Beginning teachers:
a challenge for educational systems

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Edited by Patrick Picard and Luc Ria

CIDREE Yearbook 2011

CIDREE

Contents

Foreword

Stefan C. Wolter

'Aller Anfang ist schwer.'

'Every beginning is hard' is an old German saying. It might be perhaps especially true in the field of teaching. Every year thousands of new teachers leave university or teacher education institutions in Europe and within minutes they have to switch from having been a pupil and student for years to teach and educate those who are now sitting in the school desks. This change of sides is a critical period in the life of beginning teachers, regardless of how well they have been prepared for this moment. It is critical for at least two reasons: firstly, because many teachers leave the profession after the first couple of years, very often frustrated by their objective or subjectively perceived failure to succeed in the trained profession. Such an early abandoning of the chosen career is not only a personal loss but also a societal one, as good teachers are scarce and the education and training of teachers expensive. Secondly and perhaps even more important is the empirical observation that in terms of effectiveness, that is the degree of success of educating pupils, the first years of teaching can show incredibly positive progress if the induction of young teachers is well prepared and accompanied. Otherwise, teacher might leave the profession but can also harm generations of pupils not receiving the education and instruction they could have expected.

Looking at the various chapters of this *Yearbook*, one easily gets the impression that the ways to lead young teachers into teaching are even more diverse than the educational systems in Europe as such. The positive side of this diversity is the scope for innovation, mutual learning and best practice in a field that is of critical importance to the quality of our educational systems. But before doing so, we need more information on the different practices and systems in place and this is where CIDREE has stepped in. I am therefore delighted that the collaboration of co-authors from almost all CIDREE member institutions has led to a yearbook that provides information and insights on such an important issue for all stakeholders in education around the globe.

I would especially like to thank Séverine Bresciani-Dalynjak but also other collaborators at ENS for their timely initiative and the work they have put in the production of the *CIDREE Yearbook 2011*. My sincerest thanks also go to all the authors who have contributed to this unique book that collects descriptions of teacher induction policies and experiences from a dozen European countries. This yearbook reflects the richness of the membership in CIDREE at its best.

This yearbook will be presented and discussed during the conference preceding the CIDREE general assembly in 2011 in Lyon and hopefully serve as a source of information for many people involved in teacher education and policy-making around the world.

Stefan C. Wolter
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Introduction

Yves Winkin

He was slowly coming towards them, feeling relaxed with his bag over his shoulder and his hand still in his pocket. He only hoped they would not notice too soon that the collar of his shirt was soaked. It was his first time as a teacher. He had been thinking about it for years. How would they handle him? How would he handle them?

The papers collected in *CIDREE Yearbook 2011* take a multi-perspective approach to a major issue in educational sciences: what is the best way to train newly qualified teachers? The English expression – induction – says simply what it is all about: literally leading teachers in(to) (their classrooms).

The increased professionalisation of beginning teachers is on the agenda across all OECD countries. It is assumed that if young teachers are more professional sooner, educational systems will be more effective and students will be better trained. Consequently, reforming teacher education is crucial. Admittedly, field reality calls for a refined analysis of teacher induction because if young teachers cannot quickly find the right balance at a reasonable cost, they might reject their training model and turn to the most usual, long-standing teaching practices.

One question emerges: what are the conditions necessary for mentors and trainers of beginning teachers to optimise their professional well-being while providing them with the means and resources to have a critical glance at their practice and become part of professional groups? The answer probably lies in how experienced teachers can help inexperienced ones to prioritise the problems they meet. Indeed the problems faced by beginners (how to save one's energy, how to collect passing information on student reactions, etc.) cannot be mistaken for job-related problems, whatever the level of experience teachers have (understanding the epistemological nature of student learning difficulties, motivating students, or relating procedural to contextual knowledge).

These complex problems call for State training institutions to reprofessionalise the mentors and trainers of beginning teachers and middle bodies (inspectors, principals, and coordinators). The purpose is to build their capacity to raise collective professional controversies to bring about gradual renormalisations; to challenge the so-called 'good practices' that are too often decontextualised; to come differently to grips with the actual difficulties faced by teachers. Mentor training should also address ordinary situations experienced in classrooms; connect various instructional resources (both those provided by humanities and those brought by schools themselves); raise awareness that the short time frame of politics is at odds with the long time frame

of policy-making or training. In this respect, teacher mentors, whatever their jobs, are expected to become true experts in the dilemmas faced by teachers in their daily teaching, social, and personal activities.

This is how induction has become 'induction to induction': wondering about the best ways to provide guidance and support to beginning teachers raises questions about all education jobs and their capacity to meet increasing demands. All OECD countries represented in *CIDREE Yearbook 2011* have opted for increasing continuing professional development across all educational actors, whether they are beginning teachers or experienced principals. This is a lesson in lucidity and modesty but also evidence of the belief in the capacity of educational systems to find a new impetus.

He came out of the school feeling completely exhausted. On this hot day of early September, he just wanted to take a seat outside, have a beer and look back on his first day. He felt he had done quite a good job. But how quick these kids are when they get started! Nobody had ever told him. He had only just been sitting when one of his students walked past him and gave him a faint, rather knowing smile. The worst might be behind him.

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Note

1. My acknowledgments to Séverine Bresciani-Dalynjak, Patrick Picard and Luc Ria for their patient support.

How to cite this chapter

Winkin, Y. (2011). Introduction. *In* P. Picard & L. Ria (Eds.), *Beginning teachers: a challenge for educational systems – CIDREE Yearbook 2011* (pp. 7-8). Lyon, France: ENS de Lyon, Institut français de l'Éducation.

1 Continuing professional development for the 21ˢᵗ century: setting the scene for teacher induction in a new era

Rudi Schollaert

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Continuing professional development for the 21st century: setting the scene for teacher induction in a new era

Rudi Schollaert

Abstract

Apart from the mere struggle for survival, novice teachers face multiple challenges during the induction period, such as the clash between theory and practice, the shift in the teacher's role from provider of knowledge to facilitator of learning and the deployment of one's starter competences in the specific context of a particular school.

Yet, induction cannot be looked upon as an isolated period that novice teachers have to go through in order to advance their trainee status to that of qualified teachers. In fact, induction is a stage in a continuum that starts with initial teacher education and extends into continuing professional development, lifelong learning for teachers if you like. Consequently, the features that contribute to high quality continuing professional development (CPD) are already hugely relevant at the induction stage.

This essay describes the key effectiveness criteria for CPD, whilst at the same time explaining how the concept of CPD has evolved in recent years as a result of a deeper understanding of learning processes, and of the changing demands on education in general and on the teaching profession in particular.

As opposed to what is often intimated in official publications by national or supra-national authorities, effective CPD requires much more than the acquisition of a set of teacher competences. Indeed, teacher learning is not only a highly complex but also strongly emotional business, as the 'unlearning' of existing routines and their underlying beliefs often touches upon people's professional identity.

The baseline for deciding on the effectiveness of CPD is the degree to which it rubs off on pupil learning. Research shows that both teachers and schools (although rather indirectly by creating the supporting conditions) can have a major impact on the learning of the students in their care. Therefore, the effectiveness criteria for CPD do not only draw heavily upon research on (adult) learning, but also on organisational learning. CPD can only maximise its effect on student learning when individual teacher development goes hand in hand with school development.

Learning in the 21ˢᵗ century

At the start of the second decade of the 21ˢᵗ century, the teaching profession is facing a multitude of unprecedented challenges. In the current knowledge society, schools have to share their long standing near-monopoly on learning with information and communication media of all sorts. In the meantime, the sheer amount of knowledge that is available keeps growing exponentially and much of it becomes obsolete in next to no time. It is safe to say that a great deal of the knowledge that today's first grade students will need once they graduate from upper secondary school, does not yet exist (Dumont *et al.*, 2010).

At the same time, we also live in a global world in which the crumbling of economic attainment and its attendant social fabric leaves citizens in the Western world with a sense of insecurity. An accompanying feature of globalisation is the irreversible rise of the multicultural society, which brings about a nostalgic craving for a sense of identity by all its component groups, as well as an unprecedented diversity in the (school) population.

The redistribution of economic resources contributes to the emergence of a dual society of 'haves and have nots'. In the present knowledge society, these categories often coincide with those of 'the knows and the know nots'.

All across Europe, education authorities react to this unparalleled situation by passing new legislation accompanied by strict accountability measures. Curriculum developers design innovative curricula and researchers come up with exciting findings that shed a new light on learning processes. Member institutions of CIDREE, the Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe, have made major contributions in both areas of curriculum development and of educational research.

From induction to continuing professional development

All this is happening just at the moment that a large cohort of teachers, who entered the profession in the late sixties and throughout the seventies to teach the growing number of baby boomers, is now reaching retirement age. This means that a new generation of teachers is taking over – a bunch of inexperienced newcomers who have to face the consequences of the paradigm shift described above. They are the ones who will be shaping the profession for the coming 30 or 40 years, and this is a very good reason not to take the recruitment, initial teacher education, induction and continuing professional development (CPD) of these key people lightly.

Now enter the novice teacher, who comes straight from a college of teacher education with all the expectations on his/her plate as described in a wide array of national or

international surveys of teacher competences. Hargreaves, who is beyond suspicion of being teacher-unfriendly, voices his expectations for the teachers in the knowledge society, saying that they should be professionals who are:

> *'[…] cultivating these capacities in young people – developing deep cognitive learning, creativity and ingenuity among students; drawing on research, working in networks and teams, and pursuing continuous professional learning as teachers; and promoting problem-solving, risk-taking, trust in the collaborative process, ability to cope with change and commitment to continuous improvement as organisations'* (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 3).

This is a tall order indeed! For a start these expectations conflict – to say the least – with the average first-year teacher's own aspirations to become a second-year teacher. If the novice teacher manages to take this first hurdle, in spite of the prospect of having to face a bunch of unruly students day after day, in spite of overload and fragmentation and in spite of a lack of guidance and support, there are other pitfalls are waiting around the corner. For one thing, novice teachers carry a heavy burden with them. Often contrary to the wonderful pedagogical and methodological theories they heard at the college of education, their idea of what teaching and learning is like has been shaped by some 12,000 hours' experience they have had as learners at primary and secondary school. If they see the same standards they were exposed to as learners reflected in the beliefs and classroom practices of their senior colleagues, the road is paved towards conforming to traditional approaches and towards regression to the mean.

Appropriate support embedded in a school culture that is oriented towards capacity-building and coherence-building is the decisive factor for professional growth of novice teachers or, for lack of it, for their relapse into an uninspired and stereotyped teaching routine. In this respect, the induction period is a crucial stage and an inalienable part of the process of continuing professional development (CPD). In fact, the principles that govern effective CPD are fully applicable to teacher induction, although some of them deserve special attention at this early stage.

Until a couple of decades ago, there was very little research evidence on effective CPD. In fact, the acronym had not yet been coined. Consecutive terms that were used in those days were, 'in-service training', 'in-service education' and 'staff development', in that chronological order. Until then, the only consensus was on what did *not* work in CPD. Over the last 20 years, however, a body of research literature has emerged that can safely be used as a basis for an effective CPD practice.

Let us examine what effective CPD looks like, and consider the conditions needed for the optimal deployment of teacher competences.

The nature of learning

CPD is lifelong learning for teachers and, therefore, obeys the same laws as any other learning. Over the last decade, the understanding of the nature of learning has grown exponentially thanks to breakthroughs in neuroscience and more specifically the study of the brain. What it reveals about learning is roughly that it is not so much about storing new knowledge into computer-like files in the brain, but rather about connecting new information to already existing clusters of knowledge. Each individual has their own mental model (Senge, 1990) through which new information is filtered, coloured, linked and anchored into a unique frame of reference. Learning, therefore, is not storing and reproducing what was taught, but constructing new knowledge by making sense of and by attributing meaning to existing knowledge. The major implication for the teaching and learning process is, to a large extent, that what is taught is not what is learnt, that no one can do your learning for you.

Teacher roles

This development brings about no less than a paradigm shift for traditional teacher roles, and hence for teacher education, in general, and for continuing professional development in particular. Not only does a constructivist approach dramatically alter the way in which teachers instil subject knowledge in their learners, but their role is also to turn them into better learners, learners for life. Apart from subject experts, teachers also need to be experts in learning. They can only achieve the latter if they are expert learners themselves. Not only should they be able to convey content knowledge and explain to their students how to learn, they should also be able to demonstrate how learning works. In other words teachers should be role models.

Teacher learning

You can only become an expert in something if you are passionate about it and if you devote vast amounts of time and energy to your area of expertise. Therefore, the one-off CPD seminar or workshop clearly falls short of reaching the ambitious goal of turning teachers into expert learners. If students spend an average of about 1,200 hours of formal learning a year, there is only one way for teachers to do better. That is on-the-job learning, when learning and working go hand in hand, when every professional activity – whether it is preparing a lesson, assessing students' work or a staff meeting – is looked upon as a potential learning opportunity.

The major problem with CPD is that most of the time it is introduced top down by governments who want to improve school effectiveness, publishers who want to sell the latest method, educational researchers who expect to see their findings

implemented in the classroom and/or by gurus who want to share their brilliant theories with the world. Time and again, teachers are expected to change their classroom behaviour. This breeds resistance among the teaching profession. The point is not that teachers do not want to change, but that they do not want to be changed. Forcing teachers to adopt a new behaviour that runs counter to their beliefs is a perfect recipe for failure. Applying pressure may be the appropriate way of turning poor teaching into acceptable teaching, but it will never succeed in turning good teaching into outstanding teaching. As Kotter remarked*:

> *'Transformation, sustainable development, requires sacrifice, devotion and creativity. And these happen to be three things that cannot be enforced on people by putting them under pressure'* (Kotter, 1996, p. 30).

When a practice that runs counter to their beliefs is imposed on teachers, they find the most inventive ways of carrying on with the old practice under a new flag, and when it comes to the worst, they will do whatever is necessary for an unwanted reform to fail. They do not do this out of malice, but because adopting a new behaviour is perceived as a threat. The problem is not so much in learning the new behaviour, but in unlearning the beliefs that underlie their current behaviour, because letting go of deeply held convictions touches upon teachers' professional identity. *'Oh, I see, we have been doing things wrong all these years'*, is a complaint that has been heard in many a staffroom. Indeed, teacher learning is a highly emotional business.

Just like other people, teachers will only learn what they think is relevant, useful or interesting for them. No one can do the teachers' learning for them. How could one expect teachers to help children develop into self-directed learners, if they themselves cannot take charge of their own professional learning?

The question now remains what teachers can do to promote their own professional learning. A recent OECD survey, the Teaching and Learning International Survey report (TALIS, 2009), states that the following professional development activities are effective, with a descending degree of efficacy, which should not be interpreted as if the activities towards the bottom of the list are not effective.

- individual and collaborative research
- qualification programmes
- informal dialogue to improve teaching
- reading professional literature
- courses and workshops
- professional development network
- mentoring and peer observation
- observation visits to other schools
- education conferences and seminars.

CPD should not only be geared towards achieving the necessary competence in the subject or area that needs to be implemented, but should also focus on improving their reflective skills and on the skills that are needed for collective learning.

Let us dwell upon *reflection* at this point. The issue of collective learning will be taken up in the next section. Indeed, reflection is a key feature that most of the activities above have in common. It is meant to make practitioners aware to what extent their practice is in unison with the theories they hold and vice versa. Taking it from there, reflection provides the basis for acting upon this knowledge. This is not simply a matter of coming to an 'Aha Erlebnis' and starting to behave differently there and then. On the contrary as argued above, questioning one's long standing and often unconscious 'mental models' is a highly emotional act that may lead to unlearning and letting go of one's deeply held beliefs and one's certainties.

Reflection is also essential if we do not want teachers to see themselves as instrumental in merely carrying out other people's (e.g. governments'; curriculum developers'; external experts'; advisers' or trainers'; headteachers') agendas, but as professionals, who know where they are going and how they want to get there. As expert learners too, who are in charge of their own learning, acting as role models for their students.

The bottom line of the school's mission is pupil learning. Consequently, a very prominent element in CPD is the link between teacher learning and pupil learning. In her meta-analysis on the positive impact of CPD on student outcomes, Timperley *et al*. (2007) argue that CPD cannot be called effective unless it leads to improved pupil outcomes. To that end joint reflection among practitioners should run along the lines of the following series of questions:

• What do students need to be able to do in order to improve student outcomes?

• How can they learn to do that?

• What do teachers need to be able to do in order to help their students acquire this particular knowledge, skill, competence?

• How can teachers learn that?

Timperley *et al*. also stress the importance of evidence informed teaching and learning, and her research confirms that teacher learning is very much like pupil learning. Just like their learners, teachers need multiple opportunities to learn and to apply their learning, as well as a diversified approach to learning processes and opportunities for cooperative learning.

From what precedes we can already derive some of the characteristics of effective CPD. It is teacher led, it is a continuous process of on-the-job-learning, it is inextricably linked to pupil learning and it is grounded in reflection.

However, there is more to it. Both the results of the TALIS report and Timperley *et al*.'s meta-analysis suggest that CPD is not merely the responsibility of each individual teacher, but that it can only be effective if embedded in an institutional context.

From cooperative to institutional learning

Teachers do not teach their students in a vacuum, but in a particular context and, more than anything else, this context is defined by the school. The development of a teacher as a professional will be affected by the ethos of the school, the relationships among its stakeholders and the prevailing approach to teaching and learning. Employing the same teacher in 'School A' or in 'School B' may make a world of difference for the kind of professional that teacher will become.

Classrooms can no longer be sanctuaries in which teachers withdraw behind closed doors to do their own thing. The term, 'autonomous professional', which is often applied to teachers, is clearly in need of a new definition. One of the main reasons for this is that it can no longer suffice to teach a set curriculum to a group of learners and then expect them to reproduce this at the exam. As argued above, each individual learner needs to process new knowledge in a unique way by connecting it to existing knowledge, often acquired through lessons in other subjects. The learner is not a segmented being, the sum of their achievements in maths, languages, geography and physics etc., but a whole person. Therefore a holistic and cross-curricular approach is required that goes beyond school subjects. If schools do not want to burden students with fragmented and unrelated knowledge that will be deleted from the learner's memory right after the test, teachers need to diversify their teaching and join forces to support the learning of each individual learner and of all learners in their care. They need to streamline what and how they teach and find a common denominator for the work they do together. They need to construct shared meaning by means of intensive consultation, which requires cooperative learning.

This brings the notion of 'socio-constructivist learning' into CPD. This is not learning as filling empty vessels, but mutually increasing a common understanding, as is the case with communicating vessels. Beware, what is advocated here is not a monolithic approach to teaching and learning, but a plea for 'systems thinking', a consistent, yet complementary approach, in which each practitioner contributes to a common goal by mobilising his/her unique competences and passions.

We started off by stating that CPD is lifelong learning for teachers. In fact, it is more than that. A holistic approach, as advocated above, is not possible without cooperation. CPD that claims to have a lasting effect cannot but transcend the individual teacher. Teacher development goes hand-in-hand with institutional development. It requires what Hargreaves (1994) calls *'the deprivatisation of practice, a cooperative culture within a learning organisation'*.

There is a substantial body of literature on learning organisations, most of it referring to a business context. Yet, it is certainly worth while contemplating the applicability of the learning organisation principles to schools. Indeed, schools should be learning organisations par excellence because learning is their core business, just like teachers should be expert learners as learning is their trade.

In a publication that is typically intended for corporate use, Day, Peters and Race (1999) sum up the characteristics of a learning organisation as one that addresses the present and future learning needs of its members through creating structured learning opportunities on the basis of day-to-day experiences.

This definition fits wonderfully well with what we have in mind when talking about schools as learning organisations. The future learning needs refer to sustainable development, while the term, 'members', reminds us that learning is essential for all stakeholders involved in the school; students, teachers and management alike. The type of learning advocated in this definition is not ad hoc learning, but learning that is systematic and structured, and that it is grounded in day-to-day experiences rather than in abstract concepts.

However, the prevailing literature on education seems to favour another term, 'professional learning communities (PLCs)'. This term is closely related to that of the 'learning organisation', as appears from the following definition:

> '[…] PLCs serve to connect and network groups of professionals to do just what their name entails – learn from practice. PLCs meet on a regular basis and their time together is often structured by the use of protocols to ensure focused, deliberate conversation and dialogue by teachers about student work and student learning' (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2008, p. 7).

This definition is wider, and at the same time narrower and more precise, than the Day, Peters & Race definition of learning organisations. It is wider, because a PLC is not restricted to one organisation, i.e. one school, but can also be established through networks of schools, principals or teachers of any number of schools. It is narrower, because a PLC can also operate within a school, without necessarily involving the whole school in the learning process. It is also narrower because a PLC by definition consists of professionals and therefore does not include the students.

Finally, the term PLC is also more precise, because it refers to the bottom line of all these efforts: the primary process of pupil learning. This latter aspect is heavily emphasised by Hopkins *et al*. (1994), who claim that in professional learning communities, staff collaboratively:

• set clear goals for student learning

• provide a coherent programme

• develop a consistent assessment policy

- develop action plans to improve student learning; learning that integrates new knowledge into prior knowledge.

These collaborative activities are clearly learning activities of the professionals that constitute a PLC. In other words, they are self-directed CPD activities.

In summary, one can conclude that CPD is more than just teacher learning. If we want CPD to be effective, i.e. to contribute to sustainable development in schools, it needs to be a deliberate and cooperative undertaking embedded in a wider school policy. This can be achieved by creating structured learning opportunities that address present and future learning needs of both students and staff. This requires a systematic reflective dialogue among teachers, that focuses on pupil learning and is grounded in day-to-day experiences. Reflective dialogue is essential, but does not suffice. It is evidence-informed and it needs to be followed by action.

School-based and self-directed CPD activities may include:

- observing colleagues' lessons

- giving and receiving feedback from colleagues

- coaching each other

- planning lessons together with colleagues

- doing action research

- mentoring novice teachers

- assessing students' work together with colleagues

- reflecting together with colleagues

- teaching together (team teaching).

Supporting CPD

As argued above, teachers, like all other humans, want to be in control of their own learning. Yet, in order for their (collective) learning to be effective, i.e. systematic, structured and focused on learner outcomes, it is also imperative for them to receive support, both from inside and from outside the school.

Internal Support

Within the school, the conditions that are necessary for teachers to develop their full potential can be created through capacity-building and coherence-building. Issues involved in capacity-building include creating a powerful learning environment for students and staff alike, setting up a CPD policy and promoting agency through empowering people. Coherence-building refers to creating a coherence – not

uniformity – of ideas. Call it 'shared meaning', or 'a common cause', if you like. It also means creating coherence among people, cooperation in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust.

Although creating these conditions requires a collective effort from all stakeholders, the primary responsibility lies squarely at the principal's doorstep.

Capacity-building

A school that has the capacity to develop and to improve needs people who have the 'competence' and the 'authority' to contribute to this improvement. Let us look at both components in turn.

Competence

The competence needed is acquired through systematic and continuous learning, in other words through CPD. Supporting CPD involves proper planning and organisation of professional learning activities. Teachers need structured time for consultation and cooperation. They need proper equipment and infrastructure. This is clearly a support task for the school management. But creating a 'powerful learning environment' is more than just facilitating. It requires a cooperative school culture that is based on mutual trust and tolerance of error.

Practitioners who are willing to take the risk to change their practice dramatically go through a period of temporary incompetence as they try to replace old routines by new ones. They are bound to make errors. Making errors is an inalienable part of the learning process. If teachers – and learners for that matter – are penalised for making errors, they will stay on the safe side, and consequently they will cease to learn.

The extent to which both teachers and students are in control of their learning, have the opportunity to experiment and reflect, are allowed to make mistakes and consequently are willing to take risks, can make learning challenging and exciting for all. The excitement of discovery versus the boredom and perceived irrelevance of reproducing other people's knowledge.

A sure sign of a professional attitude is that practitioners can decide for themselves what kind of professional development they need. Here again, support needs to be provided in either tracing and contracting the external expertise that can meet the teachers' needs, or alternatively to trace and mobilise the internal expertise that may well be available in the school. Teachers are reluctant to hear answers to questions they never asked in the first place, nor do they want to 'waste their precious time' pondering over abstract problems that are situated in a void. Teachers' learning is grounded in their concerns here and now, their experience, the context they work in. They want to learn from people who share these experiences, who understand this context and who have found satisfactory solutions. In other words, they want to learn from peers.

This is why internal, school-based professional development activities are such powerful tools in teacher learning. An important benefit of drawing upon internal expertise is that it results in deepening and widening this very expertise that is available within the school. Indeed, teachers teaching or coaching their colleagues will not come unprepared and in doing so will develop their own competence. Through this way, internal professional development contributes to capacity-building in schools.

Agency

Having the competence to do something is one thing, having the authority to do it is another. Being able to make one's own decisions and act upon them is an important feature in the concept of 'agency'. People have agency if they can have an impact on things that really matter to them. Agency is, *'the human capacity to make a difference through the application of bottom-up power to change the structures which constrain and determine our actions'* (Giddens, 1984, p. 11). This is why people who really make a difference are called 'change agents'. Lots of teachers are agents within the sanctuary of their classrooms. Yet, if we expect teachers to take on responsibilities beyond what is going on in their classrooms, we have to give them power that transcends their classroom. This is what Hargreaves (1994) calls 'empowerment'.

It follows that, if people who hold the formal power in the schools want teachers to get involved in issues that go beyond their classroom or their subject area, they should negotiate mandates with them and facilitate their work, while at the same time publicly supporting them. From this to distributed leadership is only a small step. By involving people in policy- making on all issues that affect student learning, a broad basis is created for schools to play their role in an increasingly complex world.

Coherence-building

Coherence-building is the second strategy for systematic work on school improvement. It has two components: coherence of ideas and coherence among people.

Shared meaning

Coherence of ideas is often referred to as 'shared meaning'. Attributing meaning to the knowledge that has been jointly created provides a powerful way of taking ownership of what has been learnt, and may gradually get people to substitute their old beliefs by new and more adequate ones that are shared with colleagues on the basis of common experiences. Shared meaning does not mean that opinions and beliefs should be jealously guarded by the school's thought police – *E pluribus unum!* What is needed is not a monolithic view and corresponding practice, but a wealth of variations on a theme. Variations that are all compatible with the big picture, but that create a pleasant and challenging tension and break the monotony. Compare it to a symphonic orchestra: the musicians are not playing the same notes on the same

instruments; each musician contributes in his own unique and complementary way to the harmony that eventually enraptures the audience.

This is also the reason why we should not expect all teachers to adopt and implement a new practice at the same pace and in the same depth. Some will learn fast, others more slowly; some will pick up this, others will focus on that; some will learn more, others will learn less. This is unavoidable and it does not even matter, as long as they are in unison with the philosophy underlying the joint project people have committed themselves to.

Creating shared meaning does not happen out of the blue. It needs time, a place, a procedure, a common, unambiguous terminology, in short a discussion platform. However important these physical attributes of consultation may be, shared meaning will only emerge if people get to understand the bigger picture and if they understand their role in this, how what each individual does contributes to the common cause.

Connectedness

Developing shared meaning is an inalienable aspect of 'coherence building', which enables schools to confront the complex, even chaotic and contradictory demands of our contemporary society. But there should not only be coherence in thoughts, but also among people. This kind of coherence is called 'connectedness'. Developing shared meaning would be pointless if the joint knowledge that is thus created were not acted upon. Consequently there is also a shared responsibility for the outcomes. The use of the word, 'sharing', indicates that decisions that affect any number of people, or even a whole school, cannot be made on an individual basis. They need a consensus. Who, in a complex world such as ours, can still claim to be the super(wo)man who takes the lead in every single issue that arises? Who can claim to unite all the necessary leadership competences in one person? When joining forces in a team, the chances that a good mixture of leadership qualities is available, becomes much more real.

A good school needs many complementary leaders. 'Distributed leadership' is also a condition for involvement, commitment and ownership. It is 'our' project. We will do anything it needs to succeed.

The concept of 'connectedness' addresses issues such as mutual emotional support among school head, staff and students, and taking a collaborative responsibility towards pupil interests. In such a collaborative culture, diversity is an essential ingredient. The prevailing school climate is a major facilitating factor or a major impediment for working and learning together. For this purpose, the traditional concept of teacher autonomy should be replaced by that of positive interdependence.

If learning is constructing meaning, learning in interaction with others becomes constructing shared meaning. People will learn better together with peers, by comparing notes and complementing one another's partial understanding. Neither teachers nor learners will happily do this if they are in direct competition with

their peers, if their mistakes are held against them and if their failure makes others look better.

At school level, sustainable development is about consolidating one's gains, about integrating, anchoring, institutionalising the new development into the existent body of principles and practices of the school. Instead of a sequence of loosely coupled actions, this requires a deliberate policy on behalf of the school. A policy means having a clear vision and an established set of strategies and procedures to make this vision operational on an ongoing basis.

Creating the conditions described above is a complex matter altogether. They cannot be established by means of a simple copy book approach. Gladwell managed to articulate the challenge as follows:

> *'If you want to bring about a fundamental change in other people's beliefs and behaviour, you need to surround them with a community in which these beliefs are expressed and put into practice, a community in which these beliefs are cherished'* (Gladwell, 2000, p. 258).

External support

Does all this mean that schools can be quite self-sufficient and that they do not need any external support in developing their CPD policy? This is hardly so. Turning a school into a true learning organisation is a tall order. And just like pupil learning is promoted by having it facilitated by an expert teacher, teacher learning and organisational learning can be promoted by an external expert.

In their meta-analysis, Timperley *et al*. (2007) point out that external expertise is necessary for challenging existing assumptions and developing new knowledge and skills. They claim that there are two ways of ensuring that CPD will not have any effect at all: by leaving teachers to their own devices or by outsourcing professional learning; i.e. by having external experts passing on recipes for teaching.

What does the role of CPD facilitators consist of then? A small-scale qualitative research project carried out in Flanders (Schollaert, 2007) revealed the reasons why school teams appreciate support from an external expert, an advisory teacher or an in-service trainer. One reason is that external support creates a mild pressure to stick to agreements made and deadlines set. On the whole, the knowledge of external experts is also more explicit than the tacit knowledge that is typical of teachers. This makes it easier to create a common framework for a cooperative culture in the school. External experts can act as 'eye-openers' by introducing ideas that no one would have thought about. They can break through existing patterns of navel gazing by their unbiased approach. Most of all, they can be of assistance by taking on the role of critical friend, coaching people on one occasion, confronting them on the next.

A meta-analysis carried out by Cordingley *et al.* (2007) gives a survey of how a CPD facilitator can affect learning results of teachers and students:

- extensive support time
- acquainting teachers with the existing (empirical) knowledge base
- input of new knowledge and skills
- facilitating teachers' changing practice
- making the link between CPD and pupil learning explicit
- supporting over time (longitudinal)
- facilitating and promoting independence
- taking into account the start situation and emotional aspects of learning
- experimenting
- self-regulating peer support
- embedding CPD in the goals and leadership of schools
- involving school heads in facilitating CPD activities and aligning them with the school development plan.

The general conclusion of this meta-analysis is that CPD facilitators need to be content experts as well as experts in adult and professional learning.

In Flanders, Belgium, DNI[1] is the market leader in in-service training and CPD. Informed by the existing body of research literature and complemented with 25 years of field experience, at home and abroad, we have developed and implemented a set of criteria for effective external support of CPD activities.
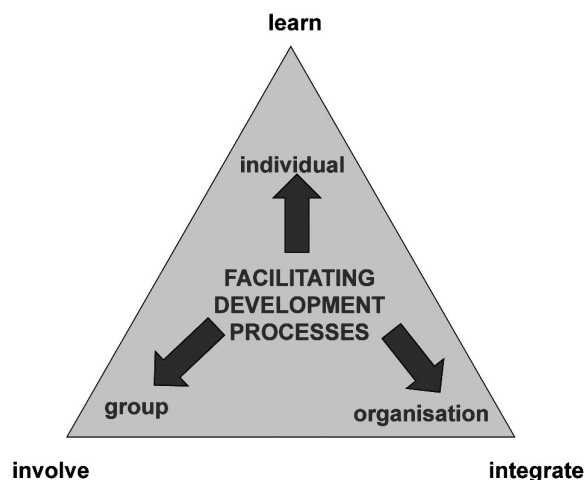
Figure 1: Facilitating CPD

These criteria refer to the three levels at which CPD needs to operate if a sustainable effect is to be achieved. The most obvious one is facilitating professional learning processes. But what is the point of learning if what is learnt is not implemented at classroom or even at school level. Therefore, getting people involved and committed is the second concern of the CPD facilitator. If we do not want efforts to dwindle and eventually come to nothing, causing a lot of frustration, we need to see to it that continuing professional development is sustainable. To that end it needs to be integrating into the school policy.

The professional developers employed by DNI go through a 'training the trainer' programme that is based on the same self-directed learning principles they are expected to apply when providing CPD for teachers and principals.

The criteria wielded by DNI can serve as a summary for what matters in CPD provision. They are the following:

1. **Facilitating professional learning processes**

    1.1 providing expert content input

    1.2 facilitating the development of adults and professionals

    The facilitator:

    • makes a link with current practice

    • makes use of experiential learning

    • promotes reflection

    • supports practitioner research

    • uses a diversity of learning approaches

    • is part of a longitudinal process

    • takes into account the participants' emotions

    • takes into account group dynamics

    • models desirable behaviour

    • focuses on content and process alike.

2. **Involving people**

    The facilitator:

    • leaves the ownership of the learning process to the participants

    • encourages professional growth of the participants.

    • purposefully works with (school) teams rather than with individuals

    • sees to building internal support for the changed practice

- urges the school head to support the CPD process

- coaches those who take the lead in the CPD process

- finds out whether the conditions for implementation are met.

3. **Integrating into school policy**

    The facilitator:

- insists with the school head that the new approach gets structurally anchored

- insists with the school head that the new approach gets embedded in the school culture

- insists with the stakeholders that they take up horizontal and external accountability

- sees to the creation of a powerful learning environment for teachers and students alike.

Conclusion

Teacher roles have changed dramatically over the last decade. This has a huge impact on teacher education in general, and on CPD in particular. Effective CPD is:

- teacher led

- a continuous process of on-the-job-learning

- inextricably linked to pupil learning

- grounded in reflection

- a sustained cooperative effort

- embedded in institutional development.

CPD requires internal and external support in order to achieve sustainable effects.

All these criteria also apply to teacher induction. Novice teachers should be included in professional learning communities from the very start. They should be involved in self-directed CPD activities such as joint reflection on student learning and what they can do to enhance it. They should be involved in action research, planning, delivering and evaluating lessons and assessing students' work together with experienced colleagues.

The future of European education depends on the new cohort of teachers that enters the profession. The impact of teachers on pupil learning cannot be underestimated. Meta-research by Marzano (2003) and Hattie (2009) has presented irrefutable evidence that there is no other influence on learner outcomes that can match the impact teachers

have. They confirmed what Hargreaves had already concluded earlier on (1994): that the one decisive factor that affects learner behaviour is not the curriculum, nor the textbook, nor the method of instruction, nor any organisational arrangement, but the person of the teacher.

In the light of these findings, the best way local, national and European authorities can contribute to the quality of education is by supporting CPD, both by means of (de)regulation and by means of funding CPD initiatives in general and research on CPD effectiveness in particular. Although over the last two decades, research has dramatically increased the understanding of what constitutes effective CPD, there are many challenges waiting. In view of the overwhelming importance of CPD, CIDREE should take a vivid interest in further research in this area.

Note

1. DNI: *Dienst Nascholing en Internationalisering van het Vlaams Secretariaat van het katholiek Onderwijs.*

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How to cite this chapter

Schollaert, R. (2011). Continuing professional development for the 21st century: setting the scene for teacher induction in a new era. *In* P. Picard & L. Ria (Eds.), *Beginning teachers: a challenge for educational systems – CIDREE Yearbook 2011* (pp. 9-28). Lyon, France: ENS de Lyon, Institut français de l'Éducation.

2 Initial teacher education: learning how to teach 'Key Competences'

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Initial teacher education: learning how to teach 'Key Competences'

Eduardo Coba Arango and Javier M. Valle

Abstract

The training of citizens is essential for the development of the new knowledge society, which should contribute to maintain and improve the level of welfare that we have already achieved. To this end, improving the quality of education and training systems and, therefore, the quality of teachers, is crucial in order to achieve the required quality of the education systems. The Bologna process and the reform of university curricula have been a great opportunity to review the initial education of secondary school teachers. Spain has made significant changes so far, and we are closer than before to other European countries of reference. The training model which includes a Master's degree in secondary education is a clear and substantial improvement, since the previous teacher training programme (Pedagogical Qualification Course, CAP) lacked the required quality and did not address practical training adequately. However, in some cases, the implementation of the Master's degrees has not been carried out with the desirable coordination and thorough planning. The Ministry of Education is quite aware of the problems that have arisen in this area. Therefore, improvements will be sought during the trial period of the implementation of each programme. We should reflect on how changes are being applied, analysing strengths and weaknesses, and bringing in improvements accordingly. The following are some of the issues for debate in the near future regarding initial teacher education: Would it be advisable to introduce a phase of in-service training? Is it desirable to implement integration plans for new teachers?

Teacher education within the programme of objectives for education and training in the European Union

Knowledge and technology are the key elements for economic and social growth in today's knowledge society. The level of welfare of the citizens who integrate this society will depend, to a great extent, on the consolidation and development of both elements. In the globalised world of the 21st century, education has attained a more relevant position, becoming the engine for the knowledge economy.

The European Council held in Lisbon in 2000 established detailed objectives for education and training systems, which will allow all European citizens to participate in the new knowledge society. The programme for the development of these objectives

includes, first of all, the need to *'improve the quality of education and training systems'* (Commission of the European Communities, 2001).

As a result of this challenge, the European Union committed to two main lines of action: first of all, to establish a series of common objectives in education which will provide training to live in a society characterised by a constant evolution in science and technology, which has, in turn, a deep impact on social development; and, secondly, to strive toward a more dynamic and competitive economy, based on knowledge.

In the Council held in Barcelona in March 2002, a series of specific objectives were established in order to improve education and training programmes in the Member States, including improvement of the training for teachers and teacher educators (Council of the European Union, 2002).

In 2004, the joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the progress made in achieving the Lisbon objectives in the areas of education and training insisted on the need to develop common European principles regarding the competences and qualifications required of teachers and teacher educators as well (*'Education and Training 2010'*, 2004).

