Appendix C  General course philosophy, aims and objectives

Note: The course philosophy, aims and objectives presented here, are taken from the General Nursing Council for England and Wales’ Training Syllabus 1977. The City school curriculum papers were loosely based on this syllabus. I have not given details of the City programme to protect anonymity.

The Syllabus sets out in broad terms the subjects to be studied during training for Registration in the general part of the Register maintained by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales.

The concept underlying this syllabus is that of total patient care but for convenience the syllabus is divided into three main sections, nursing, the study of the individual and the nature and cause of disease together with its prevention and treatment. These three aspects of patient care should be learned concurrently throughout training. In this way the various needs of patients will be closely linked together, their needs as individuals and as patients requiring nursing and specialised care and rehabilitation.

The patient in hospital cannot be considered in isolation from the community, and the nurse must be aware of the services provided by statutory authorities and voluntary organisations to help and safeguard individuals in their home and at work. The nurse also has an important part to play as a health teacher and must have a knowledge of the factors in the environment which give rise to ill-health since she will be called upon to advise patients and their relatives on how to care for themselves and their family in the way which will promote a state of physical and mental well-being.

Length of the course

The period of training is normally 156 weeks exclusive of excess sick leave and special leave.

Amount of teaching time

The total amount of time allocated for study blocks or study days during a 156-week training should not be less than 120 days (24 weeks). As programmes are

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developed which integrate theoretical and practical learning, it is important to ensure that learning/teaching sessions within practical experiences are taken into account in the final record of ‘theoretical instruction’. The length of the introductory course should be a minimum of 30 days (6 weeks) or a maximum of 40 days (8 weeks). It should provide a broad introduction and the opportunity to learn and practise basic nursing skills.

**Examinations**

Student nurses will be made aware of their progress as the course progresses and will be required to pass written and practical examinations prior to Registration.

**Practical experiences required for the training of nurses for admission to the general part of the register**

**Definition of overall aims and learning objectives; for the course**

When defining the overall aims and the learning objectives for the course, it will be important to identify the common core of the curriculum and the expected outcomes of the whole course: the synthesis of nursing knowledge, nursing skills and the body of beliefs and values which supports a code of professional practice. The stages of the nursing process, as described by Professor Jean McFarlane, and others, is helpful in offering a theoretical framework for practice.

The use of this method commits all concerned in the various caring/learning situations to a shared approach and a common purpose.

**Practical experiences**

The majority of experiences will be gained in hospital, but steps should be taken to include some aspects of community care by arranging experience in community/home nursing preferably by incorporating suitable placements to enable the students to study home and hospital care in one or more periods of experience, e.g. during the study of the care of children or the care of the elderly. The aim should be to provide as a total, a minimum of 60 hours within a 3-year training, excluding any specific teaching sessions but including ‘on-the-job’ teaching.
In selecting the areas of inclusion and building these up into a curriculum, it should be possible to ensure that student nurses have the opportunity to learn the following aspects of care:

- initial care in illness: planned and emergency admission to hospital;
- high and medium dependency care;
- preparation for self-care following discharge from hospital; and
- continuing care for patients with long-term disability or recurrent illness necessitating re-admission to hospital. Care of the dying and the bereaved.

The course should include experience of nursing people of all age groups and, although participation in a primary care team may be difficult to arrange, promotion of health and preventive care should be emphasised wherever relevant in all areas of practice.