year - 5 students, 2nd Year - 12 students. I am also involved with continuous consolidation procedures of the courses to be developed for Year 3 and Year 4; also with finding people to teach particular aspects of the course - and this applies to medical/biological sciences which are not provided from within Bedford College. I have consistent battles over books because the library has not been allocated funds for buying books as nursing is part of sociology department - and my battle is vis-a-vis that department: that the library also claims that since the Middlesex is involved in teaching, they should carry some of the book load and their arguments also apply to the medical/biological sciences. Since those are bought by outside people, the library refuses to budge. Considering those difficulties I am building up a nursing library but with immense difficulties.

Re Egham: I've been to see the District Nursing Officer about Chertsey Hospital and our students. They are very half-hearted and certainly have neither budget nor space to accommodate us willingly. We sound all right because we have prestige, but we are suspicious because we claim to be teaching nursing differently. Egham has no Director of Nurse Education and makes do with an acting head, and with a consultant, Joan Darwin

who was anything but friendly! The major problem is to provide for about 12-15 student placements which can be so organised as to provide appropriate learning experience for the unit examination system of London University which takes place every June - and so far I've been unable to move it. Chertsey is a small nurse training school (300-400 beds) and trains SRN's, RMN's, SEN's, Midwives etc. and our students are low on the priority list. There is no public transport between the university campus and Chertsey - by car or minibus it is about 5 minutes. A minibus would have to operate all the year round including weekends to get students from A to B.

Staffwise, I have Elizabeth Meerabeau, a biology graduate (1st Class) from the Surrey course, with a shortened SRN. She is very sweet, methodical and reliable, but very inexperienced and is still learning. Our advertisement did produce the sort of 'intellectual' calibre that Bedford demands of its staff. (Wonder how it was that I ever got there!!). Anyhow, we hope to appoint someone soon - but none of the potential lecturers have much relevant experience.

If Egham is considered seriously to be ready for 1985, I will have to split myself into two to carry on with the work on the Bedford site as well.

There's rumour that University College might be interested in the nursing course. The whole idea is ruled out categorically by Dr. Burton and the Principal - presumably because of the full-time equivalents of about ?£3,000 per student from the UGC for nursing students?

As I see it - there is not much chance of developing a good course in Egham - the odds are against us - Egham School of Nursing has hardly any library to speak of; there is no medical library, and what there is at present in the Bedford library will not sustain any course in nursing studies.

I think that UC might be a solution for the course or else a putting-together of us and Chelsea - but I do not know where the power lies.

All this sounds probably pretty confusing. I'm surviving, but only just, and I have my doubts as to the academic nursing establishment's judgment of launching this course?

I thought I would merely advise you of the position and would in return be grateful for any advice.

With best wishes,

Yours,

*Marion*

Marion Ferguson.