During the Council held in March 2006 it was pointed out that, *'education and training are critical factors to develop the EU's long-term potential for competitiveness, as well as for social cohesion'*. It was also mentioned that, *'reforms must also be stepped up to ensure high quality education systems which are both efficient and equitable'* (Council of the European Union, 2006, p. 6).

In December 2006, the European Parliament and the Council approved a Recommendation on 'Key Competences' for Lifelong Learning (*Recommendation of the European Parliament*, 2006). These competences are conceived as a reference for the design of the education and training policies of the Member states. They must be aimed at ensuring that initial training and education will provide young people with all the necessary tools to develop their competences and to prepare them for adult life and for 'Lifelong Learning'.

The inclusion of 'Key Competences' also involves a series of changes in schools (at the level of curriculum design, methodology, assessment, teaching materials and organisation), and besides, the educational activity in these institutions ultimately falls under the responsibility of teachers. Thus, the success or failure of reforms will depend, to a great extent, on educators. Therefore, it is necessary for the education administrations to commit to teacher training linked to educational practice, and to recognise that society as a whole is responsible for students' success in education.

In 2007, a Communication of the Commission to the Council and to the European Parliament, called, *Improving the quality of Teacher Education*, regarding teacher training in higher education, stated the following:

'To ensure that there is adequate capacity within higher education to provide for the quality and quantity of teacher education required, and to promote the professionalisation of teaching, teacher education programmes should be available in Master and Doctorate (as well as in Bachelor) cycles of higher education' (Commission of the European Communities, 2007, p. 15).

Links between teacher educators, practicing teachers, the labour market and other agencies need to be strengthened. Higher education institutions have an important role to play in developing effective partnerships with schools and other stakeholders in order to ensure that their teacher education provision is based upon solid evidence and good classroom practice.

Those responsible for teacher education (and for training teacher educators) should possess practical experience in classroom teaching, and should have attained very high standards in the skills, attitudes and competences required of teachers.

Changes in education and in society place new demands on the teaching profession and make it increasingly complex. Teachers are required to learn to work in collaborative environments and to help young learners become fully autonomous by acquiring 'Key Competences'. Furthermore, teachers are required to work in increasingly heterogeneous classrooms, to use the opportunities provided by ICT and, probably, to take on additional decision-making or managerial tasks consequent upon increased school autonomy.

Therefore, improving the quality of teacher training is a key objective for the education systems in Europe if we want to make significant progress towards achieving the common objectives established within the framework of the Education and Training Programme of the European Union.

Initial teacher education in Europe from a comparative perspective

Having reviewed the position of the European Union regarding initial teacher education, the present section is devoted to a comparative analysis of how different aspects of initial teacher education are being implemented in some European countries.

In the great majority of European countries, prospective teachers usually receive initial education at tertiary level. (This is also the case of Spain). This type of provision usually includes both a general component (related to the subjects to be taught in the future) and a professional component (devoted to acquiring the required teaching skills and to in-class placement) (EACEA, 2009). However, there are some variations in the way both components are combined. Thus, two different models arise:

- **A *'concurrent'* model**, in which both components are acquired at the same time. This is the most frequent model for teacher education, which is aimed at prospective teachers in compulsory education levels, especially in pre-primary and primary education. For these two levels, the concurrent model is widespread in all European countries, with some exceptions such as France, where both training components are carried out consecutively, and the United Kingdom, where the concurrent and the consecutive models co-exist. As far as secondary education is concerned, both models are common practice in most countries.

- **A *'consecutive'* model**, in which contents related to the general component are acquired first (the specialised areas or subjects for the prospective teacher), followed by a professional and pedagogical component (generally graduate programmes). This is the most common teacher training model for upper secondary education (non-compulsory) in countries like France, Spain or Italy.

As far as the length of these programmes is concerned, the average for primary school teachers is four years (from three to five), with a period for in-class placement ranging from one to two years, whereas training for secondary school teachers in most countries requires more than four years (from four to six), including Bachelor's and Master's degrees, and a similar duration for in-class placement.

In the past few years there has been increased support for novice teachers, especially regarding lesson planning and assessment of students. In many countries, we even find a phase referred to as the, 'on-the-job qualifying phase'. This phase is:

> *'[…] provided in several countries to facilitate support to teacher trainees and to introduce them to their new working environment, this compulsory period (often called 'induction') forms a transition from initial teacher education to fully-fledged professional life. […] During this phase, teachers are still not considered to be fully qualified and are usually regarded as 'candidate teachers' or 'trainees'. They carry out wholly or partially the tasks incumbent on fully qualified teachers, and are remunerated for their activity. This phase includes an important supportive and supervisory dimension provided by a 'mentor', and normally also a formal evaluation of teaching skills. It also includes formal theoretical training. In most cases, candidate teachers become fully qualified teachers at the end of this stage after satisfying a set of formal evaluation criteria. Eleven countries organise such a phase, in seven of them for work at all four levels of education considered here (pre-primary, primary, general lower and upper secondary)'* (EACEA, 2009).

Initial teacher education in Spain within the framework of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

In Spain, a new model of initial teacher education is being currently designed in accordance with the framework for the construction of the European Higher

Education Area (also known as the Bologna Process). The new model includes two Bachelor's degrees in Pre-primary and in Primary Education, as well as a Master's in Secondary Education for teachers at lower and upper secondary levels.

The new structure of higher education eliminates the previous catalogue of qualifications and establishes a procedure for the inclusion of new qualifications in the Registry of Universities, Schools and Qualifications (RUCT). This procedure is based on the assessment of programmes at three different stages: there is an initial review and verification of the programme before being implemented, a follow-up of its progress during operation, and, six years after the programme has been successfully implemented, it is awarded final accreditation.

Furthermore, programme syllabuses have changed from a mere list of subjects, descriptors, credits and content areas into a contract between universities and society, whereby society's trust on universities is gained by means of syllabus quality. Universities must also make explicit the educational objectives that graduates from each programme are expected to have achieved, the actions that will be undertaken in order for students to attain those objectives, as well as the syllabus planning and resources needed.

In other words, universities are given greater autonomy for the design and implementation of provision, while increasing their accountability at certain key stages in the development of their programmes.

In addition to this, the Act on Education (*LOE*, 2006) states the official qualifications required for both primary and secondary school teachers, a Bachelor's and a Master's degree, respectively.

According to the Act, the Ministry of Education is responsible for establishing the professional objectives of these qualifications as well as of the planning of provision. These requirements must be met by universities when designing programme syllabuses, and by the University Council and by the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) during verification, follow-up and accreditation of the programmes.

We find ourselves now in a privileged position to implement the changes in initial teacher education in Spain. On the one hand, the former three-year programmes leading to a diploma in primary school teaching (*Magisterio*) have disappeared, giving way to a four-year Bachelor's degree (240 European Credit Transfer System, ECTS credits). On the other hand, prospective secondary education teachers must now enroll in a 60 ECTS credit professional Master's programme. Therefore, the changes introduced by the Act on Education (*LOE*, 2006), and the new Act on University Education (*LOMLOU*, 2007), as well as the establishment of the EHEA, among other factors, have provided an actual opportunity for the improvement of teacher education.

The dual role of education administrations

The concern of education administrations over initial teacher education is, indeed, both legitimate and relevant, considering the dual role that these administrations play: on the one hand, they are active agents within the system, responsible for the education of citizens, and, on the other hand, at some point they will become, 'employers of prospective professionals in education'.

We must also bear in mind that the implementation of changes in initial teacher education in Spain, especially of the most recent one, namely, the introduction of a new Master's degree in secondary education, has not always taken place under the most desirable circumstances of quietness, planning and coordination.

The Ministry of Education is quite aware of the problems that have arisen. Although the analysis of current actions within the EU indicates that we are already on the right track, we must reflect upon how changes are taking place, learning from both mistakes and right decisions, for which all stakeholders must take responsibility, since the results will also affect everyone. In view of these circumstances, future improvements will have to be put forward along the way.

Thus, regarding the design and supervision of new syllabuses, as we have mentioned above, current national regulations establish the control mechanisms for compliance with the objectives and standards of quality of university education at three different levels: during verification, follow-up and accreditation of programmes. It is necessary for education administrations to be present throughout these processes (at the stages of design and evaluation) in their role of 'employers'. The ANECA decided so when the verification processes were implemented (the other two stages have not been initiated yet), and it was also established that they had to participate in the commissions for syllabus evaluation, which include, together with academic evaluators, other representatives from the education world.

Up to now, teaching professionals have participated in verification commissions. However, in order to achieve the strategic challenges for education in Spain and in Europe, from now on it will be imperative to include professional evaluators who represent the interests of education administrations, who have been appointed by these authorities and are familiar with the new needs of the teaching profession.

Provided that the education administrations participate actively in these processes, there is still time to incorporate education professionals into the design and evaluation of the follow-up and accreditation procedures of the Bachelor's and Master's degrees in education for primary and secondary school teachers.

In a different line of action, the Ministry of Education should also carry on developing diagnostic assessments of the implementation of the new qualifications, as well as promoting symposiums for the discussion of these issues. An example of this type of research is the study carried out by the General Council of Professional Associations

and the ANECA on the degree of acquisition of 'Key Competences' of current students who will potentially become primary and secondary school teachers in the future. The results of this study are expected by the end of the first semester of 2011[1]. As an example of a symposium we may mention the conferences held in November 2010, organised in collaboration with the Education Department of Castile-La Mancha, with the aim of analysing good practices in the development of the in-class placement component of the Master's programme for secondary school teachers.

As we all know, changes in education can be studied on a short or a long-term basis. Therefore, it would be necessary to wait for a reasonable period of time before stating confidently whether the outcomes of innovations have been positive or negative. However, this is not incompatible with the implementation of continuing actions for improvement, which may introduce necessary changes or support the principles and foundations that had originally led to the design of a new model. In both cases, these modifications may arise from experience during implementation, or from observation of reference education systems.

This leads necessarily to carry on discussing the existing model, with a cautious mind and a constructive spirit. Among the ideas which have been presented in the many conferences and symposiums recently held, we must highlight those related to in-class placement and, specifically, to the introduction of *'on-the-job practical training'* and on the need to provide *'actual plans for the integration of novel teachers'*.

Whenever we think about designing syllabuses for both Bachelor's and Master's degrees, we must not forget that teacher education, just as training in any professional field, requires a number of years of actual teaching practice in order to become consolidated (at least the same number as the ones devoted to initial academic training). In other words, initial education is a component of 'Lifelong Learning', therefore, it is essential to coordinate all the actions proposed for each stage of the teachers' professional development, so as to, on the one hand, avoid duplicating efforts, and, on the other, be able to measure the level of qualification attained.

Monitoring initial teacher education of primary and secondary school teachers regarding 'Key Competences'

As we have already mentioned, the Ministry of Education makes great efforts in monitoring initial teacher education, especially regarding whether it takes into account the development of 'Key Competences'. An example of this interest is a survey carried out during 2009 and 2010, which will come out at the end of the first semester of 2011, called, *Initial Teacher Education for primary and secondary school teachers: Learning how to teach Key Competences*. This study has been drafted in collaboration with the

Professional Association of Graduates and PhDs in Liberal Arts and Sciences, and with the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation[2]. Cooperation among institutions is a good example of the deep interest of the education community in Spain in gathering information about the outcomes of the recently implemented training model for primary and secondary school teachers.

The present section is devoted to providing a general overview of the study, indicating its main objectives and presenting some of its most relevant results[3].

The study is based on the assumption that if we want primary and secondary education students to acquire the 'Key Competences' included in the Act of Education, teachers must design, teach and evaluate each subject according to the same competence model. Thus, in order for prospective primary and secondary school teachers to develop their teaching practice promoting the acquisition of 'Key Competences,' their initial education (a Bachelor's degree for the first and a Master's for the later) must be coherent with this model too. Furthermore, in order for future primary and secondary school teachers to receive training based on the model of 'Key Competence's, the design of the relevant programmes, as well as the teaching practice of these professionals, must also be organised accordingly.

From this point of view, the aim of the study is to observe the implementation of the new Bachelor's degree for primary school teachers as well as the Master's degree for secondary school teachers which makes up the new model for initial teacher education. Its goal is to determine, by means of analysing the perceptions of the main agents involved (teachers, students and mentors during the in-class placement component of the Master's programme), whether this provision is being planned so as to enable prospective teachers to teach through 'Key Competences'.

Therefore, the most important question here is: are future primary and secondary school teachers receiving the kind of training required to carry out learning and teaching processes focused on the acquisition of 'Key Competences'?

In order to provide an answer, 2,423 persons from 17 different universities involved in teacher education programmes participated in a survey (students, teachers and mentors for in-class placement in the case of Masters' programmes) from May to September 2010. The sample distribution as well as the universities which participated in the study appears in the following tables.

The results of the study showed that the implementation of the model based on 'Key Competences' is a complex challenge for initial teacher education. Even though 48 per cent of the students in first year of the Bachelor's programme already considered themselves as 'fairly qualified' or 'highly qualified' to teach in the future primary school ?according to this model, only 45 per cent of the students on Master's degrees for secondary school teachers considered themselves prepared to undertake such a role.

	Bachelor's in Primary School Education	Master's in Secondary School Education	Total
Teachers	53	544	597
Mentors during in-class placement in Master's programmes	-	333	333
Students	520	973	1,493
Total	573	1,850	2,423

Table 1: Sample distribution, according to programme and participants

Bachelor's and Master's	Master's	Bachelor's
Autonomous University of Barcelona	Cantabria	Complutense of Madrid
Deusto	Castille-La Mancha	
Extremadura	Jaén	
Murcia	Las Palmas de Gran Canarias	
Pontificia Comillas	Oviedo	
Public University of Navarre	Salamanca	
Santiago de Compostela	Sevilla	
Valladolid		
Zaragoza		

Table 2: Universities participating in the survey

It is evident that the model based on 'Key Competences' is quite innovative and calls for specific training in order to be successfully implemented. It is important to emphasise the importance of continuing to work along these lines in order to improve the results. The percentage of students who claim to be familiar with the eight 'Key Competences', which is an essential aspect of their training, reaches 57 per cent in the case of Masters' students, whereas in the case of students enrolled in Bachelor's degrees is a 24.6 per cent. Regarding the latter, we must bear in mind that these students are in their first year of the programme, and they still need to complete 75 per cent of their education. It is also possible that they have not already registered in the subjects which deal specifically with 'Key Competences'.

However, the perception regarding these general issues improves a lot in the case of surveys carried out on teachers and on in-class placement mentors[4]. Thus, 66 per cent of the teachers in the Master's programme and 76.2 per cent of the mentors agree in pointing out that prospective teachers are receiving training which will allow them to teach at secondary levels according to the model of 'Key Competences' either, 'rather satisfactorily' or 'very satisfactorily'.

The insights provided by mentors are especially valuable. These teachers are, in fact, the ones in contact with the students during in-class placement, when they have the opportunity to practice their teaching skills in actual classroom situations. Mentors are, perhaps, the ones who have first-hand information regarding the quality of training received by prospective teachers. If the concept of competence is related to the development of an action in a real context, there is no better scenario for the assessment of the teaching competence of students than their in-class placement period, and, therefore, nobody is better qualified to evaluate this competence than their mentors, who are in charge of monitoring their progress during this training stage.

Beyond these global perceptions, the study focuses on other educational dimensions related to 'Key Competences', such as the methodological aspects implied in this type of learning, assessment procedures and teaching practice based on this model.

If we focus on the methodology employed in developing 'Key Competences', 73.6 per cent of the teachers in the Master's programmes perceive that the number of activities based on solving practical problems related to secondary school education has been 'frequent' or 'very frequent'. About 70.5 per cent think likewise regarding teamwork in the preparation of projects to be presented in the classroom. Around 70.8 per cent of the Master's teachers report that students have received guidance related to the teaching profession, while 66.2 per cent of them state that they have organised tutorial or working sessions devoted to informing students about the specific features, internal dynamics and general running of education institutions.

In addition, 78 per cent of the teachers and 82.1 per cent of the mentors agree on pointing out that the design of units and the elaboration of teaching materials according to the development of 'Key Competences' has been a frequent methodological practice throughout the Master's programme.

On the other hand, further methodological aspects related to the teaching of 'Key Competences' are not perceived as being so frequent. For example, only 12 per cent of the students and 31.3 per cent of the teachers think that students have carried out joint projects involving several subjects or modules. The same is true for the use of materials in a foreign language, an activity perceived as 'rather common' or 'very common' only by 23.3 per cent of the teachers in the Master's programmes and by 11.5 per cent of the students.

As far as assessment is concerned, we must mention that 60.8 per cent of the teachers consider that the evaluation procedures employed allow, to a great extent, to evaluate the level of achievement of competences, while 67.7 per cent of the teachers consider the end-of-degree project, compulsory in the Master's, to be a very adequate means of assessing whether the students have acquired the required competences of the programme.

As regards in-class placement in the Master's in secondary school education, 55.9 per cent of the teachers and 38.4 per cent of the mentors perceive that there has been a 'rather satisfactory' or 'very satisfactory' relationship between academic tutoring and mentoring during in-class placement. This type of coordination has been effective according to 25.3 per cent of the students.

The results of this study, which we have only partially presented here, obviously require some contextualisation in order to be interpreted accurately. First of all, we must take into account that the survey only provides information based on perceptions, as always happens with data gathered through questionnaires. These insights are not an exact reflection of reality, but the image of this reality as perceived by the persons experiencing it. On the other hand, the survey was carried out during the first year of implementation of the new programmes. Thus, it seems only logical to think that, during this first year, we may find slight maladjustments, which might have influenced responses to the survey. One may expect that these shortcomings will improve as these programmes become fully implemented. We must also consider that the survey was only carried out in 17 universities, and does not provide a complete picture of the Spanish university system, which has more than 70 universities in operation. Finally, it is also necessary to point out that, within the new framework for 'Lifelong Learning', initial education is only a first approach to the development of the professional competences that teachers will have to acquire. These competences will be reshaped and improved throughout their professional life. This is especially obvious in the case of primary and secondary school teachers. For them, their first years of actual teaching are decisive as regards their future teaching activity. If we also take into consideration that the students who participated in the survey were in their first course of a four-year Bachelor's degree, we may understand that these results should be regarded as a first tentative approach.

Epilogue: Some questions for debate on the improvement of initial teaching education within the framework of 'Key Competences'

In view of the current situation in Spain, we must conclude that significant steps towards improving teacher education have already been taken, both for primary and for secondary school teachers. Spain has been able to combine two factors in order to put forward changes on the right track, namely, the European Higher Education Area, as well as the changes involved in its construction, together with the EU proposals in this field.

However, the journey has only started. Therefore, studies such as the one mentioned in the previous section may shed some light on the improvements which are yet to be discussed.

As far as competences are concerned, considering that they are defined according to the ability to put them into practice in 'real' contexts, it seems necessary to reflect upon the structure and characteristics of in-class placement of prospective teachers. Some possible measures in this regard could be:

• to extend its duration

• to improve its organisation, by promoting better coordination between schools and universities, and between university teachers and trainee mentors during in-class placement

• to establish a series of quality indicators for schools where in-class placement is going to be carried out, based on a solid plan for training and guidance for prospective teachers, with the participation of all school agents and where the leadership role of heads is made effective

• to establish clear criteria for the selection of mentors, who should have, among other skills, comprehensive training on these issues.

We may also reflect on the need to improve the teaching strategies employed in the education of prospective primary and secondary school teachers. For example, the development of dynamic learning experiences linked to 'Key Competences' should be increased, as well as the coordination between different subjects and teachers, with the aim of providing students with globalised training in the general competences of the programme.

Assessment should also be reconsidered, since certain traditional evaluation procedures are still persistently present in teacher-education programmes. These practices should give way to innovative tools, which would allow evaluating more effectively whether students have acquired the competences in each subject or in the programme as a whole.

In order to implement these methodological and assessment improvements, it would also be positive to provide more training to the professionals in charge of educating prospective primary and secondary school teachers. We may also discuss whether the criteria for the selection of teacher educators should also be stricter. Among these standards we should include whether these professionals have an actual connection with classroom reality in the levels for which prospective teachers are being trained, as well as their competence in foreign languages.

In addition to this, we could also think about the convenience of establishing better selection mechanisms for candidates to Bachelor's or Master's degrees in education. Considering the social responsibility assigned to professionals in education, prospective teachers should possess, from the very beginning of their training, a series of qualities which could guarantee a certain level of success, not only in their studies, but also in their future careers.

One of the most frequent suggestions for improvement of teacher quality and of the education system as a whole is the need to attract the best professionals to the world of education. Leaving aside useless ideological considerations, if we want to improve initial teacher education, candidates to these teaching programmes should be carefully selected.

Last, but not least, we must not forget that the coordinated and synergic efforts of all the institutions involved in teacher education is the first and foremost factor to guarantee the improvement of its quality, and that, besides initial education, the first years of professional practice are equally decisive for teachers to become competent educators. Thus, the 'induction' phase for novice teachers must be paid attention to and must be connected directly and efficiently to initial education.

At any rate, in order to make sure that we keep on the right track, we have to continue doing research on the development of this new model, and reflect upon the results obtained, in order to introduce the necessary changes so as to attain the proposed objectives.

Notes

1.   The outcomes of this study are fully detailed in the next section.

2.   The study is a continuation of a fruitful collaboration between the three institutions which started with a previous joint project called *The practical dimension of initial education for secondary school teachers: orientations to give recognition to good school practices*, which was submitted to the National Education Board in June 2009. It is available at: http://www.consejogeneralcdl.es/Dimensión_práctica_formación_inicial.pdf.

3.   The authors would like to thank the institutions which collaborated in carrying out this project: The Institute for Teacher Training, Education, Research and Innovation (IFIIE); the Professional Association of Graduates and PhDs in Liberal Arts and Sciences (CGDCDL); and the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA). They would also like to thank all the persons who have participated in the study, and, given their high number, cannot be listed here.

4.   The data from Bachelor's teachers have not been taken into consideration here, given the small number of responses received.

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How to cite this chapter

Coba Arango, E. & Valle, J. M. (2011). Initial teacher education: learning how to teach 'Key Competences'. *In* P. Picard & L. Ria (Eds.), *Beginning teachers: a challenge for educational systems – CIDREE Yearbook 2011* (pp. 29-47). Lyon, France: ENS de Lyon, Institut français de l'Éducation.

3 Building the curricular capacity of teachers: insights from the Netherlands

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Building the curricular capacity of teachers: insights from the Netherlands

Nienke Nieveen and Monique van der Hoeven

Abstract

At a national level, several European countries have made curriculum policy less prescriptive and have left space for schools and teachers to follow their local and individual curricular aspirations. Ideally, the continuum of teacher education (encompassing initial teacher education programmes, induction of newly qualified teachers and continuing professional development for practicing teachers) follows the policy expectations that schools and teachers will have an active role in school-based curriculum design (SBCD).

This contribution examines six curricular capacities needed in school-based curriculum development: subject matter expertise, pedagogical expertise, intrapersonal expertise, inter-personal competences, curricular consistency competences and curricular problem-solving competences. The level of proficiency teachers need in SBCD projects depends on the complexities of the curriculum design tasks at hand. This contribution provides an overview of the growth and diversification of curriculum design tasks and examines what specific curricular capacities are needed by student teachers, as opposed to novice and experienced teachers.

Moreover, the contribution provides information on how teacher (pre- and in-service) education in the Netherlands seeks to enrich teachers' curricular competences throughout their careers. It appears that attention paid to curriculum competences is fragmentary and is rarely focused on curricular consistency and problem-solving capacities.

When it comes to bridging the gap between, on the one hand, the high expectations related to the curricular capacities of school leaders and teachers and, on the other hand, the lack of coherent opportunities for curricular capacity building of teachers, we work on two major developments: defining and validating a learning strand for curricular competences and stimulating and creating professional development opportunities in pre- and in-service education.

Introduction

This contribution examines the need for curricular capacities of teachers in relation to the educational policy and practice background of the Netherlands. During the last decade, the Netherlands have made curriculum policy less prescriptive and have left space for schools and teachers to follow their local and individual curricular aspirations, concerning the aims and objectives of learning, the pedagogical approach, selection of learning materials, time scheduling and assessment, etc. Within some broadly described boundaries, teachers and school leaders are expected to make their own curriculum decisions at the school level (school programme), the classroom level (teaching plans, instructional materials and resources) and individual level (personal plan for learning). Although implicit in practice, schools need to take into account and stimulate coherence amongst these curriculum levels and the broader national policy directions.

Ideally, the continuum of teacher education (encompassing initial teacher education programmes, induction of newly qualified teachers and the continuing professional development [CPD] for practicing teachers) follows these policy expectations of schools and teachers having an active role in school-based curriculum design. This contribution seeks to examine what specific curricular capacities are needed by student teachers, as opposed to novice teachers and experienced teachers. Moreover, we will provide information on how teacher (pre- and in-service) education seeks to enrich teachers' curricular competences throughout their careers.

Dutch educational policies and need for curricular capacities

In Dutch educational policy and school practice, three factors seem to be related to the need for curricular capacities: curricular autonomy of schools, digitalisation of lesson materials and career planning.

Curricular autonomy

Compared to other countries around the globe, the Dutch educational system is a 'champion' of autonomy for schools and teachers, especially for primary and junior secondary education (Kuiper, van den Akker, Letschert, & Hooghoff, 2007; Law & Nieveen, 2010). Within the boundaries of a very limited national curriculum framework, schools in the Netherlands are offered ample 'curricular space', which is defined as the opportunity to tailor the curriculum according to the school's own aspirations (Nieveen, van den Akker, & Resink, 2010). These boundaries, and as a result, curricular autonomy vary across the different sectors in the educational system. To illustrate this we use a visualisation of the curriculum of van den Akker (2003). This

curricular spider's web (see Figure 1) depicts the constituent parts of a curriculum and the relationships between these parts.
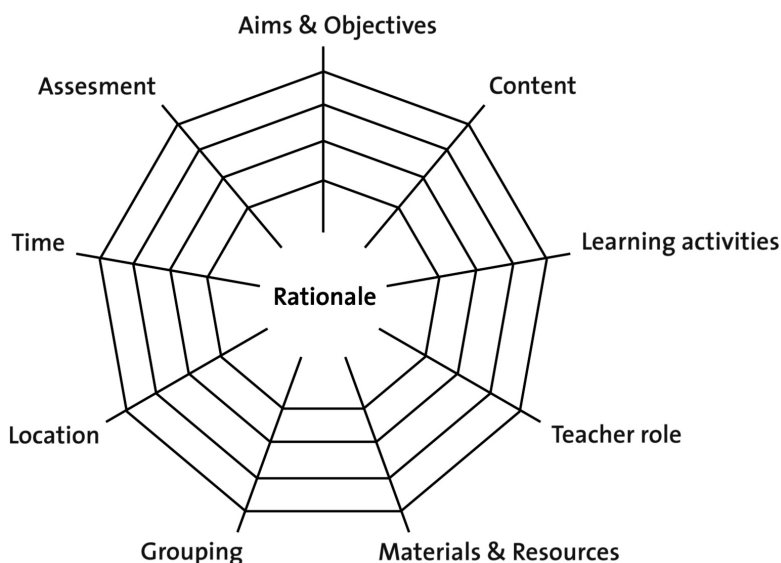
Figure 1: Curricular spider's web

Regarding the rationale (why students are learning), schools in all sectors are allowed to and do profile themselves, focusing on e.g. culture, sports, entrepreneurship or science technology. As far as the aims, objectives and content are concerned, primary (ages 4-12) and junior secondary education (ages 12-15) have the least strict boundaries: only 58 core objectives describe the content of teaching. For junior secondary education, the attainment targets cover two-thirds of the minimal education time and are not linked to a mandatory time table. Until now there are no obligatory national tests, but this might change in the near future for the basic skills. In senior secondary education and vocational education, stronger central steering exists concerning mandatory and elective courses, and prescriptive and detailed attainment targets. But also in these sectors schools and teachers have ample freedom to decide how to achieve the attainment targets.

For all sectors, no national guidelines for timetables or teacher roles are available. Therefore, schools organise their lessons in various ways: lessons of 45, 50 and 70 or 100 minutes exist; lessons with one teacher for the subject, for one class, but also team teaching for larger groups of pupils. With regard to the educational materials and resources, commercial educational publishers offer a rich array, with elaborated learning strands, learning activities and tests. The materials and resources are so extensive (and not always properly covering the core objectives and learning strands) that teachers need to make their own curricular choices.

When looking more specifically at the various sectors, it turns out that in primary education, textbooks, student monitoring systems and (especially in the last year) the final test of primary education (national, but not yet obligatory) are actively steering the curriculum. Curricular competences are especially required in differentiating (special needs and excellency) between students and in collecting and analysing results in relation to outcome-based education, not only at the level of pupils but also at classroom and school level, and to re-arrange the curriculum accordingly.

Since 2006, junior secondary education has had the least strict boundaries. Of all the schools in junior secondary education (with greater amount of autonomy), 85 per cent have reported working on curriculum change (Onderbouw-VO, 2008). The core of most redesign efforts is to improve the coherence of curricula into an inter-disciplinary project education or learning domain. However, teachers report a lack of confidence in skills to redesign their curriculum and a struggle with fully utilising the given curricular freedom (Onderbouw-VO, 2008). Fewer curricular competences are demanded in senior secondary education, unless teachers are involved in special projects such as linking the curriculum to (inter-)national Olympiad-tests or the development of new subjects (e.g. NLT: Nature, Life and Technology) or subject renewal and a new pedagogical approach toward the attainment targets (e.g. more attention to concept-context approach in chemistry and physics).

Similar to junior secondary education, teachers in vocational education (student ages 15-16) are putting effort into inter-disciplinary curricula. In doing so they meet some curriculum development challenges related to the integration of vocational and career orientation into the subjects, longitudinal alignment within subject domains and horizontal coherence with other subjects.

Digitalisation of lesson materials

Concerning educational materials, some trends affect the need for curricular capacity in school. Since 2008, the financial regulation of school materials has changed: until then parents had to pay for the school books, a yearly account of 400-600 euros. Since 2008, parents don't have to pay anymore, but the government provides schools an amount of about 300 euros per student. In order to control expenses, school boards are trying to find ways to develop or find school materials in a cheaper way; for instance by using fewer textbooks and more digital materials or by directing teachers to develop their own lesson materials.

In addition to financial purposes, the prospects of ICT in education (e.g. increasing learners' motivation and adapting education to learners' needs) encourage schools and teachers to re-arrange their learning resources. The increasing amount of digital materials and open source content gives teachers the opportunity to develop their own materials or re-arrange elements from the existing materials to form a new programme.

Research shows that indeed in all sectors the majority of teachers search, develop or arrange (digital) materials for special purposes (SLO, 2011). Regarding the use of digital materials and the development of own materials, there is no significant difference between lower and upper secondary education and vocational education. Most teachers report that they expect to use more digital materials in the near future.

Career planning and teacher quality initiatives

In recent years, many activities have been unfolded in order to improve the attractiveness of the teaching profession and to improve teacher quality. One of the main problems was the fact that the career of a teacher was *'as flat as the Dutch landscape'*. Although teacher salaries do increase up to a certain level, a lack of challenges could make this job unexciting and monotonous. More task and function differentiation for teachers was found as a solution, profitable for both teachers and school boards.

Function differentiation has just started in primary education. Higher functions are mostly connected with special tasks such as remedial teaching, coordination of cultural activities and policy in the school or coordination of basic skills such as mother tongue and arithmetic. In senior secondary education, function differentiation hardly plays a part as most teachers have an academic degree and already have the highest possible function. At this moment function differentiations plays the biggest part in lower secondary education and vocational education. Although it is uncommon practice, teachers in these sectors have the most opportunities to elaborate their expertise and career in this respect. In those schools where teachers do perform special curriculum design tasks, school leaders have an important role to play in coaching teachers and teams and assessing the competences and results in view of promotion to a higher function.

With the movement of providing curricular autonomy to schools, Dutch policy recognises that teachers and school leaders use their contextual knowledge in locating school-specific needs, formulating needs-related ambitions and articulating feasible solutions. As a consequence, all persons involved (teachers, teams and school leaders and those responsible for the time table etc.) take part in the responsibility of designing a coherent school-based curriculum and should have (to various degrees) the capacity to make these curricular decisions. The specific degree depends on the curriculum autonomy of the sector and the related school-specific context and ambitions, the availability of digital lesson materials and function differentiation. Teachers and school leaders in primary, lower secondary and vocational education seem to have the greatest opportunities to take up curriculum design challenges. In the remainder of this contribution we will mainly focus on the challenges in lower secondary education.

Framework for curricular capacities of teachers

This section covers an overview of curricular capacities for school-based curriculum development, factors that influence curriculum design complexity and levels of proficiency needed throughout teaching careers.

Curricular capacities

The curricular capacities of teachers form a subset of all relevant teacher capacities and contain all competences needed in order to design (parts of the) school-based curricula. Teachers need these capacities when designing additional learning resources, working on subject-integration or fine-tuning subjects longitudinally throughout the years. Based on several overviews (Horváth, 2006; Huizinga, 2009; Richey, Fields, & Foxon, 2001), we distinguish the following curricular competences:

1. **Subject matter expertise**. To have a state-of-the-art longitudinal and horizontal (adjacent subjects) overview of the subject matter that is central to the design, to have an understanding of possible learning routes, and to be able to point out potential difficulties of students with the subject matter.

2. **Pedagogical expertise**. To be able to apply a varied and adjustable pedagogical repertoire (including use of ICT) and to be familiar with strong and weak elements of teaching and learning methods.

3. **Intra-personal competences**. To be self-motivated to contribute to the design of the school curriculum, to be able to reflect in and on action, to be interested in checking (positive and negative) results of the design in practice.

4. **Inter-personal competences**. To be able to contribute to good relationships with colleagues and school leaders involved in the design activities, to take care of a common vision, to cooperate effectively with colleagues, to provide and collect collegial feedback.

5. **Curricular consistency competences**. To be able to take care of the *internal* consistency (aligning all curricular components of the design) and *external* consistency of the design (embedding new curricular elaborations into existing school practices, connecting to the needs and wishes of learners, subject matter demands and societal developments).

6. **Curricular problem-solving competences**. To be able to apply and keep track of design activities, such as analysis, formulating design requirements, materials construction, evaluation of the curriculum in action, implementation in a wider context.

Complexity of curriculum design tasks

The level of proficiency of these competences depend on the complexities of the curriculum design task at hand. To illustrate this we use the typology of curriculum

design tasks of Marsh, Day, Hannay, & McCutcheon (1990, p. 49). First of all, they characterise curriculum design tasks according to the type of activities (needed during the design process), such as: investigation of an area of activity, selecting from existing materials, adaptation of existing materials and creation of raw materials. Secondly, the task complexity depends on the number and kinds of persons involved in the design process. These could be individual teachers, a small group of teachers, the whole staff, or teachers with parents and students. Finally, the time frame of the SBCD activities influences the task complexity. This can vary from a one-off activity (e.g. a single meeting) to a long-term plan of several years of action. Combining these three dimensions leads to a three-dimensional model for the characterisation of SBCD, as depicted in Figure 2.

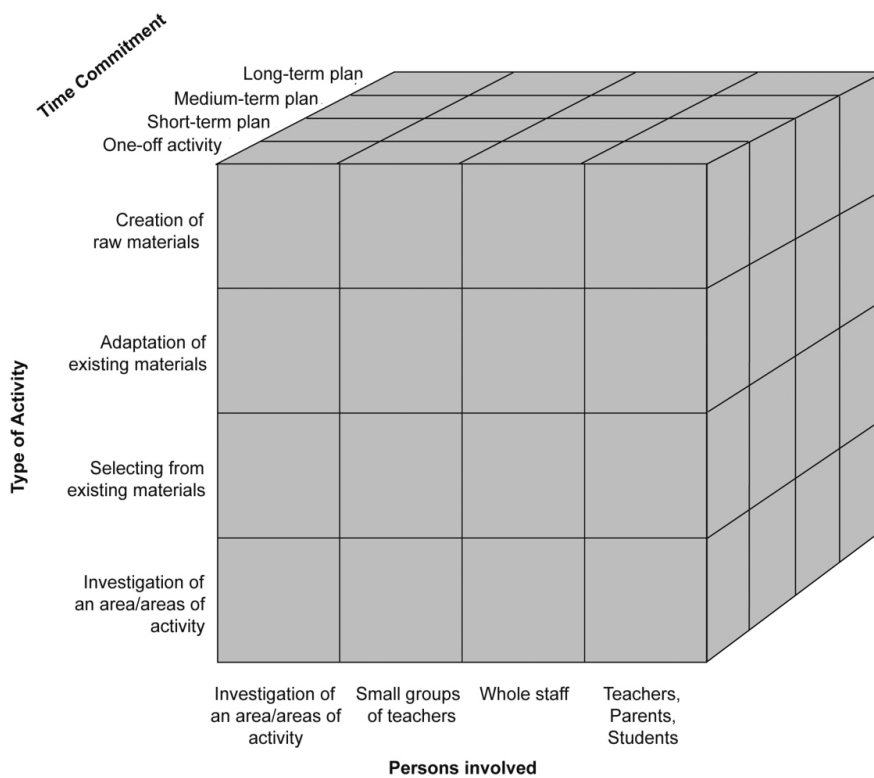

Figure 2: A three dimensional model of SBCD variations

As is illustrated in Figure 2, SBCD can be one of a range of activities. Teachers who are working on a rather limited design task (for instance, selecting an interesting lesson from existing materials for tomorrow's class) need fewer curriculum capacities compared to a situation where teachers join a long-term collaboration in which they

consider subject integration and need to design new lesson materials. Ideally, the task complexity aligns with the curriculum capacities of teachers.

Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Too often, we see teachers and team leaders struggle with design tasks for which they lack capacities. When analysed more closely, teams and teachers report problems related to one or all of the following curriculum design perspectives (Goodlad, 1994; van den Akker, 2003; Nieveen, Handelzalts, & van Eekelen, 2011):

1. Substantive perspective, related to 'what'-questions, such as: What curricular choices do we make? From which rationale do we start from? What ambitions do we strive for as a school? What are the constituent parts of a coherent curriculum?

2. Socio-political perspective, including 'with whom'-questions, such as: Whom should be involved in the decision-making process? Who decides on this? What is the role of the teachers and school leadership?

3. Technical professional perspective, containing 'how'-questions, such as: How will we go about the design task? What design strategy will we follow? How and when do we plan and perform evaluation activities?

Schools profit from teachers who are able to oversee and work from this plurality of curriculum design decisions. School leaders and teachers should critically consider what level of curricular ambition would be achievable when taking into account the curricular capacity of the team.

