

## letters

involved client and student safety, why did this investigation take almost a year?

2) Why did this investigation consist solely of an exchange of letters between the Nursing Council, the principal of Waikato Polytechnic and my head of department?

3) Why, in the results of that investigation, do council not acknowledge that standards were breached before their investigations when this is in fact acknowledged by the principal?

4) What active monitoring of the department has taken place since their investigations?

5) Why, when approached by my lawyer to release copies of all relevant information, did council refuse to release it, stating that they were exempt from the Freedom of Information Act? What on earth would they want to conceal?

There are those who say that I am trying to turn the world of nursing upside down. I want to do more than that. I want to turn it upside down and shake it and shake it. Shake out all the rottenness, the political correctness, the vicious infighting in which nurses treat each other with far less respect and consideration than they treat their clients. I want to shake out the widening gap between nursing theory and nursing practice. I want to shake out the politicking and power games that go on. I want to shake out the obsession with academic achievement and the negative competitiveness that seems to accompany it.

I want to shake out the inordinate emphasis on cultural difference which at Waikato Polytechnic sometimes divides nursing classes into Maori and "non-Maori." While she recognised the importance of cultural difference, Dame Whina Cooper knew that in New Zealand our future lies in concentrating on those qualities that we all share as human beings, rather than focussing exclusively on the cultural differences that separate us. When will nursing academia catch on?

These are some of the issues which led to me "blowing the whistle" and which I now put before you for your consideration.

**Brian Stabb**

Nursing tutor

Department of nursing and health studies  
Waikato Polytechnic

The head of Waikato Polytechnic's nursing and health studies department Rose McEldowney said: Brian Stabb has taken out a personal grievance against the principal of Waikato Polytechnic based around some of the concerns he has expressed in this letter. His alleged concerns, which are disputed,

seem destined to go before a Labour Court hearing.

Because it would prejudice Brian Stabb's chances of a fair hearing, not to mention putting myself in contempt of the Labour Court, I am therefore unable to comment on his claims at this stage.

Nursing Council chairperson Elaine Papps said: The Nursing Council of New Zealand developed its standards for registration of nurses and midwives as requirements which are pre-requisites to registration. Any concerns brought to the council's attention in regard to these standards being compromised are viewed seriously.

The council received a complaint from Mr Stabb in relation to the compromising of two of the council's criteria for standards of entry to the register. Given the nature of these concerns, the full council wished to be advised of the facts relevant to this matter. The council meets four times a year.

In relation to Mr Stabb's concerns, the council required that those persons who had allegations made against them had a right to reply to those allegations. A number of points of clarification were required from Mr Stabb before the specific allegations could be presented to those concerned. Deliberating on the matter, the council took all the information received from a number of sources into account and made a decision based on this information. The council was satisfied that sufficient, appropriate information was obtained for a decision to be made.

This process can be perceived by those who make the initial allegations as prolonged. However the correspondence required and investigations made often take some time. The full council is apprised of the results of any such investigation at the earliest opportunity.

Mr Stabb asks about the continuing monitoring of the standards in respect to Waikato Polytechnic. The council continues to monitor these and a letter to this effect has been written to the head of school of nursing and midwifery, Waikato Polytechnic. It is council policy to communicate with heads of school on any matters which have the potential to compromise registration standards.

A formal audit visit will be conducted by a panel including a council staff member in 1994 under the auspices of NZQA.

In relation to the release of information, the council is not in a position to release the information as it is not subject to the Official Information Act.

In any matters relating to council business, the council is always willing to assist in clarification of any of its policies.