Levels of proficiency

Teachers vary in the level and extensiveness of curriculum capacities. This is (partly) related to their function in the school. For beginning teachers, design matters are usually limited to the design of a lesson or a lesson series to be used in their own classes. Often different from student teachers, they will feel and have the responsibility to attune these lessons with the overall plan of the subject department and reach agreement with their colleagues. More experienced teachers will be in charge of more complex design tasks, such as the design of a longitudinal curriculum for a certain subject area and the selection and design of accompanying lesson materials. Usually, this work means a greater demand for interpersonal competences and capacities to consider and balance the overall consistency of the curriculum. Figure 3 depicts this growth and diversification of design duties from the perspective of the three dimensions (substantive, socio-political and technical-professional).

Experienced teacher
in charge of educational
development

Rationale forsubjects, grade
levels, school

Learning strands

To be used by colleagues

Relationship with school
rationale on subject, society
and region

Experienced teacher
in charge of subject
development

Lesson series and learning
strands

Also for usage by collegues

Relationship with rational
for subject and grade level

Beginning teacher

Lesson series for own
usage

Relationship with subject
rationale

Student teacher

What
do they
design?

Lesson series for own usage

Collaboration with design
team

Tuning with design team and
team leaders

Tuning with school leaders,
boards, external parties

With
whom?

Individualwith
coaching

Individual

Tuning with subject
colleagues

Collaboration with subject,
grade level colleagues

Tuning with design team
and team leaders

How?

Limited design cyclus

Reflection on own
performance

Limited design cycle

Reflection on learner
performance

More systematic application
of design cycle

Embedding learner results
in design decisions

More systematic application
of design cycle

Embedding learner results
in design decisions

Pendulum between school
and classroom level

Figure 3: Learning strand with curriculum design tasks

The growth and diversification of the curricular tasks of teachers (as depicted in Figure 3) influences the type and level of the teachers' needed curricular capacities, with more emphasis on subject matter and pedagogical expertise at the micro level for student teachers and beginning teachers and more emphasis on (but still including the other capacities) consistency, interpersonal and problem-solving capacities at the meso level for experienced teachers.

The educational policy of placing the curriculum decision-making process in the hands of schools and teachers implies that they need the capacity to perform these curriculum design tasks. The first seeds of these capacities need to be planted, ideally, in pre-service education. The next section will elaborate this issue of professional development in relation to these curriculum design capacities.

Professional development of teachers in relation to curricular capacities framework

In this contribution, we use a broad definition of professional development, including all activities that improve the expertise of teachers (cf. Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Desimone, 2009). Overall, a wide range of professional development activities is available, from formal in-service education and workshops, to coaching and using job aids at the workplace, to the involvement of teachers in a (curriculum) development and improvement process. In this section, we will provide an overview of how professional development of teachers in the domain of curricular competences currently looks in the Netherlands. In this we make a distinction between pre-service and in-service education.

Curricular capacity building in pre-service education

Specific information on how much attention teacher colleges in the Netherlands pay to curriculum competences is not easy to obtain. This section is based on a study by de Boer, de Kievit, Klein, Mulder, & Rodenboog (2009) and our own experiences. The data of the study were gathered based on a questionnaire for teacher trainers and in-depth interviews with teacher trainers and students of five teacher trainer colleges. Findings show that colleges involved in this study do pay attention to curriculum competences, although the colleges vary quite extensively in this and the attention paid is scattered. Curriculum competences at the classroom and learner level are especially considered. The main issues that are discussed here are setting objectives and to a lesser extent the selection, design and evaluation of lesson materials. At the meso (school) level some attention is paid to the curriculum rationale of a school and consequences of the rationale for the school organisation. According to teacher educators, it is important that student teachers learn to plan their teaching and learn to teach independently from complete textbook materials. The findings give the impression that the focus on curriculum competences could be more systematic and coherent. The central attention to the classroom and learner level is explainable. However, attention to the curriculum at the school level would be needed to prepare student teachers for their future in the schools, as many schools are working on the redesign of their curriculum and expect a pro-active role of (also) beginning teachers.

Curricular capacity building in in-service education

For teachers who are willing to professionalise themselves at a basic level, the educational offerings are varied. Workshops are being offered by teacher training institutes or by school support organisations. Often these cover pedagogical themes (e.g. how to motivate pupils; how to improve classroom management; information about special needs) or pedagogical content knowledge (e.g. active learning or multiple intelligences). However, generally speaking, hardly any attention has been given to curricular capacities as were introduced in this contribution.

For a more advanced level, the government provides funding (in money or time) to stimulate teachers to improve their knowledge and skills by attending Master's programmes. Since 2011, there is the possibility to follow a PhD programme, where teachers work for two days a week on a research project (instead of teaching), during a four-year period. The success of these measures shows that teachers do feel the need to professionalise themselves and keep up their competences (Ministry of Education, 2011). However, within these initiatives, the amount of attention paid to specific curricular competences is rather limited.

Another capacity-building option is covered by the so-called 'Academic Schools'. This initiative stimulates teachers to do research or practice action research in the context of their school. However, according to Imants (2009) many of these research activities do not lead to a follow-up. Often, the research findings point at action points for the future. However, a translation into curriculum renewal initiatives is often lacking. This might be caused by a lack of 'curricular mindedness' of school leaders and teachers.

Next to formal professional development initiatives, of course, informal curricular capacity building of teachers takes place. Besides teachers visiting lessons of their colleagues, coaching on the job, and inter-school visitations, working in 'teacher design teams' is a way schools can stimulate capacity building. In the latter case, groups of teachers at the same school (and sometimes with colleagues from other schools) are working on curricular renewal (cf. Handelzalts, 2009). External support and examples of other schools and context are important features for these teams to succeed.

Overall, pre-service as well as in-service teacher education do not seem to have a kind of general standard concerning curricular capacities. The level of curriculum skills of beginning teachers, as well as of experienced teachers, depends on the university or college where they have had their teacher education. Attention paid to curriculum competences is rather fragmentary and is focused mainly on subject matter expertise, pedagogical expertise, intra-personal and inter-personal competences. Hardly any attention is given to curricular consistency and problem-solving competences. The main pathway for teachers who want to develop their curriculum competences is attending an educational Master's programme. However, due to time constraints, this is not practical for all teachers. In-service education in curricular matters is rarely found.

Improving curricular capacities of teachers

In a country, such as the Netherlands, where educational policy gives ample freedom to the schools and teachers to follow their own curricular ambitions, there are high expectations when it comes to the curricular capacities of school leaders and teachers. For that reason it is rather odd that only fragmented opportunities are provided for curricular capacity building of teachers. When it comes to improving this situation,

we are working on two major developments: elaborating and validating the learning strand for curricular capacities and creating and stimulating the design of professional development opportunities in pre- and in-service education.

With regard to the first challenge, the learning strand introduced in this contribution (Figure 3) will be used as a starting point. Before taking the next steps, an expert appraisal was organised with representatives of educational policy, teacher education and school boards of secondary education to ask their advice and get feedback on the first draft of the competences and learning strand. Their positive responses strengthened us to continue our activities in this respect, leading to several follow-up activities. First of all, we will elaborate the learning strand and competences in a more detailed way. These competences and levels of proficiency need to be more distinct, especially in the third and fourth level and characteristics of the school context should be included. Secondly, during additional rounds of expert appraisal the competences and accompanying learning strand will be validated. Thirdly, in the near future, a major revision is being planned at the national level of the teachers' competency descriptors in primary and secondary education. In its current version, curricular competences (especially the curricular consistency and problem-solving competences) do not play a part. The redesign process provides an interesting opening to give these curricular capacities a more prominent role in the professional development and career planning of teachers and school leaders.

Next to putting effort into making explicit teachers' capacities for school-based curriculum development, there is a great need for professional development opportunities in pre- and in-service education. For starters, SLO developed, implemented and evaluated a pilot course on curriculum design. This course is now included in a new in-service training programme of the Twente School of Education for experienced teachers in secondary education. More teacher education colleges have indicated their interest in providing the same kind of offering in their in-service programme. These courses are less extensive than educational Master's programmes and in that way they are feasible for more teachers.

We see it as our challenge to extend the existing course on curriculum design to other sectors: primary education and vocational education. We will investigate the level of proficiency of student and beginning teachers with regard to their curricular capacities, and we took the initiative to further analyse relevant courses currently available and will stimulate the design of additional professional development opportunities for all levels. Partnerships will be set up in order to work together on the defined challenges.

Moreover, in order to help schools successfully overcome the challenges of school-based curriculum development, more synergy is required in demand and support of intermediates (expertise centres; interest groups; support agencies; teacher education colleges etc.). In this respect, all the stakeholders involved (e.g., policy-makers, support agencies, and schools) should become more 'curricularly capable'.

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How to cite this chapter

Nieveen, N. & Hoeven, M. van der (2011). Building the curricular capacity of teachers: Insights from the Netherlands. *In* P. Picard & L. Ria (Eds.), *Beginning teachers: a challenge for educational systems – CIDREE Yearbook 2011* (pp. 49-64). Lyon, France: ENS de Lyon, Institut français de l'Éducation.

4 Support programme for beginning teachers in Estonia: benefits and challenges

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Support programme for beginning teachers in Estonia: benefits and challenges

Eve Eisenschmidt, Katrin Poom-Valickis and Anita Kärner

Abstract

Many countries follow Estonia's example of implementing beginning teachers' support programme – the induction-year programme. The European Commission recently published a handbook for policy-makers entitled, Developing coherent and system-wide induction programmes for beginning teachers *(European Commission, 2010), expressing the opinion that Estonia's induction-year model is worth following in other countries. Introducing Estonia's experience to other countries has enabled us to analyse the implementation of the induction programme against a broader system background and draw ideas to improve the existing practice.*

This article discusses the process of teachers' induction-year programme as part of the Estonian teacher-education system. The article analyses the role of school managers, mentor educators and specialists who organise the induction year and their level of skill in supporting beginning teachers' professionalisation.

The article then considers the results of the induction-year programme in combination with the support programmes offered to beginning teachers by universities, which are aimed at developing teachers' self-analysis and reflection skills. In conclusion, the authors note that teacher education and supporting young teachers' professional growth are closely connected with school development in general and the preparation of school managers.

Introduction

There are various ways for raising awareness of the importance of the first professional years in a teacher's career. Most countries are facing the fact that studying to become a teacher is not popular among the young; as a result, the number of young people entering teacher education programmes decreases. For example, in the Northern Countries the number of teacher-education programme applicants reduced significantly during 2003-2007: in Iceland by 45 per cent, in Denmark by 36 per cent, in Norway by 15 per cent, and in Sweden by 4 per cent. As the teaching staff is becoming

older and many undergraduates drop out of teacher-education programmes, all European countries are currently paying increased attention to teacher education and supporting beginning teachers (European Parliament, 2008).

The Estonian higher education system has been reformed according to Bologna regulations in 2006 into a three-year Bachelor level studies degree and a two-year Master level studies degree. Teacher education is part of the higher education area. Every year, there are approximately 500 applicants to teacher-education programmes. Currently, two teacher pre-service education models are used in Estonian universities: the 'mono-phase, integrated model' (class teachers in primary school level), in which subject and educational studies take place concurrently, and the 'two-phase or consecutive model' (for subject-teachers and pre-school teachers), in which a two-year course of teacher education is passed by students after the completion of their subject studies. In the case of the two-phase, teacher-education model, educational studies (including pre-service school practice) must extend over at least 40 study weeks; i.e. 60 credit points according to European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). This equals one year of studies in Estonian higher education.

Pre-school teachers receive a Bachelor's degree (180 ECTS) with education as a major. This degree provides the kindergarten teacher's or pre-school teacher's qualification. Those who continue studies towards the Master's degree, acquire the early childhood educator's and counsellor's competence.

Class teachers receive a Master's degree (300 ECTS) with education as a major. This degree provides the class teacher's qualification for practicing in a comprehensive school from Grades 1 to 6, and teaching all subjects on that level. This is an integrated Bachelor- and Master-education programme.

Subject teachers receive a Bachelor's degree (180 ECTS) and a Master's degree (120 ECTS); their major is usually the subject that they will teach in school. A qualified subject teacher has to attain a Master's degree and complete the teachers' pedagogical studies. The teachers' pedagogical studies (60 ECTS) are included in the degree studies. Mainly subject teachers are prepared to teach two subjects in lower secondary (Grades 7-9) and upper secondary levels.

Special-education needs teachers receive a Bachelor's degree (180 ECTS) and a Master's degree (120 ECTS) in special education. This degree provides the special-education teachers' qualification for practicing in a comprehensive or special school.

Vocational-school teachers acquire a degree at a university, higher education institute or vocational school in a profession and usually participate for some years in the labour market. After that, they complete the teacher's pedagogical studies at a university.

Research indicates that, unfortunately, even postgraduates who have successfully completed a teacher-education programme may choose not to take up a teacher's career. The first professional years are critical. Research shows that a beginning

teacher's problems are largely similar, irrespective of the country and teacher-education system. No matter what the place and time, beginning teachers tend to find tackling discipline problems to be the most complicated thing. Novice teachers lack the skills of planning and organising work in class, increasing students' motivation, and taking into account students' individual qualities. Generally, it is also difficult for beginning teachers to evaluate students and cooperate with parents (Griffin, 1992; Korthagen, 1999; Fullan, 2000). Other reasons for giving up the teaching profession, according to beginning teachers, are: complexity of the profession, unreal expectations (idealistic understanding of the profession and work) and a high level of stress connected with the work.

The primary tasks for a beginning teacher in the first year of the teaching career are to build an understanding of yourself as a teacher and the values which relate to this, develop your own professional self-concept (Kagan, 1992) and find your own teaching style. This is not always easy. In their personal-experience backpack, beginning teachers carry tens of thousands of hours spent as a learner in various learning situations. As a result, they have developed implicit models about what it means to teach, manage a class, and learn. Such understandings of 'good teaching' may sometimes be in conflict with reality.

Another important task of a beginning teacher during the first year of professional practice is to adapt to the school as an organisation. A beginning teacher becomes a member of the school community and acquires knowledge, values, norms and manner of behaviour, which are considered important in the organisation and among the specific group of teachers to which s/he belongs. Socialisation within the organisation affects the development of the teacher as an individual. Research shows that the more quickly a beginning teacher adapts to the organisation, the more successful his/her professional development is.

However, adaptation involves certain risks. When a beginning teacher tries to adapt to the environment and mix with the school staff, it may happen that the knowledge acquired in the course of completing the teacher-education programme is discarded because the specific school culture does not support implementation of this knowledge. When new ideas and well-established understandings clash, the more confident and experienced ones often win. Experienced teachers may impose their teaching principles on novices. For a novice, each piece of good advice is *'like a straw to a drowning man'* and, therefore, such advice may be implemented without critical analysis.

At the same time, teachers today are being asked to teach students from a broad range of backgrounds, to prepare them to read and write at sophisticated levels to help them think critically and to help them apply their knowledge to solving real-world problems. The range of expectations that the surrounding community has for school also grows. In short, the skills teachers need to develop are both complex and demanding.

The process of becoming a teacher largely involves overcoming contradictions, comparing prior experience and understandings with new ones and learning from them· We rely on the understanding that learning to become a teacher and professional growth are constant processes which will not end upon completion of a teacher-education programme, and involve a period of adaptation to the profession and consequent in-service training. All these stages must be tied to each other, therefore, and beginning teachers must be provided with the necessary support during the adaptation period (European Parliament, 2008).

Implementation of the induction year in Estonia

In planning educational reforms, both cultural and historical contexts must be taken into account. Estonia is the northern-most of the three Baltic States with a population of 1.4 million people. In Estonian general-education schools, 14,701 teachers were employed in the year 2009 (Statistical database, 2010). Each year, about 200 beginning teachers start work in schools. The birth of the induction-year programme in Estonia was the result of the combined effort of many specialists and institutions; during this collaboration the special literature and experience from several countries were analysed. A preliminary project was carried out in the academic year 2002-2003. In 2003-2004, an expert group consisting of professors from Tallinn and Tartu Universities analysed the results of the preliminary project, improved the implementation model and made preparations for implementation of the induction-year programme at the national level. Considering that the educational institution, where a beginning teacher starts his or her career, has a significant role to play in successful implementation of the induction year, it was important to involve practicing teachers and school managers in the preparation of the objectives, content, and principles of the induction-year programme and introduce the idea of the induction year implementation and related issues to the wider educational public.

The corner-stone understandings underlying the Estonian induction-year model were the following:

1. The school is a learning organisation where teachers cooperate and support each other's development reciprocally and where the mentor supports a beginning teacher's professional growth, helping her to adapt to the school and teacher's profession and solve problems related to school practice.

2. Professional and organisational socialisation takes place concurrently and in course of it a beginning teacher becomes a member of the teaching staff.

3. An on-going professional development, a teacher's readiness to grow, analyse her practice and reflect on it are essential pre-conditions for development.

The mentor's duty is to support a beginning teacher's reflection and help him or her to produce a roadmap for their self-development (Eisenschmidt, 2006; Poom-Valickis, 2007).

A beginning teacher's professional growth plays a central role in the induction-year model implemented in Estonia (Diagram 1). From one side, the growth is supported by the school environment and, from the other side, by the support programmes organised by induction-year centres.
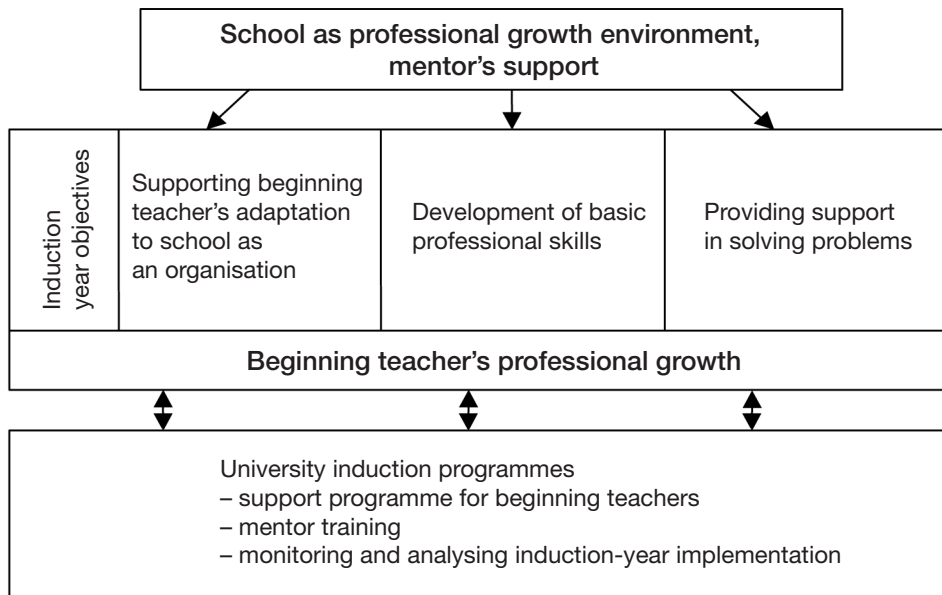
Diagram 1: Induction year implementation model (Eisenschmidt, 2006)

The model combines two action environments: learning and development in the school environment and peer meetings for beginning teachers at universities.

Induction year parties

The school is a working, development and learning environment to all its members: students, teachers and managers alike. The organisation and its work culture play a major role in a beginning teacher's adaptation process and the development of their coping skills. The induction year should form part of the natural school culture and its implementation should be treated as a component of the school's quality system. A co-objective of the induction year lies in supporting the development of a teachers' in-school counselling and feedback system to support their learning process.

Diagram 2 provides an overview of the role of various parties participating in the induction year.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│              School manager                  │
│         is responsible for implementation    │
│       of the induction programme in school   │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                        │
                        ▼
┌──────────────────────────┐     ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ Novice teacher – a teacher-│    │ Mentor – novice teacher's │
│ education programme        │───▶│ supervisor, supporter of  │
│ graduate working as teacher│◀───│ his/her development and   │
│ for the first year         │    │ self-analysis             │
└──────────────────────────┘     └──────────────────────────┘

┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Induction centres by universities                                        │
│ 1. organise support programme seminars 4 times a year to support young   │
│    teachers' professional growth and self-analysis                       │
│ 2. offer mentor training programmes                                      │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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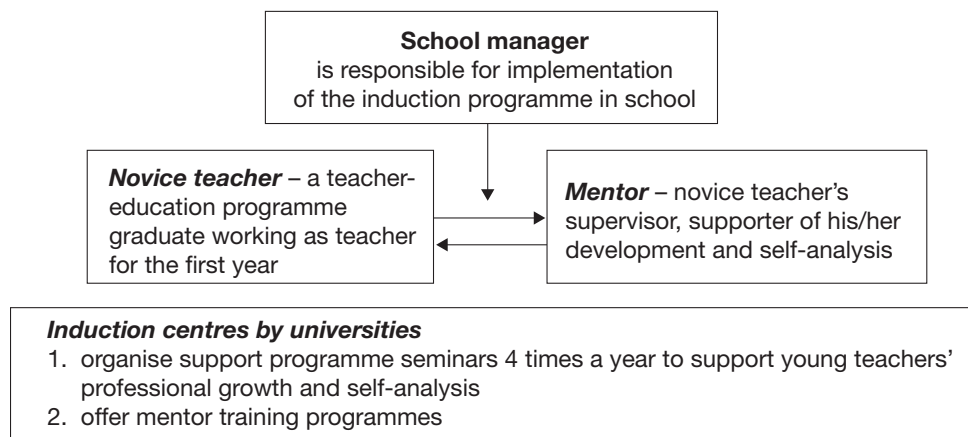
Diagram 2. Induction year parties (Eisenschmidt, 2006)

According to this model, a beginning teacher completes the induction year under a mentor's supervision by practicing in a position which conforms to the teacher-education programme completed by the teacher. The school manager appoints a mentor for each teacher participating in the induction programme. A mentor must have at least three years of experience in the field of pedagogy, s/he must have completed a mentor training under an in-service or a Master's degree programme, and she must participate in the school development. The relationship between the mentor and beginning teacher is collegial, not hierarchic. The mentor's main role lies in supporting the beginning teacher's professional growth and learning. Likewise, the mentor plays an important role in supporting the beginning teacher's adaptation to the organisation and involvement in school development. However, the beginning teacher can take responsibility for their own professional growth by planning their actions, analysing and evaluating the growth of their coping skills and recording these processes in their development portfolio.

Outside the school environment, the universities (of Tallinn and Tartu) operate induction-year centres. These organise mentor training and beginning teachers' support-programme seminars and constantly monitor the implementation of the induction-year programme. The centres also plan development activities for the induction-year programme. The support programme offered by the universities is based on reflection, where beginning teachers analyse their practical experience (problems and successes) in small groups (of 10-15 teachers). Group discussions are led by highly experienced and professional teachers / teacher-trainers who have mastered the skills of managing reflection in groups and analysing learning and teaching and the teacher's role in it.

Lessons learned from the implementation of the induction year

Each year, the teachers who have completed their induction year are interviewed in order to collect feedback about the implementation of the induction-year programme and information with which to plan development perspectives. The results of the monitoring are analysed by the specialists involved in the programme, mentor trainers and organisers of beginning teachers' support programmes. Among the interviewees are novice teachers, mentors and school managers. The following areas are covered by the induction-year monitoring: a beginning teacher's professional growth and main practice-related problems, cooperation with the mentor, adaptation to, and cooperation in, the school environment and participation in the induction-year programme. Below is a comparative overview of the first year of implementing the induction-year programme (2004-2005) and results of the monitoring conducted in 2007-2008 (Eisenschmidt & Poom-Valickis, 2005; Reiska & Eisenschmidt, 2008).

Beginning teachers' professional growth

According to the results of monitoring conducted in both of the academic years, beginning teachers evaluated their professional growth during the course of their induction positively. At the end of the academic year, beginning teachers rated their professional competences higher than at the beginning of the year. In the induction-year monitoring of 2004-2005, beginning teachers (n = 145) found that the biggest positive change took place in the development of the following professional skills:

- ascertaining study results

- planning lessons, including preparing lesson plan

- using time efficiently.

Thus, according to beginning teachers' self-observations, competences related to teaching proficiency improved most during the induction year. The teachers gave lowest scores to the professional skills related to cooperation and giving feedback. Across the years, the areas which beginning teachers tend to see as most problematic are class management, establishing order/discipline, and self-assertion. Vocational- and general-education school teachers are less satisfied with their coping. The biggest issue for teachers beginning their career in a general-education school is class management, whereas beginning teachers in vocational schools find issues related to the curriculum, teaching and adaptation to the organisation most difficult. As a general rule, adaptation to the organisation is not difficult for general-education school teachers and kindergarten educators. In vocational schools which employ specialists with a wide range of educational background and careers and have students with varying backgrounds, adaptation to the organisation is more complicated and painful. The monitoring results from both of the studies showed that belief in one's own ability to attain professional goals and cope with teaching

duties increases in parallel with one's acquisition of competences. For example, it appears from the monitoring conducted in 2007-2008 (n = 151) that in the first school term 18 per cent of the respondents fully agreed with the statement that they were able to realise their work objectives, the percentage in the fourth term had increased to 48 per cent. The teachers' belief about their ability to cope with work duties grew during the academic year from 24 per cent to 52 per cent. A beginning teacher's tool-kit during the induction year includes the development portfolio, which supports a teacher's self-analysis. The format of the development portfolio has been constantly improved since the induction year was first implemented. Changes have been made both with respect to its objectives and to the requirements for its compilation. Over the years, beginning teachers' approach to self-analysis and the development portfolio as such has changed. When, according to the first monitoring, 37 per cent of beginning teachers considered that the development portfolio was necessary, 31 per cent did not consider it to be necessary and 33 per cent remained neutral. Then, in the second monitoring, 87 per cent of beginning teachers agreed, or principally agreed, that taking notes about work-related failures and successes helped them to improve their practice. Among beginning teachers, kindergarten educators were most willing to analyse their practice.

According to the results of monitoring, the time spent on self-analysis has increased over time. According to the interviews, in 2004-2005 beginning teachers spent 2.2 hours a week on average in analysing their practice and compiling the development portfolio (maximum five hours and minimum 0.1 hours; the most frequent answer was two hours a week). In 2007-2008, the figure was 3.4 hours a week (maximum 24 hours, minimum one hour).

The results of monitoring show that, as professional skills become more secure, beginning teachers also become more adept at assessing the completed teacher-education programme. The material studied at the university acquires meaning and teachers develop the skills of putting the learning into practice. So, at the beginning of the academic year 2007-2008, 69 per cent of induction-year participants considered their teacher education sufficient or principally sufficient, whereas at the end of the year, the percentage had grown to 74 per cent. In the interview conducted at the end of the academic year, beginning teachers were asked to assess their ability to cope as a teacher during the first year of work. It appeared that most of the teachers were satisfied with their performance during the first year since 96 per cent of the teachers who had completed induction in 2004-2005 wished to continue working as a teacher in the same position. The same percentage in the academic year 2007-2008 was even higher at 99 per cent.

As research on the effects of mentoring shows that participating in an induction programme and working with a mentor teacher reduce the likelihood that new teachers will transfer to a different school or leave the profession (Norman & Feiman-

Nemser, 2005; Daresh, 2003), we hope that participation in the induction programme has increased Estonian teachers' desire to stay with the chosen profession.

Mentors

During induction, the mentor is an important partner for a beginning teacher. As Norman & Feiman-Nemser (2005) noted, most induction programmes rely on mentoring as the primary induction strategy. Mentor programmes are based on the understanding that learning to teach is best accomplished with professional guidance rather than under an individual 'sink or swim' set of conditions (Conway & Clark, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2003).

At the same time, the mere presence of a mentor is not enough. If we want mentors to be able to support new teachers as they learn to teach, mentors need to have a certain level of competence and a special preparation programme is needed. In Estonia, all mentors, who have had no special preparation, now have the opportunity to participate in a basic course for mentors which lasts eight days (160 hours). The mentor training is financed by the Ministry of Education and Research.

The aim of the mentor training is to facilitate the formation of the counselling competences and attitudes necessary for the analysis and development of pedagogical practice, and to acquire the skills necessary for supporting teachers' professional growth and engendering a culture of cooperation.

According to the monitoring results for mentors, the opportunity to cooperate with young teachers was a new and interesting experience. The results of the interviews show that mentors are generally motivated by the desire to share their experience and support beginning teachers in adjusting to the school.

For years, most beginning teachers have said that mentor support was sufficient during the first year of work. In both of the monitoring studies, 84 per cent of the beginning teachers found that their mentor was a role-model teacher for them. This shows that the choice and training of mentors has been good.

From among the duties of a mentor, beginning teachers regarded support in adaptation to the school as an organisation as the most valuable. According to beginning teachers, a mentor is like a 'local guide'. According to the results of the first monitoring, mentors (n = 125) themselves regarded their skill of supporting beginning teachers' adaptation to the school culture and arrangement of work as their most important one. At the same time, the mentors considered it very important to acknowledge their young colleagues' achievements in attaining set objectives and developing the desired skills. According to the results of the second monitoring, however, the mentors (n = 107) regarded their skill of acknowledging beginning teachers and supporting their adaptation as their most important duty.

Both beginning teachers and mentors gave significantly lower scores to the mentor's skill of fostering the beginning teacher's professional growth, giving feedback, and

supporting their self-reflection. A reason for this may be that mentors lack prior experience of giving feedback to colleagues. On the other hand, mentors did not value very highly the need to analyse and document their own practice. However, certain positive trends can be detected in mentors' evaluations during recent years. Namely, at the end of the academic year 2007-2008 mentors gave better scores to their skill of guiding beginning teachers to achieve the set objectives and to analyse their practice. It seems that over the years, both beginning teachers and mentors – having become more assured of their skills – have started to value self-analysis more.

According to the mentors participating in the monitoring, the weak sides of teacher-preparation programmes offered by universities include:

• communicating with parents

• coping with discipline issues

• keeping documentation in order

• lacking practical experience.

On the positive side, the mentors found that young teachers' ability to find professional self-assurance was a sign that young teachers had developed their confidence and skills. They also acknowledged kindergarten educators' good skill in building contact with children and parents.

According to the results of monitoring, there has been some improvement in the area of giving feedback to beginning teachers, based on classroom observations. When in the academic year 2004-2005, 71 per cent of the beginning teachers interviewed said that, after the mentor had observed a lesson, the mentor 'always' discussed and analysed what s/he had observed (24 per cent responded 'often'), then in 2007-2008 the figure was 79 per cent (with *often* accounting for 18 per cent of responses). However, the mentors did not feel very secure about providing feedback to beginning teachers, and thought that they lacked knowledge and experience in this area. The mentors found it difficult to describe the teacher's actions neutrally and without emotion. For mentors, it was also important that colleagues and school management valued and recognised their work.

Over the years, the time spent on mentoring activities has remained the same: approximately 2.7 hours a week (in different years, the maximum was from eight to 15 hours). What the mentors considered most difficult was finding time for fulfilling their mentoring duties. An interesting aspect appears when comparing mentors' responses about support from school management and valuing mentor activity by school management across different years. Namely, in the first year of implementing induction, 67 per cent of the mentors interviewed found that the management supported mentoring; in 2007-2008 the figure was 74 per cent. At the same time, the figure showing the mentors' opinion about how school managers value mentoring had dropped a little (the percentages in the first and fourth induction year were

67 per cent and 62 per cent respectively). Unfortunately, according to the interviewed mentors, their colleagues valued mentoring even less. A little more than a half of the mentors (52 per cent) were satisfied with their colleagues' support, whereas 16 per cent thought that their colleagues did not value their mentoring activity at all. Acknowledgement and valuing mentoring both on the management's and colleagues' side is especially important because, year by year, mentors are receiving less remuneration for their mentoring activity.

As the biggest problem for mentors is a lack of time, school managements should seek solutions on how to decrease the workload of teachers who also work as mentors. If it is impossible to reduce the number of classes given by mentor-teachers, it may be possible to reduce the amount of their additional duties and responsibilities. Let us not forget that recognition is often more important than actual payment in money.

School managers also play an important role in the induction programme – this applies to both the selection of mentors and cooperation between the mentor and the beginning teacher. According to research, mentoring programmes seem to have little effect unless they have been integrated with other principles and practices adopted in development projects as pre-conditions for a reorganisation of the teaching profession (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000). Mentoring programmes can reform schools' action culture, if the mentoring becomes not only a way of helping individual teachers, but also a means of contributing to the construction of strong teaching cultures in schools that have made a commitment to the promotion of teaching, learning and caring (Jokinen, Heikkinen, & Välijärvi, 2005).

In course of the monitoring conducted in 2004-2005, school managers were also interviewed. It appeared that in the schools where teachers cooperate closely, school managers tend to value the induction programme more as a form of learning for beginning teachers (Eisenschmidt, 2006).

To summarise, being a mentor requires leadership, analysis skills and empathy. Mentors are often selected, therefore, not only on their professionalism, but also on their supervision skills and personal qualities. As mentoring should be a dialogue between two colleagues, it is essential for the novice teacher to be ready to acknowledge his/her needs for development and to receive feedback. But at the same time, it should be kept in mind that the school community, and the values of its members, have a substantial effect on novices' learning and attitude towards reflection, as well as on researching and developing his/her practice.

Support programmes by universities

A unique characteristic feature of the induction model implemented in Estonia is that, in addition to mentoring in schools, university induction centres organise beginning teachers' support programme (group mentoring) during each school holiday. This is where beginning teachers meet to seek solutions to their jointly shared problems. According to beginning teachers, the most valuable aspect of the support programme

offered by universities is an opportunity to obtain new information and ideas, share concerns and positive experience and learn from each other.

In general, beginning teachers have given high scores to the support programme offered by universities. In 2004-2005, 57 per cent of beginning teachers considered it important to participate in the programme (20 per cent were against the programme) and in 2007-2008 the figure was 69 per cent (23 per cent remained neutral). Beginning teachers valued the opportunity to learn from each other, discuss problems and communicate with peers. 25 per cent of induction-programme participants (in 2007-2008) said that the support programme supports self-analysis. An important aspect of the work conducted by induction centres has been research and development with a view to improving the quality of the support programme and standardising the programme across universities. It is interesting to note that kindergarten educators value the induction year and the support programme conducted by universities much more than general education school teachers. This may be due to general-education school teachers' large workload after classes which involves correcting students' tests and homework and holding consultation sessions. Lack of time is a concern, not only for beginning teachers working in general education schools, but also for mentors.

Summary

In 2008, a comparative analysis of monitoring conducted over three years was carried out to assess the efficiency of induction-programme implementation. It appeared that beginning teachers' opinion about induction-programme activities has become more positive over the years (Eisenschmidt, Poom-Valickis, & Oder, 2008). There is reason to believe, therefore, that the efforts made to improve the induction programme have been productive. Likewise, induction-programme monitoring has been useful. Constant work in improving the programme will continue and will hopefully never end.

A beginning teacher's readiness to grow professionally has been at the centre of the induction year. A pre-condition for professional growth is the reflection skill. The development of self-reflection skills has its roots in basic teacher education which involves activities that help to develop these skills. Research shows that a beginning teacher's readiness to set development goals and engage in self-analysis is directly related to the extent to which the beginning teacher feels his or her mentor's and colleagues' support. Unfortunately, universities lack experience of implementing a support programme which supports self-reflection. Feedback received from beginning teachers shows that, at the start of the university support programme, instead of supporting reflection by of asking questions, facilitating analysis and discussion, university teachers tended to use the traditional teaching style in the form of lectures. It must be noted, however, that the evaluations given with regard to the support programme differed both by university and by group of participants. Due to the

variations in the results, a thorough monitoring of the university support programme was carried out after the second induction year in order to analyse the competence of the organisers of the support programme and the teaching methods used. On the basis of feedback received about the induction programme, professors at Tallinn and Tartu Universities prepared an e-portfolio seeking to foster students' on-going reflection, and so as to serve as a stronger link between the basic teacher education and induction-programme activities. No matter how good the development in this area is, supporting beginning teachers' self-reflection will be one of the key tasks even after implementation of the next and fifth cycle of the induction-year programme.

The mentor has been, and is, an important support person in a teacher's professional development. Unfortunately, it appears that the mentor training conducted by universities does not provide sufficient help to mentors for supporting beginning teachers' learning and reflection. In shaping the content of mentor training, therefore, an increasing attention has been paid to analysing mentors' own work, presuming that this provides the best experience for supporting a beginning colleague's self-analysis. Induction programmes increasingly pay attention to learning within the school organisation, learning societies and creating an environment which supports the teacher's development.

More emphasis is being laid on the connections between the induction-year ideology, school development and the preparation of school leaders. Namely, the results of induction-programme monitoring show that successful implementation of the induction programme is largely dependent on the specific school, its organisational culture and especially the principals. This is because the school manager affects the choice of mentors, adjustment of beginning teachers' workload, appreciation of induction-programme activities and creating the optimum conditions for implementing the programme. It is largely up to the principal whether sufficient time is given for cooperation between the mentor and beginning teacher, whether the mentor has opportunities to observe the beginning teacher's classes and give him or her feedback and counselling, if necessary. Research (Eisenschmidt *et al.*, 2008) shows that teachers who feel supported by the school manager appreciate the support programme offered by universities more highly. It is clear, therefore, that we need stronger integration of school management, school development, and induction.

To summarise, we must note that induction-programme bottlenecks reflect the defects of the education system at large. When teachers cooperate little, when the school environment does not support or value learning from each other, then teachers' professional growth does not get sufficient support. When teachers are not very willing to analyse their work, we have obviously failed to cultivate this practice in the teachers' basic education, as well as in the in-service training stages. Teachers, mentors and teacher educators alike should pay more attention to reflection and know the best ways of developing it. When school managers do not value mentoring, then they will probably not have a very high regard for teachers' collegial learning

in more general terms, which means that the existing resources available for school development remain unused.

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How to cite this chapter

5 Teacher induction across the United Kingdom

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Teacher induction across the United Kingdom

Moira Hulme and Ian Menter

Abstract

This chapter outlines arrangements for new teacher induction across the four nations that comprise the United Kingdom: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Arrangements for initial teacher education, induction (the first year of teaching) and early professional development (the second and third years of teaching) vary across the four jurisdictions. Following (differing degrees of) political devolution from 1998, possibilities for greater cross-nation divergence in education policy within the UK have increased. Teacher education is undergoing a period of active development with the announcement in March 2011 of the Review of Teachers' Standards in England, the Review of Teacher Education in Northern Ireland (consultation conducted between June and November 2010) and the publication of the Review of Teacher Education in Scotland, Teaching Scotland's Future (Donaldson, 2011). The different ways in which issues of professional support are approached within each nation reflects an accommodation between supra-national trends and national contexts, histories and cultures.

On leaving initial teacher education, beginning teachers working in state maintained schools participate in a statutory induction programme. Induction Standards/competences, mentoring and assessment arrangements and release time for probationer professional development vary cross-nationally. A partnership model of induction was introduced in Northern Ireland in 1998. Induction Standards were set in Scotland in 2002 and in England and Wales in 2003 (revised in 2007). Most teachers aim to achieve 'full registration' or fully qualified professional status within one year, although this is influenced by the availability of teaching posts. Training for school-based mentors and the role of university-based teacher educators in induction is a source of debate and is stimulating some interesting developments in school-university partnerships in Scotland. This chapter identifies areas of convergence and divergence in policies on induction; and reviews research evidence on the effectiveness of induction programmes in the UK in enhancing teacher quality.

Introduction

Teacher education policy has been subject to change across the four countries of the United Kingdom in recent years. Cross-national variation in policy is to be expected

given the contrasting histories and traditions of the four nations that comprise the *dis*-United Kingdom (Phillips, 2003; Raffe & Byrne, 2005). Political devolution has opened up new spaces for 'local' inflection of trans-national policy agendas in education (Hulme & Menter, 2008). Formal devolution of legislative powers from the UK Parliament (on different terms and with varying powers) followed referenda in Scotland and Wales in 1997 and in both parts of Ireland in 1998. Three devolution Acts[1] created devolved legislatures – the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Irish Assembly; each with its own devolved administration – the Scottish Government, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Northern Ireland Executive respectively.

Further changes to the boundaries of devolved responsibilities are expected following a referendum (held on March 3rd 2011) to increase devolved powers in Wales and amendments to the Scotland Bill (2010-11), which follows the *Final Report of the Commission on Scottish Devolution* (the Calman Commission). A Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition was formed following the UK general election of May 2010 and for the first time all four jurisdictions of the UK were administered through minority or coalition governments. Subsequently elections in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland on May 5th 2011 have changed the political landscape of post-devolution UK. The Northern Ireland Executive remains comprised of the Democratic Unionist Party, Sinn Féin, the Ulster Unionist Party and the Social Democratic Labour Party. In Wales the Labour Party is governing alone without coalition partners to form a 'Welsh Government' (winning 30 of 60 seats). Most radically, in Scotland the Scottish National Party has formed a majority government for the first time (winning 69 of 129 seats), providing a strong mandate for further devolution of powers and a distinctive policy agenda north of the border with England.

The UK provides an interesting case through which to examine the extent to which national politics, culture and identity interact with 'travelling' or supra-national policy agenda on teacher education. Processes of educational borrowing in Europe have been established from the foundation of state responsibility for public education in the nineteenth century (Noah & Eckstein, 1969). *Home international* studies have the potential to explore contemporary processes of policy attraction and diffusion at close quarters (Raffe & Byrne, 2005). Policy pronouncements are frequently justified by comparative references to practice elsewhere, filtered through the lens of national political culture and mediated within local policy communities. Cross-national comparison is used to '*glorify'* (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004) and '*scandalise'* (Ochs, 2006), as both *'weapon'* and *'warrant'* (Cochran-Smith, 2002). 'Travellers' tales' from fact finding visits and syntheses of international research findings continue to contribute to the flow of information available to policy makers. This chapter sets out current arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers in each of the four countries of UK and identifies some political and economic influences on education policy that are likely to shape induction policy and practice in the future.

Induction arrangements in England

Teacher education in England is distinctive in a number of regards including control over the generation of '*Professional Standards*', regulation of teacher conduct, the availability of diverse routes into teaching (including employment based routes), the operation of 'pay standards' for teachers and performance tables (based on national assessments) for schools. Recent developments in England have seen the strengthening of central control over teacher education and teachers' work. The General Teaching Council for England, established in 1998, is to be disbanded by March 2012, returning accountability for teacher regulation to the government rather than the profession. Attention has focused on raising the calibre of entrants to the profession and significantly expanding the role of schools in professional development.

In England the professional standards for teachers have been regulated by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), an executive non-departmental public body of the Department of Education. The TDA changed its title from the Teacher Training Agency (established in 1994) in September 2005 to reflect an extension of its role beyond pre-service and in-service provision for teachers to having a responsibility for the wider school workforce, including teaching assistants. The TDA will become an Executive Agency of the Department for Education in April 2012, placing teacher training more directly under the Department's control. Its remit includes issues of teacher quality and teacher supply. Currently there are 41 Core Standards within a Professional Standards framework encompassing five career stages: qualified teacher status; core standards for main scale teachers who have successfully completed their induction; post-threshold teachers on the upper pay scale; Excellent Teachers (ETs); and Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs).

The creation of alternative, flexible and part-time routes into teaching developed in response to problems of supply in England and the pursuit of innovation in teacher education, including a range of responses to improving partnership work between schools and universities. University-led partnerships have been supplemented by School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) provided through consortia of schools. Routes into teaching include Bachelor's degrees with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and employment-based routes (the Graduate Teacher Programme, Registered Teacher Programme and Overseas Trained Teacher programme). In March 2010, 13 per cent of provisionally registered teachers (student teachers) were involved in employment-based teacher training; of those, 10 per cent followed the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTCE, 2010). Teach First, a two-year employment-based programme for 'top graduates' from 'elite universities' was introduced in London in 2003 and from 2011 has operated in six English regions: Greater London, Yorkshire, West Midlands, East Midlands, North West and North East.

Induction is a statutory requirement for all new teachers employed in maintained schools, irrespective of route. Since 1998 all newly qualified teachers (NQTs) have been required to complete an induction period of three school terms (or equivalent if not in full time employment). New teachers are assigned an experienced teacher as a dedicated 'induction tutor' and have a reduced timetable (10 per cent reduction) for support meetings and preparation. Transition from initial teacher education is supported by the sharing of a Career Entry and Development Profile which is intended to support focused discussion on development targets. It is expected that new teachers will be observed each half term (at 6-8 weekly intervals). Three formal assessment meetings are convened during the induction period attended by the Newly Qualified Teacher, induction tutor and headteacher. At the end of the induction period, the local authority decides whether the NQT has met the Core Standards for full registration based on the headteacher's recommendation. NQTs must pass Key Skills tests in literacy, numeracy and ICT and complete induction within five years.

Data from the annual teacher census indicates that achieving fully qualified status (completing induction) can be a lengthy process and a significant minority of teachers trained in England are not employed in permanent posts in maintained schools some years after initial training: '*68 per cent of the 2008 cohort had passed induction by the census date of 31 March 2010. 83 per cent of those awarded QTS in 2004 had passed induction by the census date of 31 March 2010*' (GTCE, 2010, p. 8). Eighty-two per cent of teachers who qualified in 2009 were registered with the GTCE in March 2010, of those 14 per cent were employed in temporary 'supply' posts (GTCE, 2010).

A review of Professional Standards for teachers was announced in March 2011. The Teacher Standards Review will publish an interim report in July 2011 proposing new standards for Qualified Teacher Status and Induction. This will replace that Standards Framework developed by the Training and Development Agency (TDA) that came into force in 2007. A full suite of significantly 'slimmed down' standards from initial teacher education through to headship are expected to be in place from September 2012. The composition of the Review Group signals the marginalisation of university Schools of Education in England and a return to narrower forms of consultation and more selective use of evidence. There was a greater appearance of consultation during the 2006 review of Professional Standards than there had been in the late 1990s when 'public consultation' was a process that was strongly controlled and even manipulated by Teaching Training Agency (now TDA) officers (Mahony & Hextall, 2000). The latest Standards Review, the consultation on which ran for just six weeks, appears to mark a return to more directive processes of policy formation. The fifteen-person Review Group is composed of selected school leaders, teachers and education consultants with strong representation from Academies (publicly funded secondary schools that are independent of local authority control). It does not contain any mainstream university faculty. Evidence in support of the proposed reform of Standards is drawn from the GTCE commissioned 2010 Survey of Teachers (Poet *et al.*, 2011).

It is likely that schools will be given a greater role in induction in the future. The White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching* sets out the Government's commitment to, *'giving outstanding schools a much greater role in teacher training in the same way that our best hospitals train new doctors and nurses'* (Department of Education, 2010, p. 3). The White Paper also signals moves towards increased selectivity of entrants to the profession, including doubling the number of places available on Teach First as well as financial incentives to encourage *'the very best graduates in shortage subjects'*. There is a new emphasis on 'good degrees' from 'good universities'. The paper also points to reforms that will increase the time spent in school during initial training and the development of *'a national network of Teaching Schools on the model of teaching hospitals to lead the training and professional development of teachers'* (p. 9). In February 2011, the National College announced that 810 schools have expressed an interest in becoming a teaching school. The first designated teaching schools (status to be renewed in a four-year cycle), providing initial teacher education and leadership development through to headship, will be launched in September 2011 with aspirations for 500 teaching schools by 2014 (National College, 2011). Schools that meet the eligibility criteria, and are identified as 'centres of excellence', will receive an annual core grant and additional funding for the delivery of specific teacher education services. There is some debate as to whether the funding available to schools is sufficient to support a significant expansion of school-based teacher education.

In summary, the professional knowledge base of teaching is currently subject to renewed scrutiny in England. There is a return to an emphasis on traditional subject knowledge. A curriculum review group is to propose the 'essential knowledge' required by pupils with a renewed emphasis on 'facts' (Education Secretary Michael Gove speaking on the Today Programme, BBC Radio 4, 20/01/11). Nick Gibb, Schools Minister, has argued that, *'good subject knowledge and the ability to communicate it are the most important attributes of successful teachers'* (Gibb, 2011). A proposed Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL), initiated by the previous administration, to support early career teachers' professional learning has been side dropped. A Scholarship Fund is to be introduced to support subject-based continuing learning at postgraduate level. For the Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition government in England reconciling greater opportunity and raising standards entails becoming more selective in the recruitment of new teachers ('raising the bar' on entry qualifications), promoting diversity in routes into teaching (for example through an expansion of the *Teach First* scheme for high achieving graduates, school-centred routes and University Training Schools) and diversity in school type (through expansion of the Academies programme and the introduction of 'free schools'). Within this policy 'ensemble' the role of teacher education is being reconfigured with greater emphasis placed on the school as a principal site for initial and continuing professional development. As yet there is no explicit national strategy to build capacity among school-based mentors who are expected to undertake a greater role in supporting teachers' initial and continuing professional learning.

Induction arrangements in Wales

From 1999 the Welsh Assembly Government has reviewed and re-modelled policies inherited from Westminster to reflect a distinctive *'Made in Wales'* agenda. Prior to devolution 'English' legislation had typically reappeared with Welsh 'strap lines'. In 2002 the First Minister, Rhodri Morgan, used the rhetoric of 'clear red water' to distinguish between *London Labour* and a Labour group in Wales committed to the advancement of Welsh interests. *The Learning Country* (National Assembly for Wales, 2001) set out a strong commitment to the continuing professional development of teachers. A continuum of career long professional learning was envisaged from initial teacher education through to development opportunities for experienced teachers, including sabbaticals, research bursaries, and a pilot of a Chartered Teacher initiative (Egan, 2009). Schools supporting early career stage teachers in Wales are entitled to funding to support induction (Year One) and Early Professional Development (EPD) (Years Two and Three of their teaching career). Induction and EPL funding of £1,000 (1,125 €) per annum, administered by the General Teaching Council for Wales, is available for new teachers who take up a post in a maintained school in Wales.

Formal induction procedures for teachers trained in Wales were established in 2003. Termly assessment meetings are convened with the new teacher, induction tutor and headteacher. The first formal assessment meeting considers whether the teacher is consistently meeting the standards for Qualified Teacher Status. The second review meeting considers progress towards the End of Induction Standard (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008). The Induction Standards sets out four key areas of practice: (1) professional characteristics; (2) knowledge and understanding; (3) planning, teaching and learning and class management; and, (4) monitoring, assessment, recording and reporting. The final meeting assesses whether the teacher has met the requirements of the induction period. If progress is satisfactory, the final meeting initiates plans for Early Professional Development including future priorities, targets and milestones for continuing development. At each review meeting evidence is used to assess progress against the Standard, collated in a Professional Development Portfolio. Sources of evidence presented for discussion include: lesson plans and materials, reflections on observations by and of the new teacher, samples of pupils' work, schemes of work, reflections on professional development activities, pupil attainment records, samples of records to parents and participation in moderation meetings. Importance is attached to on-going professional dialogue between the range of partners involved in supporting the new teacher in school.

There is a commitment in Wales that eventually qualification to teach will require a Master's qualification completed over three years: Initial Teacher Education / PGCE, induction and Early Professional Learning. The Education Secretary, Leighton Andrews, has recently expressed support for a move towards a two-year Master's course for initial teacher education with a higher level of classroom practice. Proposals

for continuing professional development include provision through 'learning hubs' based on the professional learning communities model.

Whilst the above review depicts a positive picture and strong attention to teacher development, there are a number of contextual challenges that need to be considered. A position paper from the General Teaching Council of Wales published in April 2011 questioned the quality of initial teacher education and induction in Wales. The standing of education policy in Wales has been adversely affected by recent poor performance in international assessments in literacy, numeracy and science. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2009, comparing 15 year-olds from 65 countries, placed Wales at the bottom of the UK performance table and indicated a significant fall in achievement in mathematics (OECD, 2010). This has resulted in widespread critical media coverage and calls for a return to national testing. Wales abolished national Standardised Assessment Tests and school performance tables in 2001. A recent research study has suggested that this reform *'markedly reduced school effectiveness in Wales'* (Burgess *et al.*, 2010, p. 1).

Wales contends with a continuing problem of over-supply that was the subject of the Furlong Review of Initial Teacher Education (Furlong *et al.*, 2006), which led to the reorganisation of seven university teacher education providers into three regional centres (North/Mid Wales, South West Wales and South East Wales). The 2011 Annual Statistics Digest from the GTCW register indicates that only four out of ten newly qualified teachers are successful in securing permanent teaching posts in Wales (GTCW, 2011). The scarcity of teaching posts means that the number of teachers meeting the Induction Standard is falling. New teachers are required to complete three school terms in a substantive post to meet the induction standard. Teachers employed in intermittent supply work take longer to meet the standard. An analysis of the current employment of teachers trained in Wales who gained Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) on 1st August 2005, found that five years after qualification only 45 per cent (920 of 2044) continued to be registered with the GTC Wales (GTCW, 2010).

The sustainability of positive policy developments achieved in Wales is dependent in part on available public resource. The impact of UK government funding cuts will be deeply felt in Wales. To date the economic situation has seen the withdrawal of financial support for CPD for experienced teachers and the postponement of the 'roll out' of the Chartered Teacher programme in Wales. The impact on other flagship policies of the post-devolution period such as the Foundation Phase, School Effectiveness Framework, Welsh Baccalaureate, 14-19 curriculum, school-based counselling services and the Pedagogy Initiative are yet to be seen (Reid, 2010).

Induction arrangements in Northern Ireland

Of the four jurisdictions Northern Ireland has pioneered a more integrated approach to professional development. The *Teacher Education Partnership Handbook* is clear that, *'the development of links between initial, induction and the early years of in-service education should enhance the career-long professionalism of teachers and reinforce co-operation between employers, HEIs, schools and the Boards' Support Service'* (DENI, 2010, p. 3).

In Northern Ireland, Education and Library Boards are the lead partners in the induction process. ELBs provide differentiated courses tailored to the needs of beginning teachers. ELBs also have responsibility for teacher-tutor training and development, and provide regional courses as well as school-based support on request. The core elements of tutor-training programmes are: *'coordinating a whole-school programme; identification and involvement of other key staff; monitoring and evaluating the programme of support; and skills of classroom observation, feedback and follow-up support'* (DENI, 2010, pp. 58-59).

At the start of the induction period, beginning teachers work with school-based teacher-tutors to develop a personal Induction Action Plan based on their Career Entry Profile, classroom needs, core values and teacher competences. Evidence of developing competence is collected in an Induction Portfolio to be presented to the school principal and chair of the Board of Governors. Evidence should demonstrate:

- *'greater complexity in teaching e.g. in handling mixed-ability classes, reluctant learners, classes marked by significant diversity, or inter-disciplinary work*

- *the development of a wider range of teaching strategies*

- *basing teaching on a wider range of evidence, reading and research*

- *extending one's impact beyond the classroom and fuller participation in the life of the school*

- *the capacity to exercise autonomy, to innovate and improvise; and a pronounced capacity for self-criticism and self-improvement*

- *the ability to impact on colleagues through mentoring and coaching, modelling good practice, contributing to the literature on teaching and learning and the public discussion of professional issues, leading staff development, all based on the capacity to theorise about policy and practice'* (DENI, 2010, p. 49).

It is perhaps unsurprising in the post-conflict context of Northern Ireland, that values and diversity are a prominent theme in teacher education. In June 2006 the General Teaching Council of Northern Ireland (GTCNI) produced a *Charter for Education* informed by the Unesco Delors Report (1996) *Learning: The Treasure Within*. This charter attempted to set out the moral purpose of education in the context of a divided society. The Charter followed the introduction of a revised Common Curriculum from 2005 that emphasises tolerance, equality and reconciliation. *Teaching: The Reflective Profession* (GTCNI, 2007) set out the code of values that inform

professional conduct. A significant challenge for Northern Ireland is increasing diversity within a homogenous workforce that is predominantly young, female, white and educated in selective grammar schools (Montgomery & Smith, 2007). The absence of representativeness among the education workforce increases the likelihood of variance in values-orientation between the profession and the wider community.

Like Wales, Northern Ireland also contends with the problem of over-supply (although there are shortages in some areas, for example in the Irish-medium sector). Whilst there are up to five times more applicants than places on courses for initial teacher education, only 22 per cent of teachers who graduated from institutions in Northern Ireland in 2010 and who are registered with the GTCNI obtained a permanent post or a teaching post of a significant temporary nature by December 2010. The process of achieving tenure in Northern Ireland, as is the case elsewhere in the UK, is increasingly lengthy and requires considerable resilience on the part of early career teachers. Of those who graduated in 2006, 76 per cent had secured a permanent post or a post of a significant temporary nature by December 2010 (Northern Ireland Assembly debate, Teachers' Employment, 28 February, 2011).

Induction arrangements in Scotland

Initial teacher education in Scotland is provided by seven universities. Each year around 3,000 students who successfully complete initial teacher education programmes are added to the Register of Teachers managed by the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS). At the time of writing, there are no employment-based routes into teaching in Scotland. The Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) was introduced in 2002 and offers a guaranteed one-year, salaried training place for students leaving university who have met the Standard for Initial Teacher Education. In 2010, probationer teachers completing the scheme received a salary of £21,438 (24,156 €).

During induction, all beginning teachers must demonstrate that they meet the Standard for Full Registration to achieve fully qualified status. Only fully qualified teachers can be appointed to permanent posts. The induction scheme is not compulsory but provides a route to fully qualified status within one school year, 190 working days. New teachers who elect not to participate in the TIS can achieve the Standard for Full Registration by completing 270 days of teaching service, with an appropriate programme of Continuing Professional Development, in temporary or supply contracts, or in the independent sector. This is known as the Flexible Route.

During the final stages of initial teacher education, students select five local authorities (from the 32 local authorities in Scotland), ranked in order of preference, where they would like to complete the induction period. Induction is available in publicly funded local authority schools. Alternatively students can opt for a preference waiver, which carries a financial incentive of £6,000 (6,760 €) for primary teachers and £8,000

(9,014 €) for secondary teachers, which means they may be deployed in less well subscribed areas of the country. The induction scheme protects time for professional development and support by setting a 0.7 full time equivalent timetable commitment for all new teachers. Each teacher is also assigned a probation supporter or mentor from among the school staff during the induction year. On entry to the induction programme, new teachers complete an Initial Professional Development and Action Plan with the support of a dedicated probation supporter. Reflection on progress is monitored through focused discussion in weekly meetings. An online Interim Profile is prepared in December, followed by a Final Profile in May of the induction year. Each of the 32 Local Authorities has a Coordinator of probationer support who is responsible for coordinating a programme of professional development tailored to the particular needs of new teachers in their region. The probationer coordinator also checks the completion of online Interim and Final Profiles prior to submission to the GTC Scotland.

In addition to the provision of a salaried induction year, the range of knowledge and understanding required of beginning teachers in Scotland is distinctive in some regards. We have noted elsewhere (Hulme & Menter, 2008) that interrogation of the Professional Standards for teachers across the UK reveals differences between dominant conceptions of teaching as a 'technical craft' and broader conceptions of teaching as an 'inquiring' and 'ethical profession'. The Standards for Initial Teacher Education and Full Registration (induction) in Scotland are explicit about the role of research and professional inquiry in teacher development. This may account for the more positive attitudes towards research reported by early career stage teachers in Scotland (Hulme *et al.*, 2008) compared to England (Poet *et al.*, 2011). In England it is only the Professional Standards for teachers at senior levels that specify an expectation of engagement in practitioner research.

Attention to early professional development through the induction of new teachers has been followed by growing attention to sustaining professional learning across the career course. This is evident in a number of initiatives that have sought to strengthen partnership work between schools, universities, local authorities and national agencies such as Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) (which is to merge with the schools inspectorate to form a new Scottish Education Quality and Improvement Agency in July 2011). Initiatives include the Scottish Teachers for New Era (STNE) programme at Aberdeen University (based on the US Carnegie funded, Teachers for a New Era); the development of mentoring programmes by LTS (including a pilot 'full release' mentoring scheme for experienced teachers in some local authorities) influenced by the work of the New Teacher Centre, Santa Cruz; and the development of a University Teaching School model by the University of Glasgow in partnership with Glasgow City Council.

The Donaldson Review of Teacher Education, *Teaching Scotland's Future*, was published in January 2011. The findings of the review, which emphasises the importance of the

higher education in the professional preparation of teachers, were largely welcomed by the education community. All of the recommendations were accepted in full or in part by the government in its response, *Continuing to Build Excellence in Teaching* (Scottish Government, 2011). A Donaldson implementation group (the National Partnership Group) has been formed (led by the Scottish Teacher Education Committee, the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland and the Government) to consider implementing the recommendations, which include a recommendation to *'achieve much better integration and progression between initial teacher education and the period of induction during probation'* (Donaldson, 2011, p. 9).

At the same time, a Review of Teacher Employment (the McCormac Review) is revisiting the teachers' agreement, *A Teaching Profession for the Twentieth Century* (2001), which followed the McCrone Report on teachers' pay and conditions. There has been increasing pressure from employers' organisations to re-examine the agreement in the light of straitened circumstances. The McCormac review reports in June 2011 and agreed recommendations are expected to be implemented from Autumn 2012. Changes proposed from August 2011 include: increasing the amount of class contact time for teachers on the National Teacher Induction Scheme from 15.75 hours to 18.5 hours per week; and capping payment for periods of supply teaching of five days or less at Point 1 of the Main Grade Scale (irrespective of experience). In March 2011, recruitment to and progression through the Chartered Teacher programme (a Master's programme for experienced teachers which provides enhanced salary increments for teachers who wish to stay within the classroom rather than follow a management career) was suspended with immediate effect (Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers, 2011, p. 4). Cumulatively, if accepted, these proposals will undermine the positive achievements made in support of a continuum of professional learning across the career course in Scotland.

In addition, in common with Wales and Northern Ireland, Scotland is now contending with a problem of over-supply of new teachers as a result of inaccuracies in workforce planning. Whilst lower than elsewhere in the UK, the proportion of new teachers *not* employed in teaching in Scotland in the October following induction rose from 5.3 per cent to 27 per cent between October 2005 and 2010 (GTCS, 2010a). The proportion of new teachers employed on permanent teaching contracts decreased from 66 per cent to 18 per cent between October 2005 and 2010 (GTCS, 2010b). Teaching numbers were maintained by the Government despite falling school rolls in a pledge to reduce class sizes and class contact time to 22.5 hours a week (and accommodate predicted retrial rates). However, as a result of the financial crisis many local authorities are reducing teacher numbers. The Teacher Employment Working Group (Paolo, 2008) has recommended the use of probationer teachers for supply work and the instigation of 'winding down' (early release) arrangements for teachers approaching retirement age. Intake numbers on initial teacher education programmes were significantly reduced in 2009 and 2010. Commenting in December 2008, the then Education Secretary, Fiona Hyslop, noted that the teacher induction scheme may

have 'displaced' rather than addressed the problem of new teacher unemployment (Scottish Parliament Information Centre, 2011, p. 10).

Summary: Induction Practice in the United Kingdom

Points of convergence across UK

- no financial recompense for induction tutors/mentors

- minimum statutory induction period is one school year / three terms

- moves towards integrated professional standards framework to support transition from initial education through to leadership roles

- formal assessment involving observation of the new teacher (minimum of six), with written feedback, and termly progress reviews

- moves towards master's level credits at an early career stage

- career Entry Profile used as a bridge between initial and induction stages

- links are made between induction and staff performance review and development procedures.

Points of divergence

- salaried one-year training post for newly qualified teachers in Scotland

- continuing provision of formal support for Early Professional Development in the second and third years of teaching in Wales and Northern Ireland

- issues of teacher supply have supported the development of alternative entry routes into teaching in England. In contrast, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland have fewer opportunities for new teacher permanent employment

- pay standards operate in England i.e. professional standards are linked to differentiated pay scales beyond induction (core)

- 30 per cent timetable reduction for new teachers in Scotland; 10 per cent reduction in England and Wales

- general Teaching Council is responsible for Professional Standards and regulation in Scotland

- core values of the profession are explicitly stated in Northern Ireland Code (GTCNI, 2004).

What have we learned about induction practice in the UK?

The evidence base on the effectiveness of different approaches to mentor preparation and the relative effectiveness of different mentoring strategies is currently limited within the UK and elsewhere (Hobson, Ashby *et al.*, 2009). The majority of studies are based on self-report accounts from mentees' and mentors offered in survey responses and participation in interviews, with a lack of observational research or research employing quasi-experimental designs. The challenges of operationalising control or comparison groups in educational research are well documented and this explains the scarcity of research that attempts to link induction arrangements with student achievement (Strong, 2009).

However, a systematic review of international research literature on induction has found *'strong support for claims that induction improves teaching effectiveness and promotes new teachers' sense of wellbeing'* (Totterdell *et al.*, 2004, p. 2). This review noted that effective induction systems attend not only to the development needs of newly qualified teachers, but also provide support for mentor teachers and school leaders. In the UK, mentor accounts reported by Hagger & McIntyre (2006) suggest an increase in collaboration and reduction in professional isolation. Hobson *et al.* (2007) note that some teachers are 're-energised' and 're-engaged' with the profession through the adoption of a mentoring role in school. A three-year evaluation of the Early Professional Development (EPD) Pilot Scheme in England (Moor *et al.*, 2005) reported that mentoring at an early career stage had a positive impact on mentees' teaching practice, career development, and commitment to the teaching profession. The EPD evaluation reported *'strong evidence that the early professional development of teachers had led to them becoming more effective members of their school communities'* (Moor *et al.*, 2005, p. iv). This study is one of the few UK studies to assert a link with pupil gains. Reporting survey findings from year 3 of the evaluation, Moor *et al.* (2005, p. iv) maintain that *'more than three-quarters of teachers and mentors indicated that EPD had considerably enhanced pupils learning'*.

Whilst most studies indicate potential benefits associated with effective mentoring, some studies conducted in England continue to report variable quality in mentoring practices and mentor preparation (Jones, 2002, 2005; Jones *et al.*, 2002; Harrison *et al.*, 2005; Bubb & Earley, 2006; Bubb e*t al.*, 2005). The Newly Qualified Teacher Quality Improvement study (2008), a large-scale study funded by the Training and Development Agency (TDA) for Schools found that the experiences of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) regarding induction are often less comprehensive than members of the school Senior Leadership Team believe. Several studies highlight the importance of establishing formal mentoring relationships in the workplace, including effective selection and preparation of school-based mentors (Bullough, 2005; Hobson, Malderez *et al.*, 2009). Effective mentors ensure an adequate degree of challenge, possess subject expertise, and support mentees' critical interrogation of practice

(Harrison *et al.*, 2006; Hobson *et al.*, 2007). Successful mentoring requires adequate release time to support the role, in addition to opportunities for face-to-face meetings with mentees. Case studies of exemplary induction practice internationally highlight the significance of access to a community of professional support for provisionally registered teachers (Piggot-Irvine *et al.,* 2009; Moir *et al.*, 2009). These considerations are important in the light of moves towards increasing the proportion of school-based training in England, enhanced partnership work in Scotland, and approaches to Early Professional Development in Wales and Northern Ireland.

Conclusion

From this review of induction it is clear that attempts to strengthen transition across the career stages and support professional growth throughout the career course are apparent across the UK. This commitment to a full continuum of teacher education from initial training to leadership preparation has been supported by the development of integrated frameworks of professional standards. It is accepted that initial teacher education is an insufficient basis for a career in teaching. Entitlement to financial and professional support during induction varies, with Scotland currently offering the most structured programme of formal support for new teachers. Whilst the processes of induction may not appear to diverge radically across the UK, the professional knowledge and standing of the profession to which the newly qualified teacher is inducted does appear to differ. The role of teachers in curriculum development and assessment, the extent to which 'ethical literacy' (Mahony, 2009) and core professional values are made explicit, and the meaning of what it is 'to teach' do differ, especially between England and the smaller countries that comprise the UK. It is equally clear that induction policies are influenced by the politics and economics of teacher supply and these have been subject to change across the United Kingdom, most recently from concerns over shortage areas and attrition to more general problems of over-supply. *Home international* studies, such as this chapter, bring to the foreground the importance of 'context specificity' (Crossley & Watson, 2003) in understanding how policies on induction are *enacted*, and learning to teach is *experienced*, in different jurisdictions. A key issue across all four jurisdictions is the under articulation of a role for higher education in existing induction practice. Research indicates that building capacity in mentoring and coaching is a priority for the profession. Higher education is well placed to contribute to this process – of professional support for new teachers and professional renewal for experienced colleagues – within new relationships of partnership.

Note

1. A separate Scottish Parliament and Scottish Executive were established following *The Scotland Act 1998.* The *Government of Wales Act*s of 1998 (and 2006) set up a separate assembly (and later an executive) with devolved powers in Wales, although without the tax varying powers afforded to the Scottish Parliament. *The Belfast Agreement 1998* established the Northern Irish Assembly, suspended on 12 October 2002 and restored on 8 May 2007 following *The Northern Ireland (St Andrew's Agreement) Act 2007*. Scottish Parliament & Welsh and Northern Ireland Assembly elections were held on 5th May 2011.

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How to cite this chapter

Hulme, M. & Menter, I. (2011). Teacher induction across the United Kingdom. *In* P. Picard & L. Ria (Eds.), *Beginning teachers: a challenge for educational systems – CIDREE Yearbook 2011* (pp. 83-104). Lyon, France: ENS de Lyon, Institut français de l'Éducation.

Appendix

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales
National population / *Teaching workforce* / *Number of schools* / *Local Authorities*	51.9 million (population) 560,000 registered teachers 22,430 publicly funded schools 433 Local Authorities	1.8 million (population) 18,996 registered teachers 1,200 grant aided schools 5 Education and Library Boards	5.2 million (population) 80,853 registered teachers 2,667 publicly funded schools 32 Local Authorities	3 million (population) 38,700 registered teachers 1,753 maintained schools 22 Local Authorities
Introduction of new teacher induction	1999, statutory requirement for new teachers employed in maintained schools (exclude independent schools and further education colleges).	1998	2002	2003
Pre-requisites	Must have attained Qualified Teachers Status (QTS) (and passed Key Skills tests in literacy, numeracy and ICT before completing induction). Must do no more than 16 months short-term supply work before commencing induction.	Must have attained professional competences expected of initial teacher education and be registered with the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland as eligible to teach.	Must have attained Standard for Initial Teacher Education, must be registered with the General Teaching Council for Scotland.	Must have attained Qualified Teacher Status, must be registered with the General Teaching Council for Wales and must be employed in a maintained school or non-maintained special school. Induction must be completed within five years (Five year rule on short term supply teaching).
Transition from Initial Teacher Education	Online Career Entry and Development Profile; Observation within first four weeks of induction and then at 6-8 week intervals. Reduced timetable. 0.9 full time equivalent timetable, in addition to Planning, Preparation and Assessment time (available to all qualified teachers).	Career Entry Profile on completion of ITE. On completion of the induction stage, beginning teachers are required to register for Early Professional Development with their area Education and Library Board.	Career Entry Profile on completion of ITE. One-year salaried training post on Teacher Induction Scheme (or Flexible Route). Reduced timetable. A full-time teacher has 22.5 hours of class contact (actual teaching) time each week. During the induction year, probationers have 15.75 hours of teaching (0.7 Full Time Equivalent) and 6.75 hours protected for CPD (0.3 Full Time Equivalent).	Career Entry Profile on completion of ITE. 0.9 full time equivalent timetable (10% reduction), in addition to Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time (available to all qualified teachers). Induction is followed by a two year programme of Early Professional Development.
Professional Standards	Core Standard (Induction) (TDA, 2007) 41 core standards, currently under review. • professional attributes • professional knowledge and understanding • professional skills	Integrated set of 27 teacher competences (DENI, 2010), with exemplars for each of the stages of teacher education: initial, induction, early professional development and continuing professional development. • professional values and practice • professional knowledge and understanding • professional skills and application	23 elements to the Standard for Full Registration (GTCS, 2006). • professional knowledge and understanding; • professional skills and abilities; • professional values and personal commitment	End of Induction Standard (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008) • professional characteristics • knowledge and understanding • planning, teaching and learning and class management • monitoring, assessment, recording and reporting
Funding for induction	Funding for the induction is incorporated into the main school funding system. No training salary available for probationers.	No training salary available for probationers.	Training salary available for new teachers on the Teacher Induction Scheme.	Funding administered by the GTCW following submission of Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) Induction Record and Induction Assessment Record to the Local Authority. No training salary available for probationers.

6 Being a competent novice teacher: is it primarily a matter of implementing the appropriate mentoring scheme?

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Being a competent novice teacher: is it primarily a matter of implementing the appropriate mentoring scheme?

Finn Daniel Raaen

Abstract

Mentoring schemes can help novice teachers make the transition from education to work in various ways. They can promote the development of a more inclusive and emotionally supportive workplace culture. Such a culture is probably the most decisive factor in whether teachers successfully deal with their professional challenges at work, regardless of whether they are experienced professionals or new graduates. However, mentoring may also support widespread individualism in schools and promote a tradition-oriented teaching role, thus hampering teachers' continuing professional development. This essay will elaborate on how to meet these challenges and strengthen the professional qualifications of both graduates and experienced teachers.

Introduction

Many professionals, including novice teachers (Caspersen & Raaen, 2010), describe the transition from education to work as 'shocking'. One way of easing the transition for newly qualified individuals is through mentoring. Systematic mentoring schemes have a positive effect on novice teachers' practice (Dahl *et al.*, 2006). Whether graduates receive systematic mentoring varies from country to country. In many countries, state or municipal authorities are responsible for the development of mentoring schemes (Fransson & Gustafsson, 2008; Howe, 2006). The benefits of mentoring are well known. In this article, I adopt a different approach and discuss some possible negatives associated with the mentoring of newly qualified teachers in primary and secondary schools and whether this process functions chiefly as a remedy for shortcomings encountered in education and work. I show that mentoring schemes often help sustain a widespread individualistic culture in schools. I also show that the building of professional teacher teams, which can support teachers in their continuing professional development, can be hampered by mentoring schemes.

Mentoring and development of reflective teaching teams

Mentoring schemes established in various countries sometimes share similar features. Research comparing mentoring schemes used in different professions has also revealed some thought-provoking results. A Swedish study comparing the military and the school system found that new second lieutenants to a significantly greater extent than new teachers were guided progressively into the profession and had far more opportunities to learn from others in their on-going work (Fransson, 2006). This finding is in agreement with other studies on teacher training. A certain pattern seems to emerge: The professional status of teachers is primarily derived from the ability of teachers as individuals to cope (Engeström, 1994; Lortie, 1969). What graduates often ask their mentors about, and what they are also offered, is largely individual support to solve practical, technical problems in schools (Christophersen & Eriksson, 1999; Brock & Grady, 1998; Cains & Brown, 1998; Stukát, 1998). To a large extent, teachers believe that their ability as individuals to maintain control and to focus on rules and procedures is what determines their success as teachers (Eraut, 2002; Furlong & Maynard, 1995; Hoy & Rees, 1977). School leaders regard novice teachers' individual ability to keep control in the classroom as a central indication of their success (Oakes & Lipton, 1999). Furthermore, research has revealed that the acceptance of newly qualified teachers often depends on their ability to find their place within the prevailing conditions that an established school environment has to offer (Lacey, 1977). Many novice teachers describe the issue of learning to cope as a process that must be figured out on an individual basis (Fransson & Morberg, 2001; Rosenholtz, 1989). Surveys have indicated that novice teachers are often assigned school courses that the other teachers do not want to teach (Bergsvik *et al.*, 2005). Furthermore, research has also showed that collegial communities based on relational support are weakly developed in many schools (Hallquist, 2006; Elmore, 2002). In addition, surveys and qualitative studies have revealed that colleagues seldom discuss or question each other's ways of teaching. One primary school teacher described the situation as follows:

> *'Obviously we work together a lot. We spread the work among us, and we also plan and undertake some work together but it is not much, really. A joint evaluation of teaching – no, that it is very scarce. My experience is that most teachers are a little reticent to comment on each other. If we are two teachers sharing the class, I think we both feel it would be best if the other took his group out. It's a bit sad, but this is just how it is'* (Raaen & Aamodt, 2010, p. 280, our translation from Norwegian).

The emphasis seems to be on the ability of teachers to cope as individuals rather than on their ability to collaborate. This line of reasoning also suggests that teachers lack confidence in each other. Furthermore, research has indicated that the value of mutual technical and relational support is largely unrecognised. Each teacher often seems to maintain this pattern, in a form of self-fulfilling prophecy. When an upper

secondary school teacher was asked whether he believes that there may be a benefit in teachers working together, he provided the following response:

'Yes, but there are many who have blinders on – "It's me, and it is mine; no one else should disrupt it". Should it [the collaboration] work, one must be really confident in each other. Yes, I see things that others on the team might have done differently, also the experienced, but I hardly dare to think about what the others might say if I, who have not been in the game for more than just three years, should say that "I think you should maybe do this or that." […] Those who are experienced in the game – they are used to having their own specific subjects. It is not easy to challenge them, least of all for me who am quite new. It probably would have been difficult to keep on working together if I had confronted them. […] Each of us mainly protects our own ways of doing things. […] The exchange of knowledge and experience on the team is pretty much a superficial "prattling". Some of what is said is in a cheerful tone, but it is not of much importance for our work – no, not really' (Raaen & Aamodt, 2010, pp. 280-281, our translation from Norwegian).

Research has indicated that teachers may cooperate with their colleagues and feel free to ask others for advice and help, but they try to avoid being overly persistent or curious in this type of situation (Raaen & Aamodt, 2010). This line of demarcation makes it difficult to find out how others really do things and to receive feedback about one's own performance. Research has also revealed that teachers rarely discuss the consequences of their own teaching performance on student learning. Teacher isolation seems to be the biggest obstacle to developing collaborative cultures in schools (Lytle & Fecho, 1991). Many teachers describe team teaching to be of little use because it often implies that two or more teachers just do what each of them could easily do separately (Welch, 2000; Friedman, 1997). Teachers' collaboration with colleagues and with school leaders seems mostly to involve planning, coordination, and practical arrangements as opposed to the provision of professional feedback, which is known to raise teacher performance standards (Raaen & Aamodt, 2010; Havnes, 2009).

Overall, research suggests that an individualistic culture of learning is prevalent in many schools. In such a culture, teachers receive little information about each other's ways of teaching and lack opportunities to share their learning strategies (Jang, 2006). Under these circumstances, mentoring does not challenge an established individualistic culture but rather supports it in most situations. Analysing the consequences of an existing practice or reflecting on the implications of established goals and underlying norms and values rarely seems to occur in schools (Caspersen & Raaen, 2010). Several studies have indicated that the focus of mentoring is primarily on what novice teachers lack rather than on what they may provide (*Unge Pædagoger*, 2008; Hansen *et al.*, 2002). Experienced colleagues are described as being little concerned about whether teaching graduates possess resources that can be of use in the community of practice at school (Mathisen, 2007). Limited attention is thus given to how collegial collaboration can promote professional development and how novice

and experienced teachers can be an important support for each other. A discussion addressing how collegial guidance can contribute to the personal and professional development of those involved is also lacking in the literature. In addition, little is said about what types of dialogue and learning culture should be in place if experienced and novice teachers find it meaningful to allocate time to exchange their views on teaching and learning. I believe that a change in perspective is required to detect these deficiencies in teacher collaboration and school culture and that mentoring schemes on these terms may play an important role in challenging the prevailing individualism in schools.

A culture of cooperation

Many teachers have stated that they do not find their individualism to be entirely positive and have claimed that they would like to receive more than just technical support. Research has also shown that many teachers want to discuss issues and solve problems together but rarely transform these aspirations into practice (Welch, 2000). Do schoolteachers want greater educational and professional cooperation and support from their colleagues but are faced with a lack of opportunity to do so within their school's culture of learning? Research studies exist that support such a hypothesis.

International research has indicated that novice teachers find it very useful to be involved in team teaching (Ginns & Watters, 1996). A recent study combining quantitative and qualitative data also revealed that cooperating on work activities and receiving support from colleagues and management at school seemed to have a greater influence on teachers' coping than did their level of teaching experience. More specifically, in schools where a high degree of collegial and superior support and collaboration are offered few differences existed between novice and experienced schoolteachers' levels of coping, no differences in their perceived abilities to contribute to pupils' learning and motivation, and only small differences in their confidence levels as teachers. In that study, the novice teachers had taught school for 0 to 3 years (Caspersen & Raaen, 2010). These findings are in accordance with international research showing that a lack of support from peers has a negative effect on one's own experience of mastery and that collegial support and teacher cooperation are essential elements in preventing burnout (Brouwers, Evers, & Tomic, 2001). Another study showed that teachers involved in learning through collaboration had a higher perceived mastery than those who did not participate (Shachar & Shmuelevitz, 1997). This finding is also supported by several international research projects that have described teamwork as a key aspect of teachers' professional development and interaction with colleagues as a prerequisite for establishing professional school cultures (Jang, 2006). In addition, research has showed that collegiality is important not only for bolstering teachers' perceptions of support but also for cultivating cultures in which ideas and criticism are generated (Day, 2000; Day *et al.*, 2007).

Moreover, research has indicated that teachers are more willing to experiment and try out new teaching approaches when they have a community of colleagues to lean on (Rosenholtz, 1989). An inclusive workplace culture that is based on professional and emotionally supportive cooperation has been shown to be at least as important as teaching experience in terms of teachers' confidence levels and their expectations of coping (Raaen & Aamodt, 2010). This finding raises the following question: Do schools' mentoring schemes reflect such a collaborative culture?

Previous research has indicated that teachers have the potential to strengthen their professional practice and to challenge the widespread individualism that exists in schools. Mentoring programmes may introduce novice teachers to research studies explaining how supportive and reflective teams can contribute to their continuing professional development. However, this type of programme alone is insufficient to challenge the prevailing individualistic culture. Extensive research has revealed that learning in the workplace also requires an adequate infrastructure for learning (Wenger and Snyder, 2000; Hargreaves, 1997; Rosenholtz, 1989), including the existence of meeting places and meaningful tasks to perform as ways to promote cooperation (Scribner, 1999; Rosenholtz, 1989). Furthermore, greater focus should be placed on the implications of an existing school infrastructure for communication and decision making. It would also be helpful to develop a shared vision to which participating teachers can refer, including a common vision of what constitutes effective class leadership and teamwork. In addition, a common understanding of what concepts and principles foster good teaching and teacher collaboration needs to be reached (Shulman & Shulman, 2004). Shulman and Shulman stated that teachers who engage in collaboration must recognise the importance of learning from their own experience and from that of others, as well as what takes place inside and outside the classroom. According to Shulman and Shulman, teacher partnerships that rest on such assumptions may provide a basis for reflective practice and professional development and learning that will prepare teachers to act as members of a community of learning. Other researchers (Åberg, 1999; Jönsson, 1998) have emphasised that breaking with an individualistic culture requires the involvement of school leaders who are open and specific in their educational policies and judgments, who are able to build bridges between different approaches, and who are specific about how their plans can be implemented. These researchers also stress the necessity of a clear and mutually agreed division of labour between leaders and teams, in terms of how decisions should be handled. For teamwork to be successful, school leaders also need to exhibit confidence in teachers' cooperation and to show support for team initiatives (Friedman, 1997).

Although many schools do not have such a culture of learning, it may not necessarily be a problem for newly qualified teachers, experienced teachers, or school leaders who are keen to learn and develop their capabilities. However, this type of situation does require those individuals involved to be patient, to be willing to think long term, and to proceed with small steps, starting with what one can do and seeking inspiration

from what others do. This may also apply to mentoring. The point of mentoring is to build on the valuable aspects of existing knowledge and learning methods of which not only experienced teachers but also recent teacher graduates may be in possession. Both novice and experienced teachers have unique resources that can be used in the development of their learning environment; that is, their resources can be used to facilitate a break with a dominant individualistic culture. Experienced and newly qualified teachers possess different characteristics, which can serve different purposes. Experienced teachers have knowledge and varied experience in teaching. On the basis of their practical understanding of school conditions, they may be able to show novice teachers how to apply theoretical knowledge in practice. In addition, experienced teachers often know more than recent teacher graduates about what kind of control is necessary to exercise if a classroom is to function as a good learning environment (Eraut, 2002). Novice teachers in turn have recently undergone teacher training and other contextual experiences. Therefore, their presence may provide an impetus for change in schools. Moreover, novice teachers may need to articulate their lack of knowledge of school conditions and raise questions about various aspects of school life that experienced teachers may overlook. In this sense, novice and experienced teachers can draw on each other's resources in their own work and professional development. Raaen (2010) illustrated this point in his description of a staff meeting at an upper secondary school in Norway. In the following excerpt, an experienced teacher explains how the addition of a newly qualified teacher (Lisa) as a member of the staff will have a positive impact on the team by virtue of the fact that she is new:

'She is new, and she has questioned why we have those meetings concerning the subjects … what functions these meetings really are meant to fill. She has also asked why we have meetings between different teams … what they really are intended to provide. And she has asked for more sharing of experiences. We are pleased to have Lisa on our team because after she arrived we have received many new ideas. She has also talked about discussing our experiences from practice, which we also plan to introduce on our team' (Raaen, 2010, pp. 236-237, our translation from Norwegian).

The newly qualified teacher, Lisa, made the following comment:

'Well, I felt that during our team meetings, it was just like, "Okay, now we will address all our problems, all that we struggle with." But we need inspiration as well. I mean, we need to discuss actual cases, not only negative but also reflect on what works. I can elicit other people's perceptions of my experiences, and I can provide them with my perceptions of their experiences. Another issue I have suggested that we may discuss and present to each other during our team meetings is our views on how, for example, we believe that students can best learn English … through the exchange of experiences. The intention is to feel more confident as teachers, that is, more confident in our subjects, so that we may be confident when we get in our classrooms' (Raaen, 2010, p. 237, our translation from Norwegian).

Such an understanding of professional learning requires openness to change and innovation and an eagerness to draw on the views and experiences of not only experienced teachers but also novice teachers. As illustrated in the example, inter-subjectivity provides an opportunity for the exchange of ideas, where one can build on each other's ideas and use arguments from joint discussions to enhance one's own development (Cordingley *et al.*, 2003). In accordance with previous research (Murata, 2002), the example shows that in close working relationships, novice teachers are more inclined to experiment and expand their repertoire, whereas experienced teachers tend to renew and revise their established opinions. Mentoring can introduce novice teachers to a culture of dialogic learning.

Concluding remarks

Mentoring schemes can facilitate novice teachers' transition from education to work in various ways. They can help develop a more inclusive and emotionally supportive workplace culture, which has proved to be just as important as teacher experience in influencing teachers' coping ability and confidence in their work. However, mentoring may also support traditional teacher professionalism and a school culture based on individualism. If a mentoring scheme has that effect, it may hamper teachers' continuing professional development. In this type of situation, teachers may argue that they lack the opportunity to do otherwise. Thus, to make a change, teachers have to think differently by starting on a small scale and recognising those initiatives from colleagues that can support greater joint professional learning. All forums in which teachers and school leaders meet and discuss will then be important. However, teacher teams here seem to be of special importance because the actual work associated with teaching and the daily challenges faced by teaching colleagues are brought into focus.

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How to cite this chapter

Raaen, F. D. (2011). Being a competent novice teacher: is it primarily a matter of implementing the appropriate mentoring scheme? *In* P. Picard & L. Ria (Eds.), *Beginning teachers: a challenge for educational systems – CIDREE Yearbook 2011* (pp. 105-117). Lyon, France: ENS de Lyon, Institut français de l'Éducation.

7 *Neopass@ction*: a training tool for beginning teachers

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Neopass@ction: a training tool for beginning teachers

Patrick Picard and Luc Ria

Abstract

As part of the reform of teacher education in France, the Neopass@ction platform[1] seeks to provide examples of actual teacher work at national level as distance self-training resources or institutionalised training with trainers or tutors. Neopass@ction is mostly based on video resources likely to significantly contribute to the professionalisation of beginning teachers. This paper examines the various training and support schemes available. Unlike some normative models based on the identification and dissemination of 'good practice', Neopass@ction resources are designed to emphasise the gradually changing activities and attitudes of beginners.

Teacher education and recruitment in France: recent trends

Major changes in teacher education and recruitment are under way in France. Under the previous training system, teachers only needed to hold a *bachelor's degree* in order to sit competitive recruitment examinations:

- Future primary school teachers used to spend one year on a work-study course in a teacher training college (*IUFM*), with several teaching practice tutored by field trainers (expert teachers who qualified by gaining a specialist degree).

- Future secondary school teachers used to be appointed in a school on a part-time basis, while also attending courses and teaching practice organised for them by *IUFMs*, with a view to deepening disciplinary and pedagogic knowledge.

- Newly qualified primary and secondary school teachers benefited from several weeks of specific teaching practice jointly organised by the IUFM and the inspectorate. This training scheme was not unanimously approved. Indeed, a significant number of young teachers felt that they were not adequately prepared to deal with the various occupational difficulties they were to meet. In June 2010, teachers were recruited for the first time under the '*Masterisation*' scheme, whereby all French teachers, whether in primary or secondary education, are hired only after completing five years of tertiary education after the baccalaureate (*baccalauréat*). A future teacher in France now has to meet two criteria to become

a fully qualified teacher: holding a master's degree and passing the competitive recruitment examination organised by the French Ministry of Education. Once these criteria are met, newly qualified teachers become civil servants after one probation year. Teachers recruited by private schools must also pass competitive examinations and are paid by the State if they are part of grant-aided schools. However, they are not civil servants. It should be noted that currently local education (*rectorats*) also recruit temporary and contract-based staff in secondary schools only in order to make up for missing teachers in classrooms. These non-qualified teachers may sometimes, after several years of service, take an internal examination to become fully qualified civil servants.

The reform of initial teacher education in 2010, as a result of the *'masterisation*[2]*'*, represented a radical shake-up of the system to enter the teaching profession. It was revised as follows:

- Lengthening training time compels students hoping to become teachers to obtain their master's degree. They are expected to write a dissertation during the second year of the master's degree and also to prepare for the two-stage competitive recruitment examination. Written examinations take place early in the second year of the master's degree and oral examinations are held at the end of the year. Numerous students may therefore find themselves completing their master's degree, even though they have failed the written examination to become a teacher. Two options are offered: either they change course the following year or they will try again to pass the written examination the following year.

- Universities are now responsible for teacher education under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education and Research. They are now largely autonomous as a result of the *loi LRU*[3] (University Act) passed in 2007. Teachers' future employer – the Ministry of Education – is only involved peripherally in initial teacher education through the convention with a university in charge of placing students on teaching practice held during the two years of the master's degree.

- The competitive recruitment examination mainly assesses disciplinary knowledge, especially during the written admission tests. While oral examinations rather assess the candidates' teaching and relational skills, the overall academic course does not guarantee that those who pass the competitive recruitment examination will master basic professional competences.

- During the first year after they passed their recruitment examination, trainee teachers are appointed directly to a school, with full-time responsibility for classes. They are given proximity support and attend several trainee-specific meetings, depending on the available budget. Expert instructors and educational advisers (in primary school) and tutors (lower and upper secondary schools) provide guidance and support under the aegis of inspectors. At the end of this year as trainees, teachers qualify provided they were not negatively assessed.

All of these reasons explain why the professionalisation of young teachers (in the sense of their capacity to teach in an ordinary professional context) is really inadequate when they are appointed as trainee civil servants. As soon as the new induction system came into effect in September 2010, several dissenting voices drew attention to the substantial difficulties encountered by newly-appointed teachers. The usual difficulties experienced when entering the profession seemed to be more acute: fatigue was worse and field trainers were increasingly expected to address urgent problems while their ability to do so was inhibited by the fact that they could not find a suitable balance between classroom practices and the detached analysis of occupational situations. Such a balance would enable beginning teachers to gradually build appropriate responses. Teachers' unions, without dismissing the principle of *masterisation*, called for a reform of the first teaching year on a split-time basis, which they argued would provide adequate professional training.

Development of research on (beginning) teacher work: new ideas for improving teacher education?

In recent years in France, there have been several research programmes into the professional activity of teachers, including beginning teachers. Based on the assumptions of activity theory, these programmes seek to better understand the difficulties of 'the real job' compared to the work prescribed by the institution (e.g. Ria, 2006; Saujat, 2010). In a professional world that offers plenty of instructions as to 'what must be done', but relatively few as to 'how to do it', these research programmes taking seriously the 'provisional representations or spontaneous beliefs' that teachers develop over the various stages of their career to cope with the urgent situations that they constantly face. These research programmes consider it crucial to lay the stress on the environment of beginning teachers if they are to clearly understand their development stages and the compromises when teaching (Wittorski, 2007). Plans may be made to show them 'what must be done' through 'expert' sessions, but trainers know that beginners sometimes are at a loss: *'It's a nicely-run class. But what should I do to achieve this level? Where should I start?'* When there is a gap between the 'dreamed job' and the 'real job ', disillusionment can set in.

Teaching has undergone major changes over the last ten years through myriads of new prescriptions and organisations: school projects, collective work, partnerships with social-educational or economic operators, cultural projects, skills-based assessment, efforts to eradicate violence or school drop-outs, tutoring, relations with parents, partnerships with the Ministry of Defence, ICT use, efforts to lower class-repetition rates, schooling for disabled children, etc. This long and varied list illustrates the extent of changes to which teachers must adapt. They are faced with a wider range of tasks, must perform ever more after-class or out-of-class work, and need to get

involved in collective action and partnership activities around shared projects and sessions targeting increasingly heterogeneous groups.

In France, a demanding core of ten teacher competences defines the new professional model. An international symposium[4] on the transformation of the teaching profession was held in March 2011 by the designers of the *Neopass@ction* project. It gave rise to a scientific discussion on the professional changes faced by teachers, and the need to resort to various scientific frameworks to get a clear understanding of the profession as a whole but also specifically.

The contribution of research to the modelling of teacher work, particularly that of beginners, can pave the way for new forms of training and support to beginning teachers. One of the questions that arise then is how best to choose between several training options: is it about helping young teachers to become familiar with the daily tasks of the job? Is it about bolstering their feeling of professional security? Is it about developing new competences to handle new instructions, thereby giving them a role in 'transforming' the job? Is it about helping them to cope with the professional dilemmas that they will have to face during their careers? The teams that worked together as part of the *Neopass@ction* have made decisions on all of these issues.

Origin of *Neopass@ction*: a team with a multi-perspective approach

Since 1993, the *Centre Alain-Savary* at the former French Institute for Educational Research (*INRP*) has focused on the link between research and the production of resources for trainers and institutional officials, especially in troubled and educational priority areas. A first 'consensus conference' (2007)[5] organised by the *Centre Alain-Savary* highlighted several tensions faced by teachers dealing with underprivileged students. These were the socialisation approach *vs* the learning approach, motivation by instant success *vs* demands of long-term learning, class management *vs* educational differentiation.

The *Centre Alain-Savary* initiated a research project with several university research teams[6] that collected accounts and data on practices while working for several years with young teachers in troubled areas[7]. The idea behind it was to better appreciate how teachers solve these dilemmas and to understand how in-class and out-of-class teacher work is reorganised, both individually and when working with other staff members. Using video recordings, the researchers observed a wide range of 'ordinary work' situations that gave them a better understanding of the *specificities of beginners' work* and how they seek to deal with them. Then they developed theoretical models about the job of beginning teacher.

These data and models, which were discussed during research seminars at the *Centre Alain-Savary*, were presented to trainers and institutional officials who were invited to take part in trainers' training sessions organised at *INRP* (Carraud, 2011). It was assumed that the research material collected could become training tools designed to be added to the resources already used by trainers for supporting teacher induction. But experience showed that the idea could not be taken for granted. How was it possible to make sure that the video material collected, which was designed for a comprehensive use (young teachers are often found in delicate situations), would not be used for other purposes such as unsubtle caricatures or relentless criticism, thereby harming the very image of the videotaped people and causing the very opposite result to the one intended?

Then the research group devised an organised platform of resources that would present both the ethical framework for use, video resources, support texts and proposals for training sessions. This idea was endorsed by *INRP* management and *Neopass@ction* was soon declared a priority project for 2010-2011.

Neopass@ction: a tool for developing and enhancing the work of teachers and trainers

Neopass@ction aims firstly to show the complexity of the teaching job: for every topic explored, 'typical' class – the various ways in which beginning teachers cope with trouble students and classes – are examined. For each classroom situation, a snapshot of a filmed teacher gives background information on his or her experience, motives, expectations from the situation, what s/he intended to do, what s/he would have liked to do, the urgent choices made, and any questions that s/he may have. Other beginners give their impressions of the filmed situation, explaining what they would have done differently, commenting on what their colleague did and relating how their own experiences compare with those of their colleagues.

More experienced teachers also voice their opinions, share their reactions and experiences and explain how they would have handled the situations, mentioning what techniques they use to deal with them, or indicating to what extent the questions raised by beginning teachers may still be at the heart of their daily professional concerns. For each topic, about a hundred short accounts form a collection of 'professional experiences' that contribute to enriching the profession and to better understanding the professional responses developed by teachers.

The topics offered by *Neopass@ction* are aimed at both primary and secondary school teachers. There are currently five topics selected on the basis of their importance to young teachers:

• getting students to work (primary education)

- helping students in class

- getting pupils to talk (primary education)

- habits and instructions at nursery school

- teaching two grades (primary education).

Other topics are being developed. Training courses are also offered to beginning teachers and trainers in a dedicated space, enabling them to put into practice several scenarios depending on their own objectives and constraints.

How can this tool be used?

The main aim of the platform designers is to provide beginning teachers with answers to the professional questions that they ask themselves. The initial observations of how beginning teachers use the platform, including those who use it 'autonomously', show that they see likeness between what they experience and the situations studied. They realise that the problems they face are not personal but professional problems. They find the tool effective at enabling them to take a detached view of their own specific work by exploring the generic problems encountered by beginners (Ria & Leblanc, in press).

But *Neopass@ction* also aims to become an additional tool in the toolbox of the trainers who support beginning teachers: learning to observe, problematising, exchanging, putting classroom situations in perspective, and reorganising one's didactic approach are not solitary exercises. The platform can then be a tool for organising collective work geared towards solving professional 'tensions' and 'controversies' and enabling trainers and teachers to improve their approaches, especially in the most difficult situations. One of the specificities of the resources offered is that not only classroom situations are shown but also the young teachers filmed are given a voice, offering insight into the sense they give to their actions, the dilemmas that they have to manage and the temporary compromises that they make. The platform allows users to watch with some of the filmed teachers several months or years later, and realise the new resources that they have been able to develop.

Rather than taking the usual approach contrasting novices with experts and speaking in terms of shortcomings compared to an ideal, inaccessible model, what is sought here is to identify the transformation process typical to novices and open the way for designing training resources towards activities that reflect different 'objective' and 'subjective' forms of effectiveness. The resources based on this vision of transformation do not seek to teach prescriptively what should be done. Rather, they seek to see how effectively professional situations can be gradually changed. This training approach focuses on topics critical to beginners but also to the whole profession. Basically, the purpose is to help teachers to anticipate changes in the way they work with a view

to facing difficulties that have not been met yet but that are likely to be met over the first months or years of their teaching careers.

Presumably, beginning teachers will make a profitable use of the resources available on the platform in several ways:

- finding a likeness between one's activity and peer or 'quasi-peer' activity

- finding relief from identifying what typically characterises beginners learning their job; by gaining awareness of the typical characteristics of a beginning community that is learning the job

- understanding the transformation process of beginners' activity

- experiencing by proxy the situations that other beginners have lived and assessing their effects on students

- learning other teaching approaches they will have the opportunity to try out with their own classes

- anticipating situations that have not been encountered yet by capitalising on the experiences gained by peers

- learning from more experienced teachers and analyse their own professional concerns with hindsight.

Careful observation to understand how the tools are used, and raise questions about training methods

Neopass@ction is mostly based on video resources likely to contribute significantly to the professional development of beginning teachers (Mollo & Falzon, 2004; Leblanc & Veyrunes, 2011). This perspective questions the very training and support schemes for beginning teachers. Unlike some normative models based on the identification and dissemination of 'good practices', *Neopass@ction* resources are designed to emphasise task-focused principles (Ria & Leblanc, 2011):

- Working on the basis of the *concerns* expressed by beginners themselves rather than focusing primarily on the explanations that experienced teachers or trainers may come up with.

- Providing teaching situations that are sufficiently *representative* for beginners to identify with them and comparing similarities and differences with peers in order to gain confidence: *'it's not a personal problem, it's a beginner's problem (or even an occupational problem)'*.

- Understanding that the job is always a more or less operational *compromise* between what teachers are asked to do and what it takes from teachers. The compromises

differ according to the people concerned but are historically part of the job. Teaching has always implied continuous improvements to handle occupational transformations and needs to be debated by professionals to avoid undermining the effectiveness of teaching.

- Showing how teachers change and highlighting the alternation between necessary stabilisation phases to save one's energy and phases of reasonable self-criticism that may give rise to new professional approaches.

- Connecting the 'standards of personal viability' for beginning teachers with the stakes of disciplinary knowledge and student learning. The focus should be placed on what is specific to the teaching activity: organising a favourable environment to student work.

A new era for teacher education?

'*Learning from teaching situations, learning from beginners and learning from the most experienced teachers.*' The *Neopass@ction* designers' approach should be evaluated on the basis of a research-based connection between these three paradigms. This necessary connection challenges the support and training situations that are currently offered to beginning teachers:

- Training departments are asked to combine face-to-face group work sessions (with a tutor/trainer who can reorient discussions of representative experiences in the light of beginners' personal accounts), and distance browsing of the platform's resources, including via new media (mobile phones and tablets).

- Trainers are expected to re-examine the development model of professional techniques and beginners' competences at various levels (classrooms, schools, peer examination, individual tutoring, training courses and meetings, etc.) and reach conclusions towards new initiatives.

- New questions are raised as to the overlap between 'beginners' problems' and 'occupational problems'. Indeed, experienced teachers' techniques to advance student learning are not exactly identical to those prescribed by educationalists or educational researchers. For example, while beginning teachers wonder about *'the impossibility to teach differently to 24 students'* as part individualised tutoring, the most experienced teachers also voice their own dilemmas to meet the multiple prescriptions of the job. In this respect, the *Neopass@ction* platform also seeks to fuel professional debate on the topical issues of the job in order to help professionals invent new resources to address them.

- Therefore research-based categories have to be reorganised as research is often split between those who prioritise knowledge *per se* over knowledge to be taught and knowledge for teaching. The classroom situations available on the *Neopass@ction*

platform show that these two occupational dimensions are frequently intertwined: (a) mastering disciplinary knowledge to understand the didactic problems faced by students and teachers in learning situations, and (b) mastering the 'professional techniques' to be implemented to ensure the smooth running of classes.

The trainers' task, therefore, is to highlight these new connections and new methods to understand their various dimensions and help beginners to gradually build teacher capacity to perform their job effectively and provide with structured learning. The knowledge specific to trainers is also to be debated by these professionals themselves.

Collaboration and exchange are crucial

That is why the team in charge of *Neopass@ction* pays careful attention to innovative field uses to add *Neopass@ction* resources to the tool box for trainers. To this end, several *académies* (local education authorities) have already organised courses for trainers with the *Institut Français de l'Éducation* (French Institute of Education). National seminars are also organised to pool information about how different users avail themselves of the tool. Educational scenarios designed for trainers are gradually included in the platform and resources are improved to reflect the needs expressed or the comments made. This is an explicit research topic for the academics interested in the project. In addition, several doctoral theses focusing on the uses of *Neopass@ction* are in progress. Hopefully, they should eventually be of great scientific capacity to make a demanding assessment of it. It is the price to pay to know for sure whether such a platform can be truly useful to teacher training (both beginning and experienced teachers).

Notes

1. *Neopass@ction*: http://neo.inrp.fr/neo.

2. A master's degree is now required to become a teacher in France.

3. Under the 2007 University Act *(LRU)*, budgets would no longer be allocated to individual university departments directly by the Ministry. Instead, universities would receive a lump sum, and the academic committee would then choose how to allocate funding to different departments and projects. This would also lead to an alteration in the rules regulating the committee's decisions, and the establishment of a majority voting system in both teacher categories (lecturers and professors). The Chancellor of the university would take personal responsibility for overseeing this new structure. The purpose of the *LRU* law is to bring universities into line with European and Anglo-Saxon standards, in accordance with the Bologna process.

4. http://www.inrp.fr/metier-enseignant.

5. *How can training be changed to provide better support in 'difficult areas'?* Consensus conference organised by INRP (Centre Alain-Savary), IUFM Créteil, IUFM Versailles. Paris, January 24th 2007. http://cas.inrp.fr/CAS/formations/ressources-pour-les-formateurs-en-education-prioritaire/conference-de-consensus.

6. ACTé laboratory, IUFM Auvergne ; Blaise-Pascal University; CIRCEF-ESCOL laboratory, University of Paris 8; LIRDEF laboratory, IUFM Languedoc-Roussillon, University of Montpellier; SES-CREFI-T laboratory, University of Toulouse-Le Mirail; ADEF research unit, University of Provence; *Education and Politics* research unit, University of Lyon 2.

7. The way that the Ministry of Education's assignment system works means that young teachers are often appointed to the positions that are considered the least attractive by older teachers. In some very difficult schools, annual turnover of new teachers can exceed 50 per cent.

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How to cite this chapter

Picard, P. & Ria, L. (2011). *Neopass@ction*: a training tool for beginning teachers. *In* P. Picard & L. Ria (Eds.), *Beginning teachers: a challenge for educational systems – CIDREE Yearbook 2011* (pp. 119-130). Lyon, France: ENS de Lyon, Institut français de l'Éducation.

8 National induction programme for teachers in Ireland

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National induction programme for teachers in Ireland

Mark Morgan and Mary Burke

Abstract

This paper will explore the development of the National Induction Programme for Teachers in Ireland from pilot status to a national programme. The main objective of induction in the Irish context is towards supporting the personal, professional and pedagogical development of beginning teachers by way of systematic support in the first year of teaching. The programme comprises five main elements: school-based mentoring; off-site professional development via the Education Centre network; professional development support groups; individualised support at school level from the Induction Programme support team and phone and email support as well as a dedicated website.

The paper focuses on the primary strand of the programme through the pilot phases of the project and the initial year of the National Induction Programme. The National Induction Programme for Teachers is now a cross-sectoral programme, encompassing both primary and post-primary strands. The paper will track the development of the programme highlighting the findings of key phases, with a focus on the challenges experienced by beginning teachers and the supports which they found effective, efficient and beneficial. Traditionally, in Ireland, as in other countries induction into the teaching profession was not systematic or structured. Central to the new induction programme is the reduction of a sense of isolation with a special focus on school-based mentoring. *However, the* professional development programme *at Education Centre level, which is available to all beginning teachers, is also very effective in providing professional development support as well as providing opportunities to share ideas and experiences. Providing opportunities for peer-learning, through learning-focused conversations in* professional support groups, *is also critical given that many of the primary schools in Ireland are small rural schools.*

The paper will take at brief look at the training of mentors for their role as mentors at school-level and also the training of facilitators for their role as facilitators of the professional development programme at Education Centre level. Evidence from the Irish context to date suggests that the induction experience of beginning teachers, as participants on the Induction Programme, has been very successful.

In this paper, we consider the recently introduced National Induction Programme for Teachers in Ireland and, in particular, the primary strand of the programme through the pilot phases of the project and the initial year of the National Induction Programme for Teachers (2010-2011). The National Pilot Project on Teacher Induction was established in 2002 and was a partnership initiative between the Department of Education and Science (now the Department of Education and Skills), the Irish National Teachers' Organisation, the Colleges of Education / Universities and the schools which were participating in the project. The National Induction Programme for Teachers is now a cross-sectoral programme, encompassing both primary and post-primary strands.

Firstly we set out the context of the programme, particularly aspects of the selection of teachers in Ireland and how this impinges on induction, as well as the international and research influences on the planning of the programme. Part two of this report sets out an evaluation of the pilot project (primary strand) on induction which influenced the shape of the National Induction Programme for Teachers. In the third part, we describe the main features of the current programme including mentoring, workshops and other relevant supports. A final section examines the challenges for the future.

Context of the National Induction Programme for Teachers: distinctive features and research influences

Below we consider some of the major features of the context of the introduction of the National Induction Programme for Teachers, including some distinctive features of primary teaching in Ireland. We also take a brief look at the international literature on induction, especially on the quality of induction programmes.

Distinctive features of teaching in Ireland

For a variety of historical and economic reasons, the Irish educational system is somewhat different from other European countries; some of these differences impinge on teacher recruitment and professional development as well as on induction. A striking feature is that young people entering primary teaching at the undergraduate level are among the most able; all, in terms of achievement, are in the top 10 per cent and many have a level of achievement in the Leaving Certificate (the examination at the end of post-primary education) that would enable them to select most courses in University including law, business studies and the humanities. A related point is that teacher attrition, which is such an issue in many western countries, is not a feature of the Irish system; while estimates are hard to make and while undoubtedly some people do indeed drop out, there is agreement that this number is quite small.

In contrast to many countries the 'reform agenda' has not resulted in a deterioration in the morale of Irish primary teachers. Beginning teachers in Ireland are more motivated by the intrinsic rewards of teaching; the results of a survey of 749 Irish teachers who had qualified during the previous five years, showed that the everyday positive events like student engagement were the most important factors in commitment and efficacy (Morgan *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, that study showed that while policies and influences with remote origins may be ultimately responsible for school environment, it is the perception of events at school level and classroom level that mostly impinge on motivation.

Quality of induction programmes

Because induction programmes are relatively new in Ireland, particular attention was given in planning and development to the international experience and the factors that contribute to quality induction. Our thinking has been especially influenced by Feiman-Nemser's notion of a continuum of learning to teach. In her view, *'if pre-service teacher educators could count on induction programmes to build on and extend their work, they could concentrate on laying a foundation for beginning teaching and preparing novices to learn in and from their practice'* (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1016).

Feiman-Nemser mentions a number of challenges of many induction programmes. Sometimes induction is thought of as short-term support and while this approach may be effective in reducing stress and getting over immediate problems, there is a real need for induction programmes to promote teacher development. Another important issue is the dichotomy between support and assessment. Because new teachers need a basis for deciding what to work towards, it is important they experience formative assessment. Finally, there are constraining conditions in schools that arise from the culture of teaching; staffing arrangements which sometimes work against suitable placements for beginning teachers and also working in circumstances that are exceptionally difficult. Furthermore, the desire to appear competent means that many beginning teachers are reluctant to disclose their problems or ask for help on the grounds that good teachers manage those themselves.

Among the suggestions put forward by Feiman-Nemser as being critical for effective induction are the following: (i) appropriate assignments for beginning teachers, particularly work conditions that meet the teachers' need for assisted entry into the professional role, (ii) integrating assistance and assessment, (iii) a strong mentoring component, involving the careful selection, preparation and supporting of mentor teachers, and (iv) collaboration between the various partners in teacher education so that there is a seamless continuum between pre-service and induction, involving coherence and continuity. These considerations were examined in the planning and development of the induction programme, particularly the mentoring component.

Along the same lines we were influenced by the distinction between 'limited induction' which focused on support, orientation and retention and 'comprehensive induction' which has policy support, is of longer duration, involves education

partners and is aimed at promoting career learning that enhances teacher quality. The study of induction in five countries by Britton *et al*. (2003) is based on this distinction as is the OECD (2005) *Teachers Matter* study. We were determined as far as possible that the project would be more comprehensive than the limited version.

Successful features of programmes in international research

In a later section, we describe the main features of the National Induction Programme for Teachers. An important consideration in developing the features of the programme was the international literature on the specific features of induction that were most beneficial. For example, while mentoring is generally assumed to be helpful, not all components of mentoring are equally valuable (Hobson *et al*., 2009). In a review of studies by Wang *et al*. (2008), it emerged that what beginning teachers most value is to observe other teachers teaching and to be observed by colleagues. Furthermore, lesson observation and lesson-based discussions with a mentor are especially helpful. Further evidence on the role which mentors play comes from studies that show that it is especially beneficial when mentors challenge the 'normal' concerns of beginning teachers by reframing them in a different perspective or by shifting beginning teachers' attention to more important issues in teaching (Achinstein & Barrett, 2004). Considerations regarding the provision of quality induction and the identification of appropriate programme components were of major importance in selecting the features of the *National Induction Programme for Teachers* described in the next section.

Evaluation of the pilot phase of the National Induction Pilot Project

The pilot phases of the induction project are set out in Figure 1. Before the final decision was made on the extension and mainstreaming of the project, evaluations of the pilot project were undertaken on a continuous basis. Key components of the different phases of the pilot project involved access to the support of a school-based trained mentor, release time for trained mentors and beginning teachers to undertake induction activities at school level, off-site professional development workshops, support from the project team, provision of a mentor's guide and initial mentor training.

In June 2008 and 2009, questionnaires were sent to all participating beginning teachers and mentors; the questionnaires were used to garner participants' experiences of the pilot project, particularly their satisfaction levels and the aspects that contributed most to their experience of success as well as the aspects that posed challenges. The information generated was especially informative in identifying the components of the pilot project that were especially successful and how these components contributed to beginning teachers' satisfaction levels and indeed to the satisfaction levels of mentors also. The results of the evaluations formed an important part leading to the backdrop of the final shape of the programme.

This evaluation focused on the following questions: (i) What was the overall perception of mentors and beginning teachers with their experience of induction? (ii) Which element contributed most? (iii) In what specific ways was the pilot project helpful? and (iv) What can be said about the commitment of beginning teachers to teaching and to the schools in which they are employed?

Overall views on pilot project on teacher induction

Table 1 shows the evaluations of the beginning teachers and the mentors for 2009 and 2008. What strongly emerges from this table is the extent to which both groups in both years give the project a positive rating. The level of satisfaction of the beginning teachers is well over 90 per cent in both years while the mentors' rating of satisfaction is just under 90 per cent. Conversely the number of beginning teachers and mentors who found the project unsatisfactory is extremely small and does not exceed four per cent in any year for either mentors or beginning teachers.

A breakdown of gender differences emerged as not significant. There were relatively minor differences in the percentage expressing the highest level of satisfaction, particularly in 2009 with females giving the most favourable ratings; however, these were not statistically significant. In Ireland, as in many countries, there are two pathways to teaching; either the B.Ed. route which involves a three-year programme following post-primary school or a post-graduate programme which consists of an eighteen-month programme following graduation. A comparison of the two groups coming through these routes showed no significant difference.

Beginning Teachers	2009		2008	
Very satisfactory	61.0	(178)	62.7	(151)
Satisfactory	33.2	(97)	31.5	(76)
Hard to say	3.8	(11)	3.7	(9)
Unsatisfactory	1.4	(4)	0.8	(2)
Very unsatisfactory	0.7	(2)	1.2	(3)
Mentors	2009		2008	
Very satisfactory	50.6	(89)	53.7	(65)
Satisfactory	35.8	(63)	35.5	(43)
Hard to say	10.8	(19)	7.4	(9)
Unsatisfactory	2.8	(5)	1.7	(2)
Very unsatisfactory	--		1.7	(2)

Table 1: Overall evaluation of the pilot project by beginning teachers and mentors

What elements contributed to the success of the pilot project?

As was clear from the ratings of both beginning teachers and mentors, the experience of the pilot project has been very positive. The question now arises as to what elements contributed to these positive views. We approached this matter by raising the following questions: (i) What are the views of the beginning teachers on the various elements of the project; (ii) How does each element correlate with the overall perception of the success of the programme. These are quite different questions; it is possible to have a very positive view of some elements and yet this may not contribute to the overall success of the pilot project.

Table 2 shows the percentage of beginning teachers who thought that particular elements made an excellent/good contribution to the success of the pilot project in 2008. Overall, every element contributed to success in an important way – but with some appearing to be particularly important. It is interesting to note that the support of the mentor and the meetings with other beginning teachers as well as the professional development workshops were thought by over 90 per cent of the participants to have made an excellent or very good contribution to the success of the pilot project. It is also interesting to note that other aspects including observation of other teachers teaching were also rated very highly. Opportunities to be observed (although quite challenging) were rated by three quarters of the participants as making an excellent/ good contribution. In the context of the Irish primary school classroom, peer observation is a relatively new concept so this rating is a significant one.

	Percent Excellent/ Good Contribution	Correlation with Rated Success
Support of mentor	93.4	.60 **
Professional development modules	94.6	.35**
Meeting with NQTs	94.5	.21**
Observing other teachers	89.5	.23**
Opportunities to be observed	75.6	.36**
Opportunities to work with other professionals	73.8	.28**
Opportunities to plan for teaching and learning	88.8	.39**

Table 2: Contribution of elements of the pilot project (ratings and correlations)

In some respects the correlation in Table 2 is more important than the absolute percentage since they indicate the features that contributed most to the success of the pilot project. The very strong correlation of 0.60 with the support of the mentor shows the importance of this factor. It should be noted also that the opportunities

to plan for teaching and learning and the professional development workshops also yielded strong correlation as indeed did the opportunities to be observed. These results indicate that while the support of the mentor was the strongest factor, other components of the pilot project also contributed to perceived success.

Specific ways in which induction was helpful

The beginning teachers were asked about the specific ways in which the pilot project was helpful to them. The results shown in Table 3 indicate the perceptions of the helpfulness of the project for each element listed, for 2009, as well as the correlation of each element with the rating of the success of the pilot project. Overall, the various elements listed were given high ratings. Even in the case of the elements that were relatively lower than some of the others, a very significant percentage thought that the various elements were helpful / very helpful. For example, three-quarters of the respondents felt that the project helped in their work with parents.

	Per-cent Helpful / Very Helpful	Correlation with rated success of project
Enabling me to seek support and advice	94.6	.67**
Enabling me to adjust to the school's culture	80.1	.46**
Enabling me to cope with classroom demands	87.0	.63**
Caring for my professional needs as a teacher	90.0	.56**
Supporting me in planning and preparation	87.3	.51**
Assisting me in working as part of a school team	78.4	.52**
Assisting me in working with parents	74.4	.40**

Table 3: Specific ways in which the pilot project was helpful

Table 3 also shows the correlation between the perceived helpfulness of various elements of the pilot project and the rated success of the project. This indicates how important each element was in the overall judgement of the success of the pilot project. What is striking is that the correlations were highly significant ($p<.01$) for all of the elements. It was especially striking that a very high correlation emerged between 'enabling seeking advice and support' and the rated success of the pilot project and also in relation to 'coping with classroom demands'. However, the correlations were substantial with other elements of the pilot project including working as part of a school team and working with parents.

Commitment of beginning teachers to vocation and school

A convenient distinction can be drawn between two concepts of commitment, (i) commitment to teaching as a vocation, and (ii) commitment to the specific school in which the beginning teacher is now employed. While these concepts are related, there is some value in keeping them separate as is the practice in the literature on teacher retention. In the evaluation, participants were asked to indicate on a 1-7 scale how sure they were about each statement – absolutely sure (1 and 2), moderately sure (3 to 5) and not sure at all (6 and 7). Table 4 shows the percentage of beginning teachers who fell into the 'absolutely sure' category for each statement, for 2008 and 2009. The overall level of agreement is extremely high and only in a small number of instances falls below four-fifths of the participants. It is particularly interesting that the highest endorsement centres on the statement, *'I feel pleased that I decided to be a teacher'*, with close to 90 per cent absolutely sure about this statement. This is a very positive outcome and suggests a very high level of satisfaction with teaching at this critical stage in their careers.

Vocational	2008	2009
Teaching is right for me	79.0	85.2
Teaching seems a very important part of my life	77.8	77.8
I feel pleased that I decided to be a teacher	88.9	86.3
I am likely to be teaching in ten years time	75.7	75.7
Enthusiasm for teaching is as great as when I started	84.4	79.5
School		
I am happy to continue working in this school	80.6	78.5
I feel good that I got a job in this school	88.5	86.1
I would like to continue working in this school	79.7	77.9

Table 4: Vocational and school commitment of NQTs

In earlier studies of the impact of induction programmes, it has been shown that a major positive outcome of such programmes is that participants in induction programmes are more likely to remain in the school in which they started teaching than are other teachers. For this reason, the very strong commitment to their schools that is evident from Table 4 is extremely important. It is particularly significant that over 85 per cent teachers felt absolutely sure that they felt good about getting a job in the school in which they were now working.

Evaluation of induction programmes in other countries

Evaluations of induction programmes carried out in the UK have generally produced positive results (Hulme & Menter, this volume). They note that like the present evaluation, these are largely based on self-reports of participants. In this regard, a recent review of international evidence, and based on student learning (among other measures), by Ingersoll & Strong (2011) is instructive in at least two respects. Firstly it is evident that the greater the quality of mentor supports available together with other induction activities, the more positive the outcomes. The features examined included: (i) regular meetings with mentors, (ii) seminars or classes for beginning teachers, (iii) participation in a network of teachers and (iv) supportive communication with principals and other administrators. What was especially striking was the finding that the 'package' of mentoring activities produced the most positive impact in terms of commitment to teaching. In other words, one feature on its own was less effective than a comprehensive set of induction/mentoring activities. That review also showed that the degree of engagement in induction and mentoring by beginning teachers, the more positive the outcome and this applied even in studies that examined the student achievement of beginning teachers. In other words, the mere availability of induction or mentoring programmes is not the critical factor but rather the extent to which teachers got involved in the activities.

Mainstreaming of the National Induction Programme for Teachers in Ireland

The final shape of the National Induction Programme for Teachers in Ireland was guided by three considerations: (i) international research, (ii) the results of the evaluation of the pilot project, and (iii) the specific features of Irish schools relevant to beginning teachers.

In Ireland, beginning teachers must immediately, on their first day on the job, assume full responsibility for a class of between 20 and 30 pupils (approximately) and, apply their knowledge and skills in a new school environment. Beginning teachers are inducted simultaneously into a particular school's culture and into the teaching profession. Traditionally, in Ireland, induction into the teaching profession was not systematic or structured. The introduction to the classroom often consisted of being handed the keys and the register and given the advice, *'if you need anything, I'm down the corridor or ask the teacher next door!'*. In this unique stage in the life of a beginning teacher, the term induction is used to describe many concepts. Feiman-Nemser *et al.* (1999) talk of three key concepts – transition, socialisation and sustained support. For many beginning teachers the transition from student to professional is particularly challenging as it involves a shift of their role from student teacher to teacher of students. This is especially true for younger beginning teachers, as they come to

terms with their role as professionals in an adult world. This can mean that the establishment and maintenance of relationships with older adults, especially parents, can be acutely stressful for them.

In many countries, induction has become a structured and comprehensive programme of professional development for beginning teachers entering the school and profession. Wong, Britton and Ganser in describing teacher induction, refer to induction as:

> *'A highly organised and comprehensive form of staff development, involving many people and components, that typically continues as a sustained process for the first two to five years of a teacher's career. Mentoring is often a component of the induction process'* (Wong, Britton, & Ganser, 2005).

The need for systematic support for beginning teachers was recommended in various reports and reviews in Irish education throughout the 1990s. *The National Pilot Project on Teacher Induction (NPPTI)* was established in 2002 as a partnership initiative between the Department of Education and Science (now known as Department of Education and Skills), the three teacher unions, the colleges of education / universities and the schools participating in the project. The pilot project began with a specific purpose which was to develop proposals for an effective programme of induction for beginning teachers, which would be tailored to their particular professional needs and sensitive to the strengths, requirements and challenges within the Irish education system. Over the different phases of the pilot project various models of induction were explored. Figure 1 summarises the various elements of research undertaken and the development of new resources for the design of an effective, sustainable and flexible induction programme, in supporting beginning teachers, mentors and principals within the Irish context.

In July 2010, the Minister for Education and Skills announced that an induction support programme would be available to all qualified primary teachers who had been granted conditional registration by the Teaching Council and whose only remaining condition related to probation (DES, Circular 0058/2010).

Phase 1 & 2 2002-2004	– Report summarising the establishment of NPPTI and initial research findings on induction within the Irish context against the backdrop of international research findings – Models of induction explored involving combinations of release time for mentors and beginning teachers, for both school-based induction and mentoring and off-site professional development – Support for schools from project co-ordinator
Phase 3 & 4 2004-2006	– Significant numerical and geographical expansion of schools involved with NPPTI – Mentor capacity building – Models of induction explored involving combinations of release time for mentors and beginning teachers, for both school-based induction and mentoring and off-site professional development – Support for schools from project co-ordinator

Phase 5 2006-2007	– Mentor capacity building – Models of induction explored involving combinations of release time for mentors and beginning teachers, for both school-based induction and mentoring and off-site professional development – Support for mentors and beginning teachers at school level by the pilot project team – Report on the investigation of the cluster school model, in a south-eastern region – Report on the investigation of the cluster school model, in a western region – Exploration of MOODLE: online educational resource – Initial mentor training programme designed and developed
Phase 6 2007-2008	– Mentor capacity building – Models of induction explored involving combinations of release time for mentors and beginning teachers, for both school-based induction and mentoring and off-site professional development – Support for mentors and beginning teachers at school level by the pilot project team – Development and production of first draft of a Mentor's Guide for the Irish Primary school context – DVD produced in Irish primary school context on: 'Working Collaboratively with the NQT in the teaching and learning environment' – Report: Providing Accreditation Programmes for Mentors of Beginning Teachers
Phase 7 2008-2009	– Mentor capacity building – Models of induction explored involving combinations of release time for mentors and beginning teachers, for both school-based induction and mentoring and off-site professional development – Support for mentors and beginning teachers at school level by the pilot project team – Launch of website: www.teacherinduction.ie (March 2009) – Redraft of Mentor's Guide: *Guide to Induction and Mentoring in the Primary School*
Phase 8 2009-2010	– Mentor capacity building – Models of induction explored involving combinations of release time for mentors and beginning teachers, for both school-based induction and mentoring and off-site professional development – Support for mentors and beginning teachers at school level by the pilot project team – Piloting of draft planning guidelines for short-term and long-term planning for individual teachers at school level

**Figure 1: Significant Developments within the National Pilot Project
on Teacher Induction (NPPTI) in Primary Education: Phases 1-8**

The challenges encountered by beginning teachers in Irish primary schools, in the induction year, were identified throughout the various pilot project phases. In response to beginning teachers' questionnaires in Phase 7 (2008-2009) of the

pilot project, beginning teachers identified the following areas to be the most challenging in their first year teaching: differentiation, behaviour management, classroom management and organisation, planning and preparation (especially in multi-grade situations) and assessment of, and for, learning. Other areas identified were: monitoring of students' work, organisation of group work, management of relationships with parents and other adults, time management, motivation of students and working with children whose first language is not English. Mentors, in response to a question in the evaluation of Phase 6 (2007-2008) of the pilot project, on what aspects of teaching posed the greatest challenge for beginning teachers in their first year, identified behaviour management, planning and preparation, differentiation and classroom management and organisation as the aspects presenting most challenge for beginning teachers, in their first year.

The current programme, which is based on the findings of the pilot project, comprises five main elements:

- school-based mentoring
- off-site professional development workshops via the Education Centre Network
- professional development support groups
- individualised support at school level from the National Induction Programme team
- phone and email support and a dedicated induction website.

School-based mentoring

A key characteristic of the school-based mentoring programme is access by the beginning teacher to a mentor at school level. Mentors are experienced teachers who are fully probated, have a minimum of five years teaching experience and have undertaken professional training for the role. This initial mentor training, which is of twenty-hour duration, is provided by the National Induction Programme for Teachers – Primary (NIPT). While a whole-school approach to the induction of beginning teachers is promoted, the role of the mentor within the whole school context is crucial to the support of the beginning teacher. The roles of the principal, mentor and beginning teacher are clearly defined by the NIPT and the mentor 'facilitates' the induction process at school level. Beginning teachers in the Irish primary school context, value and acknowledge the importance of having 'someone there for them' in their first year of teaching. Much attention is paid to the training of mentors and, in particular, the key mentoring skills of communication with the emphasis on listening, questioning, empathy, observation and feedback, planning and preparation for the classroom and action-planning. NIPT focus on what Lipton and Wellman (2005) describe as the mentor and beginning teacher learning-focused relationship, characterised by the following three elements.

- offering support

- creating challenge

- facilitating a professional vision (Daloz, 1999, cited in Portner, 2005, p. 150).

Each of these areas according to Lipton & Wellman (2005) can operate independently from the others but in the greater context they must interact with each other for maximum effect, to sustain learning and growth.

> *'Support alone provides comfort but may encourage complacency or dependency. Challenge without support increases anxiety and may develop a fear of failure within the protégé and support and challenge without vision leaves the novice wandering on the journey to teach looking only at the ground beneath but not the road ahead'* (Lipton & Wellman, 2005, p. 150).

Release time, with substitute cover, is allocated to the trained mentor for engaging with the beginning teacher in mentoring and induction activities at school level. Discretionary release time is also available for (a) visiting mentor service; (b) schools with over four beginning teachers on staff and (c) beginning teachers needing additional support. However, this discretionary release time can only be accessed with the prior approval of the National Coordinator. The school-based induction activities focus on a menu of activities such as meetings with mentor, observation of other teachers teaching, observation of the beginning teacher by the mentor and feedback/learning conversations (protocols have been agreed by principal, mentor and beginning teacher with regard to undertaking observations and the recording of the outcomes of observation and learning conversations). Other activities include: meeting with Resource / Learning Support Teachers / Language Support Teacher / Home-School Liaison Teacher, demonstration lessons, co-teaching, co-planning, linking with other national services, resource/ICT briefings, reviewing monthly progress records, reports and assessment data and working with topics from professional development workshops.

Many primary schools still do not have a trained mentor on staff but the NIPT continue to build mentor capacity by providing initial mentor training for teachers, who are nominated by the principal to undertake the training. Mentors repeatedly refer to the mutual professional development opportunities provided by engaging with the beginning teachers and the opportunities also to collaborate and reflect on practice. Principals concur with mentors on the benefits which accrue to mentors and schools as a result of involvement in mentoring and induction, which is in line with OECD findings.

> *'Mentor teachers frequently characterise working closely with beginning teachers as a source of new ideas about curriculum and teaching, motivating them to reflect upon their experiences and beliefs with regard to teaching and learning'* (Ganser, 1997, cited in OECD, 2005, p. 121).

Evidence from the Irish context suggests that the mentoring experience has been a positive and constructive one, for both mentor and beginning teacher. It is important to note that presently induction in the Irish primary-school context is not linked with the evaluation of the beginning teacher's work. The evaluation of the beginning teacher's classroom practice is undertaken by the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills. Induction and probation are two separate processes within the Irish primary school context. The Teaching Council of Ireland has recently drafted a Policy Paper on the Continuum of Teacher Education, which will provide the framework within which it will implement its functions relating to teacher education. The Policy Paper will be finalised in the coming months and will be officially launched in November 2011 at the Teaching Council Conference.

Off-site professional development workshops via the Education Centre Network

The professional development workshops ('twilight sessions') are open to all beginning teachers throughout the Education Centre network. Whilst not compulsory, many beginning teachers view these workshops as opportunities to meet with other beginning teachers, share ideas and discuss aspects of classroom practice. Many of the primary schools in Ireland are small rural schools so many beginning teachers value the opportunity to meet with other beginning teachers who are in similar situations, to share their experiences. The programme at Education Centre level includes workshops on the following areas: Working as a Professional; Classroom Management and Organisation, Planning and Preparation, Working with Parents, Differentiation, Assessment, Literacy: Teaching and Managing a Reading lesson, Behaviour Management, Child Protection, Towards Inclusive Practice and *An Ghaeilge sa Bhunscoil* (Irish in the Primary School).

The workshops are practical and interactive and are designed to equip beginning teachers with a range of effective strategies that could be readily implemented in day-to-day classroom practice. The workshops, of two-hour duration, focus on immediate issues/challenges that arise for beginning teachers and provide opportunities for beginning teachers to share ideas and approaches. Discussion, group work, role-play and the use of case studies are key methodologies used throughout the sessions. The workshop programme is delivered by practising teachers (many of whom are also mentors) who are trained as facilitators by the NIPT team. To date, 106 facilitators have been trained by NIPT and these facilitators operate at Education Centre level as part of a local team of facilitators. The facilitators, in a recent survey (June 2011), described their overall experience of working as a facilitator on the professional development programme (September 2010 – June 2011) as 82 per cent 'very satisfactory', 16 per cent 'satisfactory' and two per cent 'unsure'. What is most significant is the response of the facilitators to the question on the overall impact facilitator training has had on their own professional development as a teacher with 80 per cent rating the impact as 'very significant' and 20 per cent as 'significant'.

Professional Development Support Groups are also hosted by the Education Centre network, for beginning teachers, in areas other than the workshops listed above. Additional support is offered in smaller groups to beginning teachers, in areas such as multi-grade teaching, resource teaching (SEN) and additional support for lesson planning. Providing opportunities for peer-learning, through learning-focused conversations in professional support groups**,** is critical given that many of the primary schools in Ireland are small rural schools.

Individualised support at school level from the National Induction Programme team

The primary role of the NIPT team is to visit participating schools in each region to support the principal, mentor and beginning teachers. The team is also involved in providing intensive support and drawing up action plans for beginning teachers who do not have access to a mentor and who may find the first year in teaching challenging. NIPT also design, deliver and develop the materials for facilitator training and provide support to facilitators throughout the year. The exploration of the 'associate mentor' model as additional support to the work of the NIPT team is being piloted presently and is proving very effective in providing additional support to beginning teachers, mentors and schools. (An associate mentor is usually a school-based mentor and also a facilitator of the professional-development workshop programme, who is selected to work as an associate mentor, based on his/her experience of working in multi-grade, disadvantaged context etc.). The associate mentors provide support at school level and assist schools in drawing up action plans, based on the needs of the beginning teachers.

Challenges for the future

The evidence from the evaluation considered here leads to the conclusion that the first decade of the National Induction Pilot Project enjoyed considerable success and laid the foundation for the smooth transition of beginning teachers from pre-service education to early career development. However, there are significant challenges some of which arise from factors that have little to do with education while others come about because of internal reforms of the system.

One of the biggest challenges is the risk of an over-supply of teachers. As noted above, Ireland has always had more candidates for teaching than actual places and the increase in the school population of the nineties was catered for easily. However, the new economic situation has resulted in a decline in the number of teaching posts which tends to be especially relevant for beginning teachers, who find it difficult to get a prolonged period of employment in a school. This has a direct impact on the induction process since the process of learning of teach can be hampered by the fact that the beginning teacher's experience is over several schools within a very short time.

A second challenge will be around new arrangements for teacher probation. Traditionally, this was the job of the National Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills. Finally, there are some matters that are less of a challenge, but require attention, and two are worth mentioning. One concerns the lengthening of the pre-service education course from three to four years. Some revision will be required to the induction programme to cater for the emphasis in the final pre-service year which will be largely school-based. The second is the issue of accreditation; traditionally only College/University-based courses are given credit while learning experiences at school level are considered professional (rather than academic) in nature. The breakdown of these barriers is one of the potential benefits of a system of collaboration between the partners involved in induction. Links with HEIs have been a very important element of the development of the pilot project and this collaboration with the National Induction Programme for Teachers continues to grow and develop. Whilst all beginning teachers have access to the professional development workshop programme via the Education Centre Network, building capacity in mentoring is a priority for the National Induction Programme for Teachers and the contribution of the HEIs is critical in the development of this capacity building.

The transition from a pilot project to a National Induction Programme for Teachers encompassing the cross-sectoral dimension of primary and post-primary is currently underway. To date feedback on the National Induction Programme for Teachers has been positive and constructive and valuable lessons have been learned which will continue to influence and inform the induction journey into the future. In providing quality support for our beginning teachers our aim is to ultimately enhance the teaching and learning opportunities for our students in our classrooms.

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How to cite this chapter

9 The steps into the teaching profession in Slovenia

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Mirko Zorman started his career as a teacher in a rural school (covering ISCED levels 1 and 2). Due to a combination of circumstances, he soon became a principal and that marked the beginning of his administrative duties – first as principal in an urban primary school, and later in a relatively large secondary school (ISCED 3). School leadership remained in the focus of his attention after being invited to run the regional office of the National Institute of Education in 1993. He promoted development planning as an instrument of change and quality assurance in education. In 1996 was awarded an MSc from the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana with a thesis on relations between power distribution and quality assurance. In 2001-2002 he served as a state secretary in the Ministry of Education. Among other duties he was involved in the EU accession activities and he remained involved in EU affairs after returning to the Institute. He was invited to chair the Education Committee of the Council of the European Union during the Slovene Presidency in 2008 and the Board of Governors of the European Schools in 2009-2010. Recently he added to his portfolio the linguistic aspects of integration of students with migrant background. In July 2011 he retired as head of the International Cooperation Department of the Institute.

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The steps into the teaching profession in Slovenia

Mirko Zorman

Abstract

As part of the legislative framework for the 1996 school reform, the requirements for the teaching profession were also defined, including the induction of newly qualified teachers. The first year in the profession was recognised as crucial for the whole career. Consequently, mentoring by an experienced teacher and limited responsibilities for newcomers during their first year were decided. The present article tries to analyse to what extent the goals of these provisions have been met and what measures need to be taken to redress any inconsistencies in the implementation.

Initial teacher education

Initial teacher education has a long lasting tradition in Slovenia. It is based on the principles established at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when basic school education became compulsory in the Hapsburg monarchy, which most of today's Slovenian territories were part of at that time. Until the late sixties of the last century, one of the features of initial teacher training was the division of initial teacher training into different qualifications for primary and secondary education. A university degree was required for teachers in secondary education, while primary school teachers were educated at the secondary level. The arrangement, which prescribed secondary education at a five year teacher's college for primary and pre-primary school teachers (ISCED[1] Levels 0 and 1), a short higher-education degree (two years' training) for teachers at lower secondary level (ISCED Level 2) and a university degree for teachers at the upper secondary level (ISCED Level 3) persisted until the mid-sixties of the past century. At this point, teacher training colleges at secondary level were abolished. From this time, the level of requirement was made equal for the whole of the unified primary school, comprising ISCED Levels 1 and 2. The training of primary school teachers became part of the study programmes of the so-called 'education academies', while the training of kindergarten educators still remained in the domain of secondary schools. A change in the legislation in 1980 raised the requirements regarding education levels again, and the present situation was confirmed by law in 1996.

Overall requirements pertaining to teacher qualifications are prescribed by the umbrella education law – 'the Law on the Organization and Financing of Education' (*Zakon o organizaciji in financiranju vzgoje in izobraževanja)*. In general, it prescribes a university degree for teachers at all pre-university education levels and further specifies requirements for individual types of education (kindergartens compulsory education, music schools, vocational education and training (VET), upper secondary general education, student dormitories, schools for children special educational needs) and jobs in education other than teaching. Thus, for example, university degrees are also required by school librarians and guidance counsellors, while at least secondary professional education is prescribed for support staff such as assistants in kindergartens, ICT technicians or science assistants in primary and secondary schools and trainers in VET institutions.

More precisely, requirements concerning the education of school staff performing different tasks in education are part of the curricula approved by the relevant Governmental Expert Council for Education (either for general, for vocational or for adult education) and confirmed by the Minister of Education. They list expected levels and sorts of initial education by subjects (for teachers) or positions in the school (e.g. in school guidance; for librarians; for speech therapists etc.) separately for each education segment (pre-primary; primary; general secondary; VET; music schools; schools for special educational needs (SEN) students).

As a rule, two paths – a 'parallel' and a 'consecutive' one – are open for those seeking to gain initial teacher qualifications. For most teaching and non-teaching posts at all levels of general education (kindergartens; primary schools; general secondary schools; music schools; student dormitories; schools for children with special educational needs) and for academic subjects in VET, the necessary qualifications can be acquired by taking undergraduate courses provided by Slovene universities. In three (Ljubljana; Maribor; Koper) of the five currently existing universities, a faculty of education trains kindergarten educators and primary school (ISCED Level 1) teachers. Besides, each of them provides a certain number of other courses, mainly aiming at qualifications for compulsory education. Thus the three faculties specialise in teacher training, while in other faculties (such as faculties of arts, faculties of mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology, faculties of sports and artistic academies etc.), a teacher qualification is just one of the possible outcomes of the study programmes. Of course, faculties also exist that do not provide teacher qualifications at all, which means that for certain subjects (mostly those subjects in VET schools that make up the training part, such as mechanical or civil engineering or economics etc.) teacher qualifications can only be acquired after graduating from the faculty. The consecutive approach is also open to those who wish to take up the teaching profession at a later stage in their professional careers. All faculties of education and faculties of art provide training for teacher qualifications.

Any graduates from foreign universities who wish to start a teacher career in Slovenia need to seek recognition for their diplomas by the university that offers study courses which are most similar to the ones that the candidate has taken abroad. Additional exams might be necessary for the qualifications awarded by the foreign diploma to be recognised in Slovenia.

A quick review of the study programmes ending in a teacher qualification, currently being carried out by different universities and faculties within them, reveals a great variety in the approaches to preparing teacher students for the challenges with which they will be expected to cope. There are differences, both in the number and composition of theoretical courses that students are required to attend or asked to choose from, as well as in the approaches to offering students opportunities to try out their theoretical knowledge in practice, and to reflect on their experiences with experienced practitioners, their colleagues and professors. It seems that the situation has not improved when compared with the one in place before the introduction of the Bologna programmes. There were differences in the number of lessons that the 39 participants of an in-service training course run by different faculties had the opportunity to teach independently during their initial training. Eight (20.5 per cent) did not teach independently at all, 12 (30.8 per cent) taught up to four lessons, and 19 (48.7 per cent) taught five lessons or more (Bizjak, 2004, p. 55).

Considering the situation, experience of the novice teacher in the first years of employment is of vital importance for the whole of their professional career, and for his or her efficiency, self-confidence and sense of satisfaction on the job. The educational legislation adopted in 1996 took account of this and placed a strong emphasis on endeavours to assure that all entrants into the profession had access to the kind of environment they need with which to develop their full potential. It was believed that the goal could best be achieved by trusting novice teachers to the guidance of more experienced teachers during a certain initial period in the job.

First employment and the professional exam

The status of teachers in Slovenia needs to be clarified in order to better understand the arrangement for teacher induction. Public kindergartens and schools (i.e. the vast majority of education institutions) are independent organisations established by local communities (ISCED Levels 0-3) or by the Government (ISCED Level 3). The state provides for the majority of the costs including wages; local communities provide for the total costs of kindergartens and for the facilities and operating costs of primary schools. Public schools and kindergartens are governed by eleven-member boards consisting of five representatives elected by the employees. The remaining six members are appointed by the parents, in secondary schools also by the students and, depending on the level of education, by the local community or the Government. One of the responsibilities of the board is to appoint the school head for a term of five years,

and s/he is then responsible for hiring all other staff. Executing its control power, the Ministry of Education issues its approval to advertise vacancies as a measure to prevent redundancies. As a rule, employees are hired on a permanent basis and can be dismissed only if their work is no longer needed because of a decrease in the number of students or other justified reasons. During their careers, professionals are promoted to the professional titles of 'mentors', 'advisers' and 'counsellors', provided they take part in further professional training and can provide evidence of certain achievements on the job and are involved in activities that prove their professional expertise. The list of activities that can be considered in granting the special titles ranges from mentoring students in preparing for knowledge competitions to taking part in extensive research work or authoring text books. The professional titles are required for leadership positions in the school system and in order to be allowed to perform certain tasks. In addition to the position of the teacher in the tariff system defined by the legislation regulating the wages of civil servants, professional titles also bring financial reward.

Teachers and other professional staff involved in working with students can gain tenure once they have passed the national professional exam prescribed by law and defined in more detail by special rules approved by the Minister of Education. Their first employment is, therefore, for a defined period of one year, the time needed to get prepared for the exam. As a rule, during this time, they are not allowed to perform their job independently, but only under the supervision of an experienced member of the staff who has held the title of mentor for a minimum of three years, or holds a higher title and who performs the same tasks that the probationer will perform after the professional exam.

As already mentioned, the content of the professional exam is defined by rules approved by the Minister of Education. Candidates for teaching positions are examined orally, while non-teaching professionals sit a written exam and are then examined orally. In the oral part of the exam the candidates are expected to demonstrate:

1. a thorough knowledge of the of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, of the institutions of the European Union and of basic human rights and freedoms

2. a knowledge of the legislation regulating education

3. a good command of the language of instruction; i.e. Slovene in the majority of cases or Hungarian or Italian if the candidate works in one of the parts of the country where these languages are also used as official languages.

Candidates who belong to one of the two minorities recognised by the Constitution are also allowed to do the exam in their first language. In the written part of the exam, which has to be submitted in the form of a seminar work, candidates for non-teaching positions are expected to demonstrate their capacity to solve independently the type of problems they are likely to face in their careers.

The rules for the professional exam also define the minimum time spent on probation before the candidate acquires the right to apply for the exam: four months for candidates with secondary education (such as technicians in science classes; ICT assistants; assistant teachers in kindergartens) and six months for those with a university education (i.e. all other teaching and non-teaching professionals). The candidates for teaching positions also have to submit a written report on their probation prepared by the mentor and reports on five classes observed and assessed by the mentor and the school head. In this way, the schools take an important part of the responsibility in assessing candidates' competence to perform a job in education.

Entering the profession as a probationer is the normal path; in real life, however, there are situations, which require other solutions. Unlike many other European countries, Slovenia is not faced with a shortage of candidates for the education professions. Rather, graduates in most school subjects have difficulties in finding employment. As there is a limited number of probationer posts financed and advertised by the Ministry of Education, not all graduates are even guaranteed a paid probation period. To acquire the right to apply for the professional exam, and in this way to improve their chances of getting a job, candidates can also undertake their probation as 'volunteers'. On the other hand, in spite of surplus demand for jobs, some schools still face the problem of finding fully qualified staff; i.e. graduates with the professional exam. In this case, entrants into the profession are allowed to perform their full duties under the supervision of a mentor from the same or a neighbouring school and may, after the probationary period, apply to take the professional exam. During this time, the mentor and the school head observe at least five classes performed by the candidate and together issue a report with their opinion on the candidate's preparedness to perform the job independently. The candidate then submits this to the authorities when applying for the professional exam.

The probationary period

The first employment of entrants into jobs in education and the role of different actors involved in probation is regulated by the rules on the probation of educational professionals (*Pravilnik o pripravništvu strokovnih delavcev na področju vzgoje in izobraževanja)* prescribed by the Minister of Education. The current version was adopted in 2006 and amended in 2007. Its *Article 2* defines the probation as *'a planned, organised and professionally guided training of probationers to perform jobs in education, corresponding to the level and kind of education, independently, assuring according to the prescribed programme the probationer gets acquainted with all the contents of the kind of work he or she is being trained for, gets prepared for performing the job independently and for the professional exam.'*

Probationers are appointed to educational institutions by the Ministry of Education and Sports and can, as mentioned above, be either remunerated or act as volunteers.

The duration of the probationary period depends on the level of education required for the work for which the candidate is being prepared. This lasts six months for those with secondary education and ten months for those with a university degree. Pending a decision by the Ministry, the period can be extended in case of the probationer's justified absence from work for more than 20 days, or shortened by not more than a quarter of the total probation time if the probationer has been extremely successful in performing the programme and the school head has approved the shortening after a commission appointed by him/her has given a positive opinion.

Year	Number of probation positions advertised		Number of candidates	Number of positions granted
2000	probation positions with employment contract			164
2001	probation positions with employment contract			254
2002	probation positions with employment contract			348
2003	probation positions with employment contract			327
2004	probation positions with employment contract		197	106
2005	probation positions with employment contract		368	88
2006	probation positions with employment contract		456	113
2006	volunteer probation posts			110
2007	probation positions with employment contract	211	603	211
2007	volunteer probation posts	450		155
2008	probation positions with employment contract	161	601	161
2008	volunteer probation posts	500		255
2009	probation positions with employment contract	105	456	105
2009	volunteer probation posts	500		447
2010	probation positions with employment contract	114	562	114
2010	volunteer probation posts	500		498
2011 (untill April 30)	probation positions with employment contract	45	325	45
2011 (untill April 30)	volunteer probation posts	200		200

Table1: Overview of available probationary positions and number of applicants

Table 1 presents the information gathered from the Ministry of Education on the available numbers of probation positions since 2000. The data illustrate the fact that demand for probation exceeds the number of remunerated positions advertised by the Ministry. In this case, candidates are selected on the ground of their average of scores obtained in the study courses. Fulfilling the teacher-qualification condition is an additional criterion. The table also shows that competition has been compelling an increasing number of candidates who have not been selected, to take up the probation as volunteers. The fact that the total number of positions assigned in 2009 and 2010 exceeds the number of advertised positions can be explained by the fact the candidates, who have studied with the support of a scholarship from the Ministry of Education are assigned probation positions without advertisement.

The rules on probation give a detailed specification of the content for the probation period. The programme, that has to be jointly prepared by the probationer and the mentor and approved by the school head, needs to take into account the kind of work that the candidate is preparing for. The programme must cover:

- getting acquainted with the planning, organisation and implementation of the curriculum or the working area for which the probationer is being trained in the school or kindergarten

- getting acquainted with different methods and organisational forms of teaching and learning

- making an in-depth study of the special didactics of the probationer's subject or subject area including the formation of a detailed teaching plan, preparing an individual lesson and its implementation, planning for cross-curricular themes, preparing knowledge tests and observing the mentor's and other teachers' classes

- acquiring experience in establishing favourable human and working relations with the children and students in developing group dynamics and developing communication skills

- acquiring experience in the selection and employment of suitable teaching methods and the use of teaching resources

- consolidating and improving the probationer's understanding of checking and assessing the learner's knowledge, and on monitoring the individual child's or student's progress

- acquiring experience in performing the task of the main class teacher with an emphasis on preparing the meeting of a class council, preparing a parents' meeting and other methods of cooperation with parents, preparing the argumentation for any administrative measures against an individual student and mentorship to the class community

- solving problems concerning the rights of children and students, with special emphasis on complaints against assessment marks and the status of students in upper secondary education or VET

- undertaking independent teaching under mentor's guidance Training for counselling children, students, teachers and parents for team-work

- getting acquainted with the primary and secondary prevention relative to the kindergarten or school and the individual child or student

- participating in the work of expert bodies of the kindergarten or school, cooperation with the school advisory services and library

- training for proper choice of contents and working methods in implementation of the pre-school curriculum

- training in the use of the Slovene standard language as the language of pedagogical communication

- getting acquainted with the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, the Institutions of the European Union and its legal set-up, basic general human and child's rights and freedoms

- getting acquainted with the legislation governing the education system

- provision for probationer's professional consultation with the mentor and other persons responsible for probation and individual study, for which the mentor recommends relevant literature.

The probation programme also needs to define the persons responsible for individual tasks in its implementation. The revised rules define the contents of the training that the probationers are entitled to in special training courses outside the school, and which mainly cover the contents of the professional exam. The obligations and tasks of the probationer are defined as:

1. Under the mentor's or school head's supervision, the teacher on probation is expected to do the tasks that help him/her get acquainted with the ways teaching is planned and performed. This type of tasks should mainly be planned for the first quarter of the time spent on probation.

2. The tasks that the teacher on probation is expected to perform independently are:

- preparing and performing at least 30 lessons in the class or group, or another form of teaching in which the mentor does his/her work

- getting directly involved in educational work, which includes independent work under the supervision of the mentor, covering for absent teachers, accompanying students on school trips, mentoring students undertaking research work and individual work with students. Altogether, this should ac-

count for at least two lessons a week, yet the total amount should not exceed half of the time on probation

- preparing and performing evaluation and assessment.

These types of task are performed in the first quarter of the time on probation and should increase in amount and intensity towards the end of the probation period.

3. The probationer is also expected to undertake training in the following areas:

- special didactics, psychological and pedagogical training for the kind of work for which the candidate is being prepared

- communication in the standard language

- studying the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, the institutions of the European Union and its legal system, basic human rights and freedoms and legislation regulating education.

These type of tasks are performed throughout the probation period and more intensively in the second half of the probation period.

4. Other probationer's tasks make it possible for the mentor and the school head to tailor the programme to the needs of the probationer taking account of his/her individual traits and pace of learning.

5. Consultation with the mentor and other members of the staff responsible for individual tasks foreseen with the programme and individual study of literature suggested by the mentor.

The rules on probation also specify the procedure for the five reports on practical teaching that have to be submitted when the probationer applies for the professional exam. The lessons prepared and performed by the probationer must be observed by the mentor and the school head. The candidate must become acquainted with the theme of each lesson at least three days in advance to allow for the time necessary to get prepared.

In the concluding articles, the rules list the required documentation on probation and specify the school inspectorate as the body authorised to monitor the implementation of the rules. The rules also provide for procedures in cases where, under EU legislation, mutual formal recognition of work experience can take place for teaching as a regulated profession.

Training of novice teachers outside the school

The rules on probation also define the content of the training courses which novice teachers are entitled to during their probationary period. These mainly cover the subject content in which the candidates for the teaching profession will be examined

by the state commission. The courses for novice teachers are organised by the National Education Institute (NEIS) and usually carried out on its premises in Ljubljana separately for teachers on probation in kindergartens, in primary schools and in secondary schools. Each course comprises two modules in total duration of 40 (24 + 16) school hours of 45 minutes each. Module 1 is dedicated to the contents of the professional exam and Module 2 to the teaching competences, such as reflecting on one's own practice, psychological aspects of communication and preparing lessons, etc. The contents relating to national and EU legislation and human rights are carried out by the relevant employees of the Ministry of Education, while those relating to the use of the language of instruction and practical aspects of teaching are mainly carried out by advisers employed by the NEIS and experienced teachers. In addition, the NEIS also offers a 40-hour course for teachers with fewer than five years of teaching experience and those who have come into the profession from other areas of employment.

t can be concluded from the data in the table that teachers on probation seem to be more concerned about the legislative part of the professional exam (Module 1) than getting support for the development of their professional competences (Module 2) since there is much more demand for Module 1 than for Module 2. The level of the educational attainment of teachers plays an important role in searching for training opportunities, with a relatively high proportion of assistant teachers with secondary education being in kindergartens. It seems that secondary school teachers feel much more self-confident than others that they can prepare for the exam on their own. It is also noteworthy that there is much greater prevalence of female than male teachers among the newcomers to the profession. This, of course, does not suggest that there will be a better gender balance in the future, though it is not strictly an issue for this paper.

The high number of pre-school assistant teachers with secondary education is the consequence of the recently introduced requirement. Now that their education level has been raised and they are treated as teaching professionals, they have to pass the professional exam, so large numbers of those already in the job participate in the courses and should be subtracted from the total number of participants. The remaining number of participants in Module 1 then roughly represents the teachers on probation. When these are compared to those in Table 1, an idea of what proportion of probationers avail themselves of the training opportunities offered to them can be seen.

Using the standard evaluation sheets for all the further teacher-training courses financed and approved by the Ministry of Education, the participants' satisfaction with the courses is judged at the end of the training. Each lecturer is assessed for each piece of content delivered from the point of view of:

• their expertise and quality of the presentation

• the choice of teaching methods and techniques

• their power of motivation for active participation on a 1-4 scale.

Module	Participants		Level of education					Employment					
	M	F	v	vi	vii/1	vii/2	other	pre-primary	primary	secondary	special ed. needs	music school	other
pre-primary 1 (Jan/10)		27	22		4	1		26		1			
pre-primary 1 (Feb/10)		27	17		7	2	1	25	1		1		
total pre-primary 1	0	54	39	0	11	3	1	51	1	1	1	0	0
pre-primary 2 (Nov/09)		39	28	1	6	1	3	39				1	
primary 1 (Oct/09)	2	34	3			33		1	35				
primary 1 (Nov/09)	4	35			1	38			38			1	
primary 1 (March/10)	4	35	2		2	35		2	35	1	1		
primary 1 (April/10)	3	27	2			27	1	2	25		3		
total primary 1	13	131	7	0	3	133	1	5	133	1	4	1	0
secondary 1 (April/10)	4	18							3	15	3	2	
total module 1	17	203	46	0	14	136	2	56	137	17	8	3	0

Table 2: Participation in training (part 1)

Levels of education (pre-Bologna programmes):

v = secondary education

vi = non-university higher (usually two years following secondary school)

vii/1 = higher professional degree (usually three years following secondary school)

vii/2 = university degree (usually four years following secondary school)

other = nearly graduated or (1 case) a postgraduate degree.

Module	Participants		Level of education					Employment					
	M	F	v	vi	vii/1	vii/2	other	pre-primary	primary	secondary	special ed. needs	music school	other
pre-primary 1 (Jan/11)		30	22	1	4	3		30					
pre-primary 1 (Feb/11)	1	21	18		3	1		22					
pre-primary 1 (March/11)	4	32	29	1	3	3		36					
total pre-primary 1	5	83	69	2	10	7	0	88	0	0	0	0	0
pre-primary 2 (Nov/10)	1	31	24		6	2		32					
pre-primary 2	2	20	21		1			22					
total pre-primary 2	3	51	45	0	7	2	0	54	0	0	0	0	0
primary 1 (Oct/10)	3	26				29			26		2		1
primary 1 (Dec/10)	2	24				26			25		1		
primary 1 (March/11)	2	30			1	31			31		1		
total primary 1	7	80	0	0	1	86	0	0	82	0	4	0	1
secondary 1 (April/11)	4	24	1	1	2	23	1		10	16	1	0	1
total module 1	16	187	70	3	13	116	1	88	92	16	5	0	2

Table 2: Participation in training (end)

Levels of education (pre-Bologna programmes):

v = secondary education

vi = non-university higher (usually two years following secondary school)

vii/1 = higher professional degree (usually three years following secondary school)

vii/2 = university degree (usually four years following secondary school)

other = nearly graduated or (1 case) a postgraduate degree.

Each course as a whole is also evaluated for the choice of the content and methods and for its organisation and performance. Several items are offered for each of these two aspects and assessed by the participants on a 1-4 scale. As the average scores of –most lecturers, and for almost all items for the course as a whole, range between 3 and 4, the courses seem to meet the expectations and the needs of the participants well. This is also proved by the open part of the evaluation, where there is room for participants' messages to the organiser of the course and for suggestions on which themes to introduce in the future. The messages mostly refer to aspects of the quality of individual contents and mostly express positive views on individual lecturers. They value their positive attitudes to participants, opportunities for active participation and any more negative views mostly concern the intensity of the work in the course due to the limited time framework. Suggestions for new themes include a wide variety of participants' needs. The most frequent ones refer to work with children with special education needs and to work with parents. What most statements have in common is an affirmation of the need for this kind of training.

A critical view of the system of probation

The National Education Institute became aware that probationers are not the only actors who need professional training and support. This is why, right after the implementation of the new rules, it offered courses for mentors and other persons responsible for that part of the induction carried out by schools. The proposal found support with the education authorities, so seminars for mentors were organised, which focused on helping mentors and school heads to be able to organise the probation period efficiently. Later, interest in these courses decreased, both within schools as well as within the Ministry, so in the last few years they have not appeared on the list of training programmes offered to schools. A manual on probation for mentors and school heads (Bizjak, 2004) was also prepared in the same framework. It consists of a review of relevant theories on teacher competences and gives practical advice how to organise the probation period. It remains available to schools as a tangible outcome of the Institute's endeavours to support implementation of the regulation.

In the framework of a broader programme aiming at creating a stimulating learning environment for school communities, a study was carried out in Slovene schools (Bizjak, 2000) on the impact of the new arrangement, four years after the implementation of the new rules on probation and the professional exam. In general, the survey indicates that the objective to provide newcomers to the profession with opportunities to gain teaching experience in a sheltered environment under the guidance of an experienced colleague and to transfer the responsibility to evaluate the probationer's practical teaching skills from the State to mentors and heads of schools, was welcomed by most probationers and school heads. The school heads

are, however, still hesitant about whether the final judgement of the probationer's teaching competences should be left entirely to them. It seems that the arrangement, whereby they sign the report on the five lessons observed (without any concrete criteria by which to judge a lesson satisfactory and when not), suits them quite well (Bizjak, 2000, p. 14). Although not all teachers' competences can be assessed from observing the five lessons, the present arrangement is much better than the previous one, in which teachers were required to prove their teaching skills in an unknown school with students that they do not normally teach (Bizjak, 2000, p. 14).

It is clear that the present arrangement gives the new teachers room for a thorough preparation for the challenging job without being burdened by the day-to-day requirement to face a large number of students in various classes. This meant, in many cases as the observed sample showed (Bizjak, 2000, p. 12) probationers preparing for more than 20 different teaching situations in one week, in two or more subjects. By giving room for experience to accumulate and, above all, for enough time to reflect on one's own activities and practices (Bizjak, 2000, p. 9), the present arrangement is better than the previous one. It has the potential to level out the huge differences in the amount of teaching experience provided to teacher students in the course of initial training, as mentioned earlier in this paper (Bizjak, 2000, p. 8).

The present arrangement also brings benefits, not only to the probationer himself or herself, but can, if used appropriately, also bring benefits to everyone involved with teachers on probation, thus contributing to the professional growth of the mentor, to the school head and to the entire school staff (Bizjak, 2000, p. 10). The school heads perceive their own work with probationers as an opportunity to refresh their knowledge of education legislation, to gain new insight into different subject areas, to rethink their vision for the school and their concept of what constitutes being 'a good teacher', increase their motivation for individual work with teachers, intensify their relations with the school staff and students and, above all, get acquainted with new ideas and views on the teaching methods. School heads also think that probationers bring new impulses to school staff, increase the motivation of teachers, stimulate the increase of knowledge, bring in fresh teaching methods, improve teacher-to-teacher relations, encourage collegial monitoring of classes, increase the sense of professionalism amongst the staff and last, but not least, also bring additional manpower to carry out different tasks and take some burden off the existing staff. More than 40 per cent of school heads (Bizjak, 2000, p. 11) cite *'stimulating the professional development of school staff'*, as the most powerful motive for offering probationary positions.

In conclusion, it seems that the present arrangement of the probation period is a step forward, when compared to the previous situations. Novice teachers are now much less likely to experience the feeling that they are, *'being left to themselves'* (Bizjak, 2000, p. 15), yet they are also critical about some aspects of their probation. They most frequently complain about the quality of the mentors and lack of involvement of the

mentor and the school head with planning tasks and activities, with some 13.7 per cent of interviewed probationers not being satisfied with the way that their work was organised in school.

The overall impression is that the rules defining induction procedures seem to be able to solve the problem of the uneven professional skills of novice teachers coming from different study programmes in different universities. To what extent they yield the expected results depends largely on the commitment of the staff in each individual school. School heads play a critical role when selecting the mentors, conveying the sense of responsibility for the probationers to the whole school staff and their own involvement with each probationer. There is a crucial relationship between the formal part of the probation performed by the Ministry of Education, consisting of the exams, and the essential part performed by the school. The latter immensely affects the newcomer's professional attitudes and motivation for the job on which his or her whole career may depend. Just changing the rules and legal arrangement is simply not enough. External support to schools is necessary for the necessary human involvement, awareness of the importance of the induction period for the whole career of a novice teacher, the dedication of the mentor, the school head and of the whole staff to be in place to support the novice teacher. Without it, schools might misuse the probationers as a cheap labour force and leave responsibility for their future entirely to the Ministry, instead of contributing to the development of new teachers' professional skills. We believe that training the mentors (as provided by the Institute in the past) should be an integral part of a comprehensive programme of teacher induction. School heads should also undergo some kind of training. No doubt, it is the Institute's role to provide the corresponding courses. Fifteen years into the implementation of the 'new' rules, a more extensive study would be needed to prove the assumptions of this article, the overall effectiveness of the arrangement and to what extent it serves the purpose for which it was created.

Note

1.   ISCED: International Standard Classification of Education of the Unesco.

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How to cite this chapter

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10 Induction programmes for teachers in compulsory education

Organisation and content, recommendations and their implementation; analysis of the impact of induction programmes

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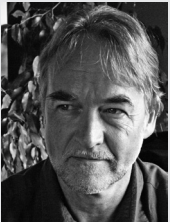
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Induction programmes for teachers in compulsory education

Organisation and content, recommendations and their implementation; analysis of the impact of induction programmes

Urs Vögeli-Mantovani,
with Marco Bachmann, Jean-François Wälchli and Martin Hofmaier

Abstract

Switzerland is a multilingual and multicultural country with a strongly federalist structure. Each of the 26 cantons retains a large degree of autonomy as regards objectives, organisation, content and staffing in compulsory education. This is also apparent in basic teacher training (see Section 1) and subsequent induction programmes for newly trained teachers (see Section 2). The diversity of offerings and organisational structures can be portrayed in three models. These three models exist alongside each other. Common to them all is a desire to provide effective support in the career entry stage and the associated requirements in terms of performance and self-development (see Models 1-3 in Section 2). In a bid to reduce the diversity of offerings, ten recommendations were passed on a national level in 2007 for practical implementation in the cantons. By 2010, a large part of the recommendations had been put into practice but a number of loopholes were identified. For instance, the recommended internal and external impact evaluation to assess the effect of induction programmes had been established almost everywhere in the form of internal evaluation of individual services, but systematic, external evaluation of services and their impact was lacking (see Section 3). In conclusion, the following three research questions remain in respect of induction programmes: How do new teachers develop professional competence? What is the impact of further training and supportive measures? What do the statistics have to say about rates of attrition shortly after career entry? These three questions will be addressed on the basis of Swiss studies, where available (see Section 4).

1. Teacher training in Switzerland

The establishment of universities of teacher education (*Pädagogische Hochschulen / Haute École Pédagogique*) in 2000 helped significantly in streamlining existing structures. The more than 150 traditional teacher training institutions gave way to just over a dozen newly established universities of teacher education. The move was an attempt to achieve simplification and national standardisation of teacher training structures (SKBF, 2007).

The universities of teacher education in Switzerland have a mandate to train a sufficient number of qualified teachers for different levels, such as pre-primary, primary, secondary I, secondary II, special needs education, speech and language therapy, psychomotor therapy, teaching in vocational schools, practice and teaching of sports.

The institutional basis for the universities of teacher education varies. A majority of them are independent institutions, but universities of teacher education may also form part of a network operated by a university of applied sciences (in Basel, Brugg, Solothurn, Zurich and Locarno) or integrated into a university (Geneva and Fribourg). In the special case of vocational education, as well as the practice and teaching of sports, these are official entities of the Confederation.

In 2011, teacher training is provided at 19 institutions at university level (see the figure below). However, there are still considerable differences between the various institutions. The three largest universities of teacher education account for more than half of student numbers and, with the middle three universities, train more than 80 per cent of budding teachers between them. The remaining 20 per cent of students are distributed among seven universities of teacher education at a total of eleven different sites.

The length of studies depends on the type of training course. The standard length of studies to qualify as a pre-primary and/or primary teacher certified by teaching diploma and a bachelor's degree is three years of full-time study (180 ECTS credits).

Studies to train teachers for secondary education require between 270 and 300 ECTS credits (master's degree level) gained during integrated or consecutive courses, depending on the number of disciplines involved.

Professional training for upper secondary education teachers corresponds to 60 ECTS credits and pre-supposes scientific training certified by a master's or equivalent diploma in one or two chosen teaching disciplines.
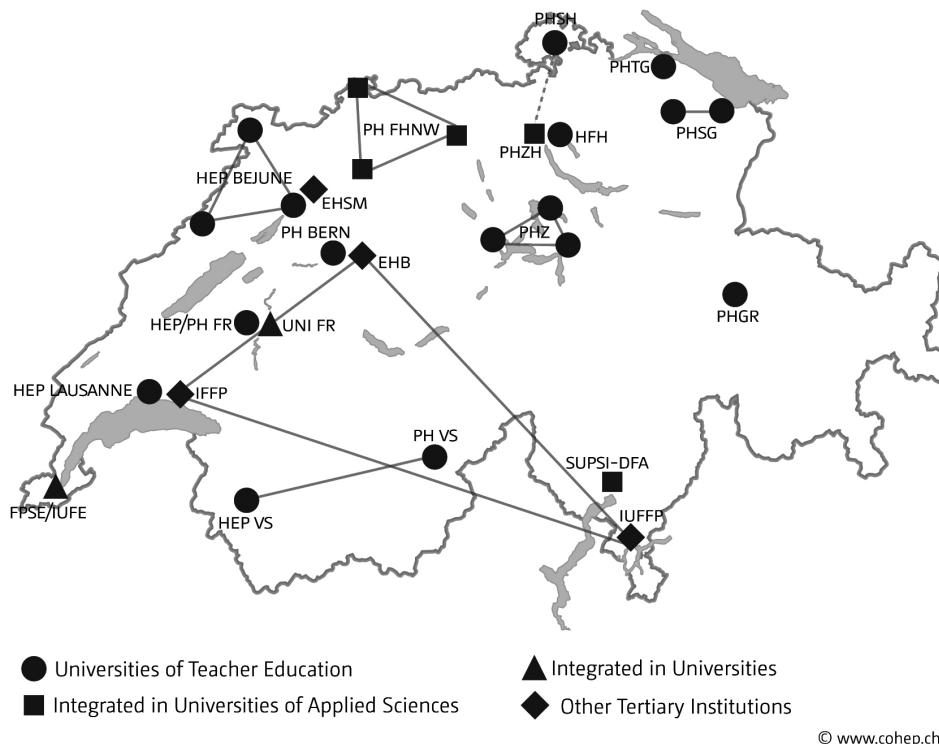
Figure 1 : Swiss Universities of Teacher Education

The fields of study at the universities of teacher education allow students to take teaching diplomas (for teaching at different levels) with an academic title (BA and MA). The teaching diplomas granted by a university of teacher education are recognised by the EDK provided that they meet the minimum requirements set by the EDK regulations for the different fields of study. A teaching diploma recognised by the EDK permits the holder to teach anywhere in Switzerland at a scholastic level corresponding to the degree major, but a teaching post is not guaranteed.

In every canton, basic teacher training culminating in a diploma is followed by a career entry period. Career entrants receive support and further training from a number of sources while taking this step leading to full responsibility for teaching a class. The high degree of autonomy of the individual cantons in the compulsory schooling system is reflected in substantial formal and procedural diversity in the induction programmes available for the career entry period.

2. Three induction programme models in Switzerland

The universities of teacher education lay down essential foundations to enable budding teachers to meet the requirements of the job. However, the basic training is no guarantee of successful career entry. Performance requirements during the induction period may be new or conflicting and cannot be explored fully at university.

Career starters face four job-related performance dimensions / self-development tasks (Keller-Schneider, 2009b):

1. identifying with the teacher's role
2. communicating content to the target group
3. providing appreciative leadership and guidance
4. formative cooperation.

The ability to cope with the four dimensions is different for every individual career entrant and depends to some extent on personality traits.

A successful career start requires an inter-play of offerings in four dimensions from the institutional end:

1. introduction at the workplace
2. supportive offerings from school management and experienced teachers at the school site
3. further training geared to address professional performance requirements
4. an introduction to professional development on the basis of practice reflection and peer-group cooperation (EDK, 1996).

Supervision is a fifth offering that actively promotes meta-cognitive engagement with self-development tasks with the aim of building competence (Keller-Schneider, 2009a). The various types of offerings are present to a greater or lesser extent in the three induction models which are presented below.

These models reduce the existing diversity to three patterns which differ in terms of key characteristics. The features are contrasted by highlighting the differences between the models.

Model 1: University of Teacher Education instructed by host canton to set up induction, using canton Thurgau as an example

In cantons hosting a university of teacher education, the universities are usually responsible for induction programmes in cooperation with local public schools. Similar concepts have been developed in many cantons of German-speaking Switzerland.

The induction concepts are based on pertinent research into the career entry setting, teacher training standards, and the requirements and needs of schools and teachers. It is important to note that, in Switzerland, new teachers assume full responsibility for classroom teaching from day one.

Focus on professional mission and the teacher

Recent research papers do not confirm that teachers starting their careers experience 'transition shock' when switching from university to teaching practice (Dann *et al.*, 1978; Terhart, 1998). However, given an induction situation marked by expectations of a high level of autonomy while confronted with complex tasks, the fact is that the various training programmes may differ in how well they prepare budding teachers for the many and diverse demands of the job, and that teachers in this stage differ greatly in how they adjust to the stresses involved (Zingg & Grob, 2002; Baer, Dörr, Fraefel *et al.*, 2005; Larcher Klee, 2005; Albisser, Kirchhoff, & Albisser, 2009). That is why the objectives of further training at career entry focus on the professional mission and the teacher.

1. Induction programmes support teachers in the career entry stage in mastering the demands of the job responsibly and competently.

2. Induction supports teachers in developing their professional identity.

3. Induction helps teachers to build upon and deepen the knowledge and skills acquired during their university training.

The induction programme comprises a set of compulsory and optional mentoring and further training courses that are dovetailed in terms of their objectives and formats.

Mentoring is offered in the form of individual mentoring on-site and group mentoring. Individual mentoring is the low-threshold provision of advice in response to questions about everyday working life by experienced teachers from the school team. Additional specialist supervision is offered as needed. Group mentoring is mentoring among colleagues under the guidance of an advisor in a peer group setting; i.e. with people who are in a similar situation in terms of their professional biography.

Further training modules with a pedagogical or didactic focus are provided in a variety of formats, spanning further training courses, multimodal courses involving practical implementation and practice reflection, and intensive further training programmes lasting several weeks during timetabled teaching hours.

Induction is generally part of the university's mandate and it is implemented in cooperation with local schools. The local school is mainly responsible for personnel induction and low-threshold on-site support. The university is responsible for didactic and pedagogical further training in various formats and for practice reflection in the peer group.

Satisfaction and further development

Induction programmes rapidly became established in the cantons and have proven their worth in practice. Satisfaction surveys indicate a high level of acceptance of the 'individual mentoring' and 'intensive further training' elements. Career entrants appreciate the opportunity to seek on-site support informally and to deepen and develop their own professional skills in further training modules spread out over several weeks. Satisfaction with group mentoring is highest in cases where participation is voluntary.

Modifications were made in some cantons, mainly in response to the universal introduction of school principals: the extent of compulsory further training during induction was reduced and the choice of options was extended at the same time. This ensures the best possible fit between a diverse programme of further training, the school's requirements, and the needs of teachers.

Existing induction models will see further refinement over the coming years. Some of the main priorities are as follows:

In most cantons, on-site individual mentoring among colleagues is confidential. At some point in the future, it is likely that information from individual mentoring will be used in line with defined processes for human resources purposes by school management. The main priority will be the formative evaluation of the teacher by school management for the purpose of planning further training.

Induction programmes can be designed in future to serve active career planning even more effectively. Induction will become part of a lifelong further training strategy spanning the person's whole career. This will necessitate the development of further training programmes that are integrated in a continuum comprising teacher training, induction and further training, with a focus on self-development tasks and transitions (Terhart *et al.*, 1994; Herzog & Munz, 2010).

Model 2: The cantonal department of education is in charge of induction: Canton Appenzell Ausserrhoden (AR) as an example

Appenzell Ausserrhoden canton hires approximately 50 to 70 new teachers annually in the compulsory education sector. A one-year period of induction at the new workplace awaits the new recruits on a cantonal and local government level.

The main priority during this annual induction period is the establishment and reinforcement of professional thinking and acting (Department of Education, 2009, p. 2). For the teachers in question, career entry involves assuming full responsibility for teaching the curriculum and class management, in addition to familiarising themselves with internal school structures, and becoming integrated in the existing team and established culture of the school. These objectives are achieved by means of three key elements.

1. **Introduction to the fundamental aspects of the compulsory public schooling in the canton of Appenzell Ausserrhoden**

    The cantonal department of education organises further training in the following areas at three full-day events and one half-day event throughout the year:

    • presentation of official cantonal agencies, services and associations

    • basic attitudes (integration) and developing trends in the canton

    • the canton's political and cultural identity

    • introduction to the Induction Compass

    • introduction to fundamental obligations: professional mission, rights and duties, curriculum and implementation, evaluating and advising, teaching and learning materials, cooperation with the various official agencies and student counsellors / school psychology offices

    • assistance and support programmes for developing teaching skills, handling heterogeneity, integration of and cooperation with special needs staff, and peer group practice evaluation

    • look-back (evaluation), appreciation, taking stock and looking ahead.

2. **Induction and support at the new workplace (personnel induction)**

    Local school management is responsible for on-site induction. School principals provide suitable resources in keeping with their personnel management role to meet the following objectives:

    • inform new teachers about the strategic, pedagogical and didactic approaches and structural framework

    • support new teachers in performing their job on site day to day

    • familiarising new teachers with the level of cooperation expected among teachers

    • advising and supporting new teachers as they acquire their initial job experience.

    As part of the development process, school management reflects with the teacher on the teacher's classroom experiences and, on that basis, draws up a plan for further development steps in a personal further training portfolio in collaboration with the teacher[1].

3. **Support in establishing a personal professional role in practice groups**

    Professionally guided group practice meetings are held (four three-hour meetings per year) in order to help teachers reflect on their professional role. Thinking and acting like a professional are the main priorities. Pedagogical and didactic aspects

and leadership issues (class management; discipline) are addressed in guided supervision sessions. The respective supervisory directors are available upon request for personal counselling, including attendance in the classroom.

General framework

The project day elements organised by the department for public schooling (canton) and the practice groups are compulsory for all new teachers and for all teachers returning to teach in the canton after a break of five years or more whose working hours exceed 20 per cent of the standard full-time working week. 50 per cent of project day work takes place during timetabled teaching hours and all of the practice group meetings take place outside teaching hours.

Teachers have a personal induction compass resembling a checklist or induction portfolio. The induction period is completed with the issuance of a cantonal certificate on the basis of the teacher's personal further training portfolio. The certificate is issued given regular attendance of the modules.

Past experience and outlook

The needs in the heterogeneous cohort of approximately 50 teachers entering the induction stage every year are very different (in terms of job experience, levels taught and tasks). As a general rule, the guided exchange of experience, in some cases with the attendance of experienced teachers, brief inputs from the cantonal specialists involved (including the school counsellors / psychology office and official agencies) and practical incentives and tips (e.g. handling heterogeneity and student assessment) meets with a positive response. Conceptual and theoretical background information inspires little interest. The practice groups are seen as an effective source of support. These sessions may also give rise to individual coaching situations.

Induction in Appenzell Ausserrhoden will see a number of changes over the next couple of years. The principle of 'cantonal lead' is likely to be retained. Direct contact between beginner teachers and the competent cantonal agencies (e.g. counselling and development) has been shown to be successful. Reflection and identification of patterns of behaviour in everyday school life will be reinforced. The concept of further expanding mentorships with on-site teachers is viewed with scepticism.

Model 3: Induction support for teachers entering the profession

Implementing the support concept

In the spring of 2002, the governing board of the University of Teacher Education, BEJUNE (UTE-BEJUNE) resolved to introduce continued professional development as a means of induction support for new preschool and primary teachers entering the profession.

The support concept involves multiple players: teachers themselves, the educational establishments, school directors, school boards, inspectors, teaching advisers, the

pertinent education departments, and UTE continuing professional development. It makes sense to involve the maximum number of partners in realising the concept.

A working group for continuing professional development was formed, comprising representatives of the education departments of the three cantons (French-speaking part of the canton of Bern, Jura and Neuchâtel), primary school directors and representatives of continuing professional development. This group drew up the support concept presented below.

Target population

- teachers starting out in their career
- teachers changing to different levels (age groups taught)
- teachers returning to work.

Main principles involved in the concept

- induction measures are optional
- induction measures take place outside timetabled teaching hours
- there is no time-limit
- certificates are provided.

Support measures

- *Carried out by cantonal department of education*
  The measures vary from canton to canton. Examples: compulsory meetings for exchange of information; individual follow-up by means of classroom visits; support upon demand, etc.

- *Carried out by school management*
  The working group drew up a list of measures which was sent out to all school principals in the BEJUNE area. The aim was to facilitate reception of new teachers in schools.

- *Carried out by UTE-BEJUNE continuing professional development*
  The services set forth below are organised by UTE-BEJUNE continuing professional development, based on the principles defined by the working group.
  They are published every year in the annual programme of continuing professional development. The first such publication was for the 2004-2005 school year.

  1. *Reflection on practice.* This activity enables the teachers concerned to promote their professional development. It provides a means of support that teachers can put to use in practicing their profession. It is guided by experienced practitioners and organised in response to the needs of the participants.

2. *Didactic elements.* The following training elements are targeted at teachers wishing to develop skills in specific disciplines:

- for pre-school and primary levels 1 and 2: integrated didactics, reading

- for primary 3 to 6: mathematics, French, German, history, geography, natural sciences.

These services are provided by experienced practitioners in the form of 'apprenticeships'.

3. *Courses in the annual programme.* A number of courses in the continuing professional development programme are of particular interest to beginner teachers. A specific classification system enables their identification.

Priority topics include classroom management, dealing with parents, conducting interviews, teaching children to read, etc.

Feedback on the measures available

The teachers involved express overall satisfaction with the measures on offer, which they consider to be highly flexible and suitable to meet their needs.

The school representatives in the working group evaluate the measures every year and are satisfied with the chosen model.

Comparison of the three models

Feature	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Distribution	Thurgau; similarly in other cantons with a university of teacher education	Appenzell-Ausserrhoden; similarly in other cantons with no university of teacher education	Bern, Jura, Neuenburg (Bern: French part only)
Organisers / responsibility	university of teacher education and local schools	Cantonal department of education and local school management	Departments of education of the three cantons, school management, university of teacher education and others
Target population	New and returning teachers	New and returning teachers	New and returning teachers; teachers switching levels
Duration	2 years	1 year	In response to individual needs

Feature	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Compulsory for beginning teachers	Partly compulsory, partly voluntary with compulsory and optional elements	Compulsory	Optional only
Time off from teaching	Three weeks of intensive training during timetabled teaching hours	50 per cent of induction days but no respite from teaching for practice group sessions	Outside teaching hours only
Qualification / certificate	Certificate of attendance	Cantonal certificate	Certificate of attendance
Potential future development	Less compulsory further training, greater choice of options. Utilise peer-group advice for human resources purposes. Strengthen the position of initiation / induction as part of the professional biography.	The three elements are well accepted. Practical support to be strengthened. No on-site mentoring.	Participants are satisfied. Needs appear to be met. No changes planned.
Special features		Induction compass, further training portfolio	

Table 1: Comparison of key features of the three induction models

The three models, which reduce heterogeneity in the 26 cantons, display a number of points in common and virtually identical manifestations respectively in terms of the selected features At the same time, they also show significant differences. For example, participation ranges from all-compulsory to all-optional. No respite from teaching is provided in the French-speaking BEJUNE region, whereas substantial time off is provided in German-speaking parts of Switzerland. The responsible agencies also differ. The BEJUNE region involves the largest number of agencies; in the other two models, either the training site (University of Teacher Education) or the cantonal education authorities have the largest say. Beginning teachers everywhere are satisfied with the services and organisation of induction programmes, but what specifically triggers their satisfaction is unclear. Furthermore, participant satisfaction does not equate with the efficacy of the measures in question (see Section 4).

The services are systematic and extensive in all three models. They bear testimony to the great importance of this career stage in preparing new teachers and retaining trained teachers in the profession.

3. Ten recommendations for inter-cantonal harmonisation of the organisation and content of the induction system

To facilitate harmonisation of the induction programmes provided, the 2007 Swiss Conference of Rectors of Universities of Teacher Education adopted ten induction recommendations at its annual meeting (COHEP, 2007). These recommendations constitute desirable developments with no specifications regarding their implementation. Implementation is up to the individual university and is based on the respective university's mandate and cantonal school legislation.

Their implementation three years on

Implementation of the recommendations in the cantons was evaluated in 2010. The main outcomes of the evaluation are the following: induction programmes had become established by 2010 in almost every canton in Switzerland as a component of the further training obligation set forth in the professional mission (see Recommendations 1 and 8 below). In cantons with universities of teacher education, it is generally part of the university's mandate (Recommendation 7). In other cantons, the cantonal educational authorities are responsible. By 2010, induction had been successfully positioned as an integral part of life-long learning for teachers in a continuum progressing from training through induction and continuing professional development. Three university cantons constitute exceptions: in one canton, the superintendent of schools is responsible for induction; another canton is exploring the establishment of a programme in line with COHEP recommendations. In a third canton, plans to establish a system have been put on hold.

Implementation in line with the ten individual recommendations was as follows in 2010:

Recommendation 1: *The universities of teacher education provide a specific, differentiated, diverse programme intended to support and provide continuing professional development opportunities for career starters*

Teachers use this programme of services to meet their further training obligations. A distinction can be drawn between compulsory and optional components.

More than half of the cantons draw a distinction between compulsory and optional components. Half of the remaining cantons have all-compulsory and half have all-optional offerings. This is based on two different philosophies: personal continuing profession development can be controlled by imposing compulsory requirements or

by the person in charge of human resources management. According to the COHEP expert group, both models are viable.

Recommendation 2: *The induction stage lasts two years*

Induction is for two years only in the bare majority of cantons. A COHEP expert group sees no need for action. The length of the programme needs to be determined on the basis of the specific concepts implemented in the various cantons.

Recommendation 3: *Induction is based on the standards established during university training*

It is not self-evident that induction in almost all of the cantons is based on training standards at the universities of teacher education. Hence, the stance adopted in most cases is that, while induction differs from basic teacher training as regards the didactics of further training, it does not differ from basic teacher training in terms of competence-based objectives.

Recommendation 4: *Career starters are given respite from teaching during this stage; part of the induction programme takes place during timetabled teaching hours*

Beginning teachers receive time off for supportive measures during the induction period in only one-third of the cantons. The most common reasons cited are the lack of a legislative framework, or cantonal provisions according to which further training must take place outside timetabled classroom hours.

Recommendation 5: *Those involved in introducing new teachers to the profession will have specific expertise in the vocational area concerned*

The recommendation that staff involved in introducing new teachers should have specific expertise is only partly met in two-thirds of cantons; e.g. in terms of specific functions or content of further training.

Recommendation 6: *Induction has a three-fold focus: the needs of beginning teachers, the requirements of the institute of learning, and the outcomes of induction research*

There is no dispute that induction must address the needs of beginner teachers. Those needs are established at the outset or during the induction stage; e.g. in group discussions. The focus on the requirements of the schools in question (at least partially implemented in three-quarters of cantons) is again based on surveys, which however tend to be informal in many cases. In addition, the efforts in almost all of the cantons are based on research outcomes in this area.

Recommendation 7: *Induction is part of the mandate of the universities of teacher education and is put into practice with the involvement of cantonal authorities, local educational units and school management bodies*

The recommendations regarding interfacing are implemented to varying extents. University-canton cooperation is more in evidence than cooperation with local

educational units. The reasons are manifold and depend on the specific cantonal school organisation system.

Recommendation 8: *Written confirmation of participation in induction programmes is provided*

This recommendation is met to a large extent.

Recommendation 9: *Regular internal evaluation and periodical external evaluation of the impact of induction programmes will take place*

Regular evaluation of the services provided takes place in almost all cantons. In most cases this is done by asking career starters to assess the efficacy of the programmes provided. In contrast, there is a significant lack of external evaluation and a paucity of empirical research data on the efficacy of induction programmes.

Recommendation 10: *The experiences of new teachers in their profession will be documented systematically and used for quality assurance and development*

In the majority of cantons, feedback from career starters on their job experience is put to use for quality assurance and development of basic training. However, the approach is unsystematic in most cases.

Conclusion

After three years of implementation in the cantons, it is clear that the harmonisation effect of the 2007 recommendations has materialised only in part. There appears to be little pressure to harmonise career entry for individuals who have qualified to teach throughout Switzerland if it can be stated (see above) that, although implementation seems to fail due to cantonal circumstances, this fact is 'not always a problem'. Career entry and becoming established in the profession is a stage in a person's professional biography that is individually experienced and co-determined by the prevailing circumstances and which requires individualised support. Since all of the cantons have an interest in enabling the majority of teachers to avail of induction programmes to strengthen their professional role, induction programmes are organised and designed to achieve that goal. Thus, it can be assumed that while there may be no disparity as regards the ultimate goal, disparity in implementation still persists. The latter can only be recognised as a serious problem if evaluation were to demonstrate that one specific implementation concept is superior to another in accomplishing that goal. The extent to which research and evaluation can answer the question of efficacy is discussed in the following section.

4. Induction research: What do we know about the processes and their effectiveness?

This section looks at the uptake of induction programmes and their effect. An effect can be recognised in the fact that the participants themselves consider the services to be appropriate and supportive. The next step is to look at retention in the profession, which can constitute an output measure for successful induction. A clear-cut means of determining the effect of supportive induction measures, for instance by measuring a desirable set of behaviours, is unlikely to be achieved since the supportive services can provide useful pointers but cannot guarantee retention in the profession. That is because the essential prerequisite for retention in teaching is the willingness of teachers to rise to the development challenges inherent in the job, to take on those challenges and work on them (Keller-Schneider & Hericks, 2011). The success or impact of induction programmes is not amenable to stringent scrutiny. As a consequence, impact measures other than those mentioned above are lacking.

4.1 Studies of professional expertise development[2] after entering teaching

From among the abundant investigations available, the following section refers briefly to two recent studies on the career entry situation for teachers in Switzerland.

Larcher Klee (2005) monitored development of professional identity during the first year in the profession among 25 new primary school teachers in the canton of Thurgau in 1998-1999. Three written surveys and interviews over the space of a year revealed the following main findings:

- Substantial individual differences apply both in terms of the structure and personal perception of the first year in teaching.

- A sense of identification with the profession and perceived self-efficacy increases significantly toward the end of the first year on the job.

- Experiencing growing self-efficacy seems to be the key to a successful induction period.

- A high degree of self-efficacy correlates with lower job stress and less risk of burnout.

Keller-Schneider (2007; 2009b) asked a random sample of 155 beginning teachers from all three scholastic levels of the compulsory school sector in the canton of Zurich to rate a number of job-stage-specific performance requirements in the course of their first two years in the profession. One hundred and thirty six experienced teachers were polled as a reference group. Out of the 80 performance requirements presented, four job-specific stressors were selected with the highest frequency and identified as significant (see Section 2). Addressing and adapting to individual learners' educational attainment levels while planning and conducting classroom activities was identified as an above-average source of stress. Other stress factors

include managing classroom culture, establishing relationships with parents, and coming to terms with one's own standards and ambitions.

Correlations are evident between coping with performance demands and personality traits, the latter being viewed as stable factors. Extroverts are better able to cope with the stress, and, conversely, emotional instability increases the perceived strain. Applied to the four performance dimensions, this correlation holds true for three of them; i.e. role identification, leadership and cooperation (Keller-Schneider, 2009b).

In respect of induction programmes, the aim must therefore be to select targets and topics that address new teachers' abilities to cope with performance requirements and self-development issues. Another factor to consider is the heterogeneity among career starters, which results in individualised targets and challenges.

4.2 Impact of further training and support measures at career entry

So what are the indicators of the efficacy of induction programmes? A meta-analysis of international comparative studies has indicated that mentoring in particular correlates positively with job retention. This is an output measure, but it does not provide a sufficient basis for drawing conclusions about the quality of the measures offered and is not a direct indicator of growing competence or ability to cope with self-development issues (Keller-Schneider, 2009b).

Opinion surveys among participants designed to determine levels of acceptance of and satisfaction with services and models cannot be viewed as a measure of efficacy. The same applies to respondents' perceived experience of the three models (see Section 2). Recommendation 9, concerning determination of efficacy by internal evaluation of services, does not go beyond the level of a satisfaction poll (see Section 3). External evaluation as well as empirical investigation of efficacy are absent to a large extent and any existing research is sponsored research that is not accessible to the general public.

One exception is the evaluation of induction conducted in the canton of St. Gallen (Keller-Schneider, 2008), which is organised according to Model 1 (see Section 2). It indicates that career starters from preschool to secondary I (N = 457) rate themselves as being sufficiently competent in their first year on the job. Self-assessed competence and performance ability rises during the course of the first year on the job. On average, the requirement to promote students in their learning processes and rate students caused significant stress and fears of being unable to cope. These outcomes confirm the key findings of the Zurich study (see Section 4.1); i.e., that new teachers are not yet able to adapt and individualise their teaching to address the individual attainment levels of their students. This should be prioritised as a professional development target.

The competence development and stress curve among new teachers is neither continuous nor synchronous. There is no indication of gender- or level-specific differences in the perception and self-assessment of competence and stress. The

external assessments of mentors confirm the self-assessments of the career entrants themselves (Keller-Schneider, 2008).

Induction programmes are rated as helpful, supportive and useful overall. Local mentoring comes in for the highest acceptance ratings because it targets individual needs and is designed to be a low-threshold intervention among colleagues. Further training courses are appreciated the most when perceived as providing direct support in coping with the demands of the job (Keller-Schneider, 2008).

Recommendation 9 (see Section 3) calls for more extensive and more targeted research to determine the efficacy of induction programmes. Little investigation has been done so far because the programmes are well accepted and generating high levels of satisfaction. As a result, there is little demand for efficacy data, and informal polls are seen to be sufficient.

4.3 Statistics on induction and early withdrawal from the profession
(SCCRE, 2010)

In a heavily job-specific course of studies such as teacher training, the transition to working life is an important goal of training. Hence, the transition rate needs to be taken into account in any consideration of efficacy. There is a paucity of hard data on transition rates and career development in teaching in Switzerland.

Graduate surveys one year after completion of studies at a university of teacher education indicate a career entry rate in excess of 90 per cent. The figure is high compared with data for other career training programmes. Herzog, Herzog & Brunner (2007) identified a career entry rate of about 80 per cent for teachers in the canton of Berne.

Ultimately, a successful induction period (Larcher Klee, 2005) is also a marker of successful training in preparation for a specific career. Logically, therefore, career entry would have to be included in any efficacy analysis. Comparison of various training concepts and programmes indicates that practical preparation for real-life teaching later on is associated with more desirable learning outcomes for those teachers' students (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford *et al*,. 2008).

The average annual fluctuation rate in Swiss cantons for teachers in the compulsory education sector was 8per cent in 2001. Hence, fluctuation in teaching ten years ago was below the average Swiss level of 10.2 per cent across all occupations, and below the 10 per cent fluctuation rate noted for health care and social service occupations. Focusing on the sub-set of young teachers with two to five years in the profession who change jobs, it is apparent that young teachers account for 20 per cent to more than 40 per cent of all job changers in the teaching professions at two years, and 30 per cent to 60 per cent at five years in most of the ten cantons evaluated. It is necessary to qualify these statistics by pointing out that it is uncertain whether the job changers remain in teaching or leave teaching for another occupation (Müller Kucera & Stauffer, 2003). The distribution of job changers in relation to the number of years in

the job follows a similar pattern on an international scale: *'Teacher attrition rates tend to be higher in the first few years of teaching, and to decline the longer that teachers are in the profession, before they increase approaching the retirement age'* (OECD, 2005, p. 175).

Viewed over the course of a full career, about half of all graduates/trained primary teachers in the canton of Berne leave their job. However, most continue to pursue a career in the field of education; only 10 per cent opt out of the educational system altogether. A disproportionately high percentage of primary school teachers leave at the start of their career rather than later. Among the many reasons for this attrition, the main one is the high stress levels involved, the trend being slightly more marked among men than women. Ultimately, almost 80 per cent of withdrawals from primary teaching are for private reasons (mainly women) or in search of new job prospects. Dissatisfaction with the job is the main reason for 16 per cent of those who leave teaching (Herzog, Herzog, Brunner *et al.*, 2007).

Notes

1. All teachers keep a pre-structured personal further training portfolio. School managements are required to use this tool to prioritise, plan and control the further training programme for teachers.

2. Expertise is defined as the ability to solve problems / meet the demands of the job on the basis of knowledge-based skills.

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How to cite this chapter

Vögeli-Mantovani U., Bachmann, M., Wälchli, J.-F., & Hofmaier, M. (2011). Induction programmes for teachers in compulsory education: Organisation and content, recommendations and their implementation; analysis of the impact of induction programmes. *In* P. Picard & L. Ria (Eds.), *Beginning teachers: a challenge for educational systems – CIDREE Yearbook 2011* (pp. 171-190). Lyon, France: ENS de Lyon, Institut français de l'Éducation.

11 Beginning teachers in Luxembourg: two teacher profiles, two ways into the job

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Beginning teachers in Luxembourg: two teacher profiles, two ways into the job

Jos Bertemes and Jean-Luc Thill

Abstract

In order to conceive of the challenges which confront beginning teachers in Luxembourg, the national characteristics and trends in political, social and economic key data are set out. Starting from these characteristics specificities, the actual situation concerning the two paths to enter the teaching profession, either in the elementary and primary school, or in the secondary education, will be explored and detailed.

For both training programmes, the starting point will be the intended teacher profile. This profile, issued by the Ministry of Education, sets the institutional and theoretical framework for the training institutions. In this context, the focus will be on the conceptual framework and the study structure of the different training programmes. These issues will be related to the core objectives of the national teacher training programmes: learning how to learn; developing a personal professional project in a community of learners; being a responsible actor and author; becoming a reflective practitioner.

Setting the stage: characteristics of the Luxembourg education system

Besides the general evolution of society and education, Luxembourg schools need to respond to the following national characteristics:

Luxembourg is at the intersection of (at least) two cultures that it inherited, throughout its history, through influences from Germany and France. Due to a strong immigration policy and an enduring commitment of the Luxembourg government to the European integration strategy, Luxembourg's society, and therefore the population of students attending its schools, is particularly diverse. The average rate of immigrant pupils reaches more than 40 per cent.

Luxembourg's public schools, which most pupils attend, accept all children and one of their main missions is to maintain social cohesion. Thus, school classes are very heterogeneous. The weakening of family structures creates a strengthening of the

educational mission of schools and this requires the extension of their offer to after-school services.

Luxembourg has three official languages and Luxembourg society is a polyglot one. Another important mission of the Luxembourg public school is to enable every student to have access to multi-lingualism. The consequences are early learning of several foreign languages and starting literacy in a non-native language; i.e. all the pupils learn to read and write in German although this is, for most of them, not their first language.

The Luxembourg education system distinguishes between two kinds of teachers (MENFP, 2010, pp. 113-117): teachers for pre-primary education and primary education, also called the elementary school or *'école fondamentale'*, who teach to children aged between 4 and 12 years (ISCED 0 and 1), and teachers for secondary schools where upper and lower education (ISCED 2 and 3) is offered together in most schools.

Teachers for elementary schools are considered as generalists and their initial training follows a broad curriculum, whereas teachers for secondary education first study one specific subject matter and then add pedagogical and didactical elements to their initial training. These two different approaches provide an appropriate teacher training for both types of teacher and will be presented in the following.

Teachers for the *'école fondamentale'*

In order to structure the aims of teacher education for pre-primary and primary schools, the Ministry for Education has issued a teacher's profile that addresses the key competences that the national employer would expect from its teachers.

Teacher's profile for the elementary school (MENFP, 2005)

This profile starts from the premise that teacher knowledge may neither be entirely practical nor entirely theoretical. A good interaction between practical and theoretical knowledge is crucial for the teacher during his/her initial formation as well as in his/her professional development. Mastering the delicate balance between theory and praxis should enable the teacher to meet the expectations of the following profile whose elements aggregate along areas of theory, practice and professional ethics.

The profile consists of ten axes (given below), where the order in the listing doesn't indicate any relative weighting in respect of each professional competency.

School as an institution: The teacher knows the children's rights. S/he is aware of the system, the legal dispositions and the educational institutions. S/he is informed of the administrative structure of school and aware of related institutions.

Partnership: The teacher knows the rights and responsibilities of school partners. S/he cooperates with parents and various social partners. S/he regularly informs the parents about the development of their child and involves them in the pupil's well-being and their own learning project at school.

The socio-cultural context: The teacher knows the socio-cultural context of the Luxembourg school and is aware of the multicultural aspect of the country, the school population and the learning environment. S/he is able to analyse and interpret critically and responsibly the social, economic and cultural development of the school and the schooling environment.

The theoretical foundations: The teacher has knowledge in pedagogy and remedial pedagogy. S/he has basic knowledge in philosophy, psychology and sociology. S/he has extensive knowledge in general didactic and teaching methodology.

The act of teaching: The teacher organises and promotes learning situations which are based on the pupil's actual competences according to the intended competences covered by the curriculum. The teacher manages the progression of learning and reflects the diversity of the class. S/he assesses the progress of learning and masters the methods of evaluation. S/he identifies pupils' special needs and responds with appropriate action.

Disciplines: The teacher is aware of the progression of teaching and learning described in the national curriculum. S/he has overall knowledge of all branches that s/he has to teach and masters the didactics of the different branches.

Communication: The teacher knows how to communicate with the different school partners. S/he is able to communicate, both orally and in writing, in both languages of instruction (German and French).

Information and communication technologies: The teacher uses different kinds of media, including information and communication, in order to access to necessary information for his/her professional use.

Professional ethics: The teacher has the professional knowledge to face the ethical duties and dilemmas of the profession. The teacher demonstrates professional ethics and adopts appropriate attitudes and behaviours. S/he adheres to the rights of the child, is sensitive to the needs of children and respects the dignity of the child and the pupil's work. S/he promotes pupils' socialisation and is attentive to the gender and the inter-cultural dimension of learning. S/he involves students in their learning and assumes his/her role as a teacher by showing care, politeness, imagination and application.

Professional identity: The teacher demonstrates a reflexive and self-regulative attitude and is open to innovation and research. S/he is committed to an individual, has a collective professional approach to development and maintains his/her own training. S/he is able to work independently as well together with others in a team, respects official guidelines, participates in the management of the school, manages the resources of the school and knows how to elaborate a project.

Regarding the professional expectations expressed in the teacher's profile, the Ministry for Education and Vocational Training is particularly interested in an initial formation that:

- aims first for general teacher training, without neglecting arts or sports
- introduces future teachers to scientific work
- is situated in the multilingual context of Luxembourg in dealing with problems of foreign language literacy and early learning of additional languages
- contains offers which are attractive to both, women and men
- guarantees that German and French are being equally used as languages of instruction
- includes both, a course of training abroad and a course of training in a social-educational structure other than elementary school
- ensures the training and involvement of trainee teachers.

At the end of initial training, the student must have acquired the competences described in this profile, in order to be able to act as independent and reflective practitioner.

Initial teacher training for primary schools

The University of Luxembourg, as well as other universities in the neighbourhood of Luxembourg, offer study programmes that lead to a Bachelor's degree, and this is required to become a teacher in the Luxembourg education system. In the following part of the document, the Bachelors' degree offered by the University of Luxembourg (BScE) will be presented in more detail because this is the degree that most of Luxembourg's teachers have acquired to enter the career of primary school teacher.

The BScE is an integrated, four-year study programme (eight semesters of full-time study for 240 ECTS) and leads to a Bachelor's degree in Educational Sciences with a particular focus on learning and teaching.

It provides qualifications for teaching in pre-school and primary school, also called '*école fondamentale*', in preparatory classes of the technical secondary school and

in institutions for children with special needs. It also qualifies for possible future enrolment in Master studies in the domain of educational sciences.

The structure and development of the BScE is based on principles of transparency, coherence and quality management. It takes into account the guidelines of the Bologna policy, the internal regulations of the university, the curricular framework and the expected teacher's profile of the national ministry of education and the regular feedback and advice of external institutes of accreditation, evaluation and quality management.

The theoretical and didactical concepts of the BScE are based on inter-disciplinarity and pluralism, and reflect the current international scientific discourses. They also match the teacher's profile that has been issued by the ministry of education.

The BScE respects the following principles:

• Learning how to learn and learning how to teach is fostered through the appropriation of theoretical concepts for analysing one's own and others' learning and teaching.

• Collaborative work is encouraged through the development of a community of learners.

• Students are supported via tutorials on creating, documenting, reflecting and evaluating personal initiatives and research projects.

• Self-reflection is cultivated by developing actors' critical attitudes towards their own practices of learning and teaching.

• The BScE emphasises the diversity of individual pathways, and raises the necessity for becoming a responsible actor and author by being accountable for his/her own professional development.

• The BScE promotes linguistic and cultural diversity. Most courses are taught in Luxembourgish and German, some in French or English and others are bi-lingual or multi-lingual; i.e. participants switch between languages when interacting, drawing upon references or producing outputs in seminars.

At the end of their studies students of the BScE should be able to:

• understand learning and teaching processes, take into account its pre-conditions (individual resources, socio-cultural context), and reflect on them

• organise and monitor learning and teaching environments, and facilitate differentiated learning processes in a multi-lingual context

• develop learning activities for problem-solving, for creativity and innovation

• contribute to the citizenship education of children

- deal with the social, cultural and ethnic diversity of students according to professional ethics

- teach and learn with multi-modal media

- work within multi-professional and inter-disciplinary teams

- work on school curriculum and school development activities (referred in the national legislation as *'plan de réussite scolaire'*)

- participate in differentiated evaluation processes

- collaborate with parents and other social partners

- assume responsibility for continuous professional development (motivation for lifelong learning).

Theoretical and conceptual foundations of bachelor studies
(University of Luxembourg, s.d.a)

The foundations of the Bachelor's studies rely on two aspects: on one side the development of an initial teacher training based on the learning processes to be individually developed by children (learning how children learn) and, on the other side, the offer of basic, target group-oriented didactic and educational courses (learning how to teach). In particular, the general educational knowledge and skills and the basic didactic aspects should be addressed as well as the reflection based on individual learning paths.

A solid educational basic training of the students is an important cornerstone of the efficiency of the practical part of the initial teacher training; these parts will be referred to in the rest of the article as *'temps de terrain'*. So the students will not only learn in the lecture hall of the university, they will spend a serious amount of time in real school situation where they will get the opportunity to apply the bases of their theoretical instruction based on the implementation of a stronger child focus, on the methods of a differentiated instruction and on learning challenging opportunities.

The central importance of scientific research, as a basis and reference point for the beginning teacher, is without doubt one of the strengths of the studies within the BScE. It consists of establishing, during all the courses offered in these studies, a continuous focus on research issues. The model for this orientation has been the reflective practitioner, who is able to reflect on his/her own practice and learning activities in schools in relationship to the required academic knowledge and teaching models. This aspect of the reflective practitioner has been extended to that of the teacher as a researcher or research-based teacher, who will be able, through his/her own practice-oriented research activities, to evaluate and modify the specific learning conditions, learning abilities and learning achievements of the pupils.

A second, practical pillar of the studies in the BScE is the terrain work in the primary schools in Luxembourg (also called *'temps de terrain'*) which is complementary to the academic training in the University. This practical phase is defined as an integral part of the studies, and thus a central element of a coherent formation. It is important to avoid two common misunderstandings. The *'temps du terrain'*, on the one hand, should not be thought of as a pure academic experimentation and practice field, where the supposedly 'superior' academic perspectives would imperatively lead to changes in practice once applied and implemented in practice. It should also be clear, on the other hand, that these *'temps du terrain'* are not the phase in the student's career where s/he is confronted with a reality and its supposed constraints, and where the knowledge learned at university is presented as theoretical and disconnected from the real life of the class. The idea is to set up during these *'temps de terrain'* a form of dialogue and cooperation between equal partners, to establish the university and the school as associates that who will contribute equally to the teacher training. Both institutions – the school and the university – will benefit from this situation if they are willing to reflect their own certainties in the light of the experience and knowledge of the other. The basis for such collaboration is the clear curricular formulation of objectives and tasks for the *'temps de terrain'*, where the roles and the responsibilities of the supervisors of the university, the teacher-tutors in the schools and the students are well defined, procedures of collaboration are laid down and resources are specified. Basically, this part of the programme can only succeed if the two partners, the teacher-tutors in the field and the teachers at the university, agree on a common conception of the accompaniment of the students. This pre-supposes that both partners have a good knowledge of the work of others and that a qualification is necessary to provide professional support on both sides.

The study programme emphasises the elaboration, the execution, the analysis and the interpretation of research activities. Students start their collaborative and individual inquiries into various educational settings from the beginning of their studies. They continue their learning explorations within their projects and teaching activities where these will provide data as resources for further training activities.

The fieldwork starts with an understanding of the learning and teaching context and moves towards the planning of long term learning and teaching episodes. The *'temps du terrain'* starts in Semester 1 and is continuously expanded in the subsequent years. The responsibilities for pedagogical activities are gradually increased in cooperation with the individual mentors from the school context and tutors from the university during the internships. A *'carnet de stage'* structures the internships and traces the development of the pedagogical and didactical competences of each student.

Research is used as a learning tool for:

- investigating educational contexts, school contexts and classrooms
- investigating and understanding current practices of teaching and learning

- monitoring the effects of new teaching concepts

- identifying issues and problems with a view to taking action

- understanding professional action as a basis for individual and team development

- generating dialogue among researchers, practitioners and students.

Study structure (University of Luxembourg, s.d.b)

Semesters 1 and 2: The main part of the studies for the BScE consists of basic theoretical and methodological inputs (lectures about theories about learning or school as a social institution), complemented by seminars that deal with particular topics, such as the aims and methods of the development of teaching and learning, (early) childhood, the didactics of language learning in multi-lingual and multi-cultural contexts and the didactics of mathematics and science education.

Semesters 3 and 4: As mobility is mandatory in Semesters 3 or 4, students may stay two semesters abroad *('stage de mobilité')*, but only 30 ECTS for each semester will be validated and the *'stage de mobilité'* will have to correspond to the requirements of the BScE.

Semesters 5 and 6: Semesters 5 and 6 are characterised by continuous inter-disciplinary work in pedagogical and didactical dimensions and in the academic situations and in the *'temps du terrain'*, as follows:

- options for specialisations in connection with the *'temps du terrain'*

- applied research activities in preparation for the final bachelor work

- hands-on pedagogical and didactical activities in in-school situations and practical workshops

- exploring new pedagogical and didactical subjects, specialising in certain areas (such as special educational needs), strengthening competences in basic subject areas (languages; maths; science; communication).

Semesters 7 and 8: The last two semesters of the BScE are characterised by an extensive internship of six weeks in each semester where two students are in one class together with their teacher-tutor for four days per week and where on the last day of each week, only one student is in the class, while the other one attends seminars at the university for reflection and preparation of activities.

Getting on the job: final exam and access to the profession

At the end of his/her studies, the student of the BScE will have to present a portfolio which contains two parts: the certificates of the courses that s/he has attended during the eight semesters of the BScE and a major written essay where s/he has to show all the aspects of the reflexive practitioners and the field-related teacher-researcher work that s/he should have undertaken during his/her studies. In this essay, s/he will

have to start from a pedagogical relevant question, conduct a research of necessary information and an appropriate documentation of significant literature, construct a research situation (often during the 'temps du terrain') in order to be able to collect data, analyse and interpret the collected data and draw a pertinent conclusion. The result of this work is a written document presented to a jury. After approval of this work, the Bachelor certificate will be awarded to the student.

With this document, the student may attend a competitive examination *('concours de recrutement'*) organised by the Ministry of National Education. This examination consists of the following elements:

1. a written open-book exam on the Luxembourg culture, written in one of the three official languages chosen by the candidate

2. a written test on teaching and learning where the candidates can choose between two proposed topics, generally one on pre-primary and the other one on primary education

3. a progression plan of learning activities on a given concrete everyday teaching situation.

Each part will be separately evaluated and the marks received in these tests will lead to a ranking of all the candidates in order to determine their access to the job. After passing the competition successfully, the student is transferred to his first teaching assignment.

Teachers for the secondary school

The programme and procedure to become a secondary teacher are specific and cannot be compared with the model for elementary and primary school teachers. Whereas the primary school teacher is doing a BScE to access the profession, the future secondary teacher has an in-service-training. In order to describe the teacher training programme for the secondary school, it is important to briefly describe the procedures to access teaching in a secondary school in Luxembourg.

There are two ways to become a teacher in a secondary school: as a *'professeur'* (MENFP, s.d.a) or as a *'chargé d'enseignement'* (MENFP, s.d.b) which are both regulated by the national legislation.

Access to the secondary teacher profession leading to the title of 'professor' is regulated by an entry-exam called *'concours de recrutement du personnel enseignant de l'enseignement postprimaire'* organised in the first term of school. The recruitment is based on the specific needs of the various subject matters taught in secondary schools. The conditions to access the exam are determined by the policy-makers, supported by the national subject-matter commissions *('Commissions nationales des programmes'*).

The *'chargé d'enseignement'* has been implemented by the Ministry of Education to handle specific and/or urgent needs in teaching staff. Although the *'chargé'* has existed for decades in the educational system, the status of this teacher profile has only be regulated by law since 2010 and a specific teacher training programme of 60 hours on pedagogics and legislation has become compulsory. In terms of the policy-makers, it is clear that the *'chargé'* should ideally be a step into becoming a 'professor'; i.e. a secondary teacher fulfilling all requirements and conditions.

Although most of the persons work as a *'chargé'* when preparing and taking this entry-exam, it is not a requirement. Anyway, once the entry-exam is passed, the future teacher will pass to the induction phase called *'formation théorique et pratique des enseignants de l'enseignement postprimaire'* and his/her professional status goes from employee (*'chargé d'enseignement employé auprès de la fonction publique'*) to civil servant in training (*'fonctionnaire professeur-stagiaire'*).

Teacher's profile for the secondary school

The following profile sets out the professional disposition the Ministry of Education expects from its secondary teachers. Conceived in the past to welcome only the best pupils from the primary school, the secondary school has undergone major changes for over three decades. Nowadays, the secondary education must bring all pupils, within the context of a growing cultural and ethnical diversity, to a qualification in terms of their individual possibilities and capacities. Reflecting the background of a rapidly changing society and taking into account the characteristics of the national educational system, the expectation and the role of what a teacher should be have changed too. Policy-makers, therefore, are very keen to ensure that the training helps teachers to fulfil their now difficult and complex task, and they decided in 1998 to principally organise the training around a number of competences. Based on Philippe Perrenoud's definition of a competence as a situated mobilisation of resources in order to know how to decide and act, the Ministry for Education decided that the following key competences should be developed, applied and evaluated in the initial teacher training programme. They are grouped together in a so-called *'référentiel de compétences'*:

- communicate with internal and external school partners

- construct one's personnel professional project

- master the institutional frame of the scholar system

- pilot learning activities, eventually in cooperation with other teachers

- regulate learning in a formative way, taking into account the diversity of the pupils

- master the information and communication technology (ICT) tools

- exploit scholar and socio-cultural information in relation with the pupil on the background of an multi-lingual and inter-cultural vision

- check the knowledge and capabilities of students in an certificated view

- articulate psycho-pedagogical and subject-matter related knowledge

- help the pupil to become autonomous and construct his personnel project

- maintain a permanent research in regard of one's own practice

- actively participate to the development of one's school

- make the pupil responsible within the scholar and socio-cultural frame.

In the context of these 13 competences, the Ministry for Education is particularly interested in an initial induction phase which enables the future teacher to develop a professional profile. In this profile, the future teacher is responsible for instructing in a specialist subject matter and contributing to the learner's education in respect of their individual needs and the official curriculum. This teacher has a profound knowledge of the subject matter which s/he teaches and of the national objectives and programmes. S/he is familiar and keeps him- or her-self informed on the general educational goals and orientations of the educational policy, as well as the results and conclusions resulting from the regular quality evaluations of the national educational system. S/he respects the responsibilities and rights of all persons involved, such as pupils, teachers parents and others. S/he is familiar with the socio-cultural characteristics of the country, his/her school and his/her classes. In relation to the development of the competences, the Ministry of Education expects every teacher to master the following key features: to instruct, evaluate, educate, dialogue, communicate, work in a team and, last but not least, reflect his/her own practice.

Initial teacher training for secondary schools

(University of Luxembourg, s.d.c)

Theoretical and conceptual foundations of the formation

The training programme for secondary school teachers offers the trainees the possibility to build a personal and professional project in order to be able to cope with the complexity of every-day teaching and learning situations. This project is principally organised around a catalogue of competences which have to be developed, practiced, questioned and evaluated during the induction phase. The alternation of training moments between the field (i.e. the practice of teaching in a secondary school with a two-hour weekly mentoring session) and the university (i.e. the teacher training as a theoretical background of teaching) contribute to a personal professional experience which enables the future teacher to conceptualise his/her practice theoretically and explore these models in the field work. While assimilating

experience and knowledge, identifying the academic pertinence and applying this to his/her practice, the future teacher remains autonomous in the construction of his/her personal professional project. The method adopted is a personal portfolio which the future teacher has to construct, relying on the founding principles of the training programme: the competences, the auto-reflection of one's teacher practice in an exchange with peers, senior teachers and trainers of a learning community. In order to respond to the national characteristics of the Luxembourg educational system, the programme applies the concept of multi-linguism and cultural diversity. Since the future teacher is an adult in training, it is most important that s/he is really motivated and dedicated to his/her in-service-training, in order to become the reflective, autonomous and responsible teacher required by policy-makers. The specific knowledge of the various subject matters is considered to be as valuable a resource as the mastery of the aimed for professional competences.

The training is undertaken with an ethical dimension which has non-negotiable values. These are: the bill of human rights and the principles of providing an equal chance for all and the European context, especially its linguistic and cultural dimensions.

In order to realise these principles, the training is intended to set free the creative potential of all actors involved in order to become a place of exchange and social interaction. This process aims to help the trainee to identify and analyse his/her own professional disposition and to understand the needs of the learner in general.

This leads to the core objectives of the national teacher training programmes: learning how to learn, developing a personal professional project in a community of learners, being a responsible actor and author and becoming a reflective practitioner.

The actual teacher training programme was introduced by the policy-makers in 1998. In the beginning, the programme was regulated and executed by the Ministry for Education. Since 2006, the University of Luxembourg has been responsible for the execution of the training programme, following the requirements of the policy-makers and in collaboration with the secondary school assuring the field work. The last modifications by the Ministry were made in 2010 and came into practice in April 2011.

Study structure *(University of Luxembourg, 2011)*

The teacher training programme consists of four modules, organised over five terms called 'trimesters', starting with the last term of the school year in April. Once the five trimesters of the induction phase are passed successfully a 6th trimester consists of a final practical exam in order to be sworn in as a civil servant.

Module 1 concerns the general and subject-oriented didactics, and the contents are defined by the specific subject-matter coordinator after consulting his staff and the university. This module is organised in 135 units, taking place during the Trimesters 1-4.

Module 2 concerns professional teaching skills and knowledge. The contents are divided into four courses of 30 units each: (a) Learning/Teaching; (b) Regulation/

Evaluation; (c) Communication/Social Skills; (d) Personnel Project / Analysis of teacher practice. The contents of this module are defined by the university after consulting the Ministry for Education. This module is organised in 135 units taking place during the Trimesters 1-4. An optional course, chosen by the future teacher, covers the remaining 15 units.

Module 3 consists of the *'Mémoire'* (final stage work) – a 12,000 to 18,000 word long personal written work on the teaching profession. This conceptual work is organised during Trimesters 1-5 and contains 30 units.

Module 4 consists of the *'Tutorat'* (mentoring). Every future teacher has one or two personal mentors at his disposition for two hours per week each. This mentoring takes place during Trimesters 2-4.

Trimester 1

In Trimester 1, the trainee teaches 7 to 18 weekly lessons (or other pedagogical activities) in a secondary school under the responsibility of the headmaster or his delegate and participates in four units in Module 1 and 16 units in Module 2. After Trimester 1, the future teacher chooses the topic of his *'Mémoire'* – the final written stage work.

Trimesters 2, 3 and 4

In Trimesters 2, 3 and 4, the trainee is in charge of 11 weekly lessons in a secondary school (teaching or other pedagogical activities) under the supervision of one or more tutors, each charged with accompanying the trainee for two hours per week; i.e. on course visits, lesson planning, evaluation and all other pedagogical and didactical matters. The national secondary school system is divided into two regimes: the classic secondary (grammar school) and the technical secondary. The future teacher is involved in the two orders if his subject matter is taught in both systems.

During these three trimesters, the coordinator for each subject-matter, as well as the University of Luxembourg, organise 250 hours of modular sessions in total in order to relate the practical field work to the specific didactics of the subject matter (Module 1) and the academic and theoretical notions emerging from the educational sciences (Module 2).

Trimester 5

In Trimester 5, the future teacher has to teach 16 weekly lessons (or the equivalent in other pedagogical activities) under the supervision of the headmaster or his delegate. In order to finalise the *'mémoire'* and present it before a jury, the future teacher must complete the equivalent of six weekly lessons.

Getting on the job: final exam and access to the profession

In order to access the 6th trimester of the induction phase, the practical exam called *'période probatoire'* all four modules must be evaluated positively. According to the philosophy of the teacher training, every future secondary teacher has to compose a portfolio during the five trimesters of training. This portfolio contains productions from both Module 1 and 2, the *'mémoire'* and the reports issued from the *'Tutorat'*, as well as each personal item documenting the personal professional development of the future teacher. At the end of the 4th trimester an intermediate report is set up. According to the principles of formative evaluation, this report takes into account the work undertaken in Modules 1, 2 and 4. If all three are positive, the future teacher only has to present the *'mémoire'* and his/her final exam. If a negative evaluation is given, the trainee has the opportunity to remediate these specific points until the final report. The final report takes place at the end of the 5th trimester and consists of a certificated evaluation, the *'mémoire'*, and in case of a remediation, all other items are presented before a jury. After all assessments, a final exam council certifies the result with a *'Diplôme de formation pédagogique'* giving access to the 6th trimester and the practical exam. In the case that the diploma is not awarded, the teacher training is extended for three other trimesters.

The 6th trimester, the so-called *'période probatoire'* is a final practical exam, where each future teacher has to plan, teach, auto-analyse and evaluate a series of six consecutive lessons in his/her own subject matter for two different classes in both the grammar and technical systems. One is for pupils aged 12-15 years and one for pupils aged 15 and more, and the trainee also has to pass an exam concerning the legal aspects of the teaching profession. Once the exam is passed, the trainee receives a life-time contract as a teacher and is given the title of *'professeur-candidat'*. In order to obtain the title of 'professor', the teacher has to write an academic work on either a scientific or a pedagogical topic related to his/her subject matter. The policy-maker encourages teachers to do so by reducing their workload by an equivalent of six weekly lessons for 18 months in order to prepare this work. When the work is evaluated successfully the secondary teacher gets the title of 'professor' and benefits fully from all legal career dispositions available to the secondary teacher.

Perspectives

Taking account of national sociological and economical key data and statistical projections, the educational system in Luxembourg will continue to be a challenge in coming years. One challenge, which policy-makers have identified, is the implementation of two competence-based teacher training programmes: one for the elementary and primary school and one for the secondary school.

Actually, these two programmes are complementary, meaning that the BScE lacks the induction phase considered as very important by the policy-makers, whereas the teacher training for the secondary school does not conform to the Bologna policy and does not deliver ECTS points, although the Bologna Charta has been signed by the national authorities. Hence, from a mid-term perspective, both teacher trainings will be affected by these changes. The BScE will need to include an induction phase of at least one school year and the teacher training for secondary teachers must conform to the Bologna criteria as announced by policy-makers in the national report on Education this year.

Considering that the teaching profession in secondary schools can be accessed in two ways – by the 'professor' or the *'chargé d'enseignement'* route – policy-makers intend that, in the mid- to long-term, only one way with one training programme will regulate the secondary school teacher population. This will affect the entry criteria for access to the profession by the secondary teacher, as well as to the induction phase.

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How to cite this chapter

Bertemes, J. & Thill, J.-L. (2011). Beginning teachers in Luxembourg: two teacher profiles, two ways into the job. *In* P. Picard & L. Ria (Eds.), *Beginning teachers: a challenge for educational systems – CIDREE Yearbook 2011* (pp. 191-208). Lyon, France: ENS de Lyon, Institut français de l'Éducation.

12 Pre-service, teacher training reform in Albania: a review

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Pre-service, teacher training reform in Albania: a review

Tidita Abdurrahmani and Elona Boce

Abstract

This paper aims to present a rationale on how the reform in teacher training came to happen in Albania. Its structure aims to reinforce a vision-based viewpoint of reform, one that pursues it in each step of implementation. A review of a few research and evaluation studies indicates that the reform has been fed by research-based, decision-making. Further action has recently been taken with regard to preparing teacher training standards and the professionalisation of teaching. The implementation of the reform is in its early stages and, therefore, needs some time to show results. It is concluded, however, that (a) revisions may be needed based on potential scenarios and, prior to this, (b) participatory evaluations are needed to provide feedback on the quality of the underlying process.

Vision of pre-service teacher training in Albania

The last decade marked significant efforts to make teacher training a key priority of policy reforms in Albania. This priority was sustained in a number of national and international policy documents. National documents include: the *Higher Education Law*, the *Higher Education Strategy*, the *National Strategy for Development and Integration*, the *Teaching Profession Draft-Regulation Paper* and the *National Education Strategy*.

A comprehensive higher education mission, as stated by the *Higher Education Law* (2007) envisions, *'creating, developing and protecting knowledge through teaching […], promoting lifelong learning; contributing to the economic and civic standards developing the society and preparing an adapting young force'*. Consistently, the role of higher education is emphasised in the National Strategy for Development and Integration as social and democratic development through education of citizenship, and economic development of the country through the creation of a qualified work force and fulfilment of aspirations of the new generation. Extended access to higher education and improved teaching, quality through human resource development is among the strategic priorities of the higher education system. The country's National Education Strategy, valid until 2015, recognises that ensuring a solid basis for teacher education is achieved through building the specific competences of pre-university teachers. Such competences are seen as a crucial part of the university curricula, especially professional practice.

European trends in teacher education put simultaneous pressure on the Albanian system. Understanding how European Union trends in teacher education are evolving is an important factor to be considered by a country which aspires to become part of the EU. In establishing a *Europe of Knowledge Society*, the role of teachers and their education is being frequently stressed by the European Commission, the Ministries of Education of the Member States of the European Union, as well as by a large number of educationalists (Buchberger *et al.*, 2000). '*Improving the quality of teacher education is an important goal for Europe's education systems […] towards meeting the common objectives that have been established under the Education and Training 2010 programme*' (European Commission, 2007, p. 3). New demands placed on the teaching profession are a reality for EU countries. Teachers all over Europe are increasingly required to help deliver skills, rather than information, and facilitate the learning process rather than be the, 'centre of truth'. This new dynamic requires a range of new teaching methodologies, a focus on inclusiveness and the use of new technologies (European Commission, 2007).

A review of pre-reform initial teacher training situation

Although limited in number, some thorough analyses have been carried out by international and national experts that have fed into the reform decision-making process. This section of the article is extensively based on two of the most important studies that shed light on teacher training issues in Albania before the reform took place. These findings and recommendations have set the stage for change.

Experts evaluated that, '*despite [teacher education] importance and the amount of effort devoted to it, it does not seem to be done particularly well'.* At this stage of Albania's development, teacher training is one of the most important issues for higher education since it affects the quality of the whole education system. In the higher education system, teacher training has a predominant role, with most faculties of local universities specialising in subject-specific teacher training, and many programmes in the Tirana universities focusing on teacher training in general (Hatakenaka & Thompson, 2006).

In the past, the programme duration of teachers' university preparation was four years. The system did not offer any longer courses for an accelerated preparation of teachers, or similar programmes to those offered by the pedagogical institutions, which were actively operating until 1980. Teaching faculties and departments had under their disposal very few technological appliances with which to assist in teachers' preparation, while the existing ones were old and non-effective. This situation led to a very traditional way of teaching in the programmes of teacher preparation (Musai *et al.,* 2005).

The education of teachers did not follow a structured national strategy. The educational development, profile and skills of good teachers, for accomplishing

the strategic obligations of the state education, were not mentioned in the national strategy of pre-university education. The teacher training programmes followed an agenda of reformation, undergoing restructuring in the context of Bologna Charter. In this context, teacher training needed to be addressed through a national reform, guided by policy documents with clear requirements and obligations, and which addressed teacher training both as a product and as a process (Musai *et al.,* 2005).

The Musai study in 2005 found that the academic university staff displayed a high level of involvement with the Bologna Process. The institutions of teacher education drafted the local reform agendas. The academic staff of the faculties of elementary schools and pre-schools structured the curricula of teacher education. According to the study, through a platform drafted by the Ministry of Education and Sciences, they reformed the university curricula, opened new courses, accredited their curricula at national level and held discussions about the progress of the process in the future. However, the study revealed that the teacher-training faculties, or the higher courses of basic and secondary schools, did not have a clear platform for teacher educators to comply with the Bologna Charter. The reformation agendas of the teacher education systems for the implementation of Bologna Charter defined the '3+1 scheme'. The new curricular structure would be applied without fundamental changes in: the designation and contents of university courses; in the institutional management; in the ways and manners of funding the university and diploma supplement and others.

> *'The process of the compilation of the teacher education curriculum according to the process of Bologna has also taken the labour market into consideration. It reflects the actual needs of the profession of teacher. The instruments of the analysis of the demand of teachers in the labour market and the tendencies of the development of pre-university education are suspicious. However, there is the tendency to educate teachers for two or more subjects in the school curricula. The intermediate profiles in the specialisations seem to match better the mid-term needs of education system expressed in the national strategy of pre-university education's development for the coming decade. These profiles seem to better suit also the labour market at remote areas, depopulated areas, with small schools and small number of pupils'* (Musai *et al*., 2005).

Back in 2005, according to Musai *et al*., the traditional teaching schedule was a key issue pointed out by Albanian experts. According to them, subjects were listed without a clear target concerning the different branches of study and the characteristics and competences which the students needed to acquire by completion of their studies. Selection of the teaching subjects was based on the 'offer' of the professors from each faculty and not on the 'demand'. This led to the creation of a very irregular structure and to difficulties in judging what these faculties were preparing. The need arose to focus on some key aspects. First of all, basic formation knowledge would cover subjects that teachers would teach and its weight on the teaching schedule would vary depending on what education level the teachers would teach. In addition, professional formation needed to be stressed, including the psychological,

pedagogical, methodological, cultural and social aspects and an applied research element. Another main element would be the teaching practice, which at the time was rated as being low profile in the teacher education programmes. Research also needed to become an integral part of the teaching curricula.

Although teaching plans for pre-school education and elementary grades had undergone restructuring, they did not demonstrate a clear target. They contained a lot of subjects, which were distributed empirically, or unified some subjects taught in partner institutions, which did not prove coherence with study-branch purposes and targets. There was no coherence among subjects that would allow for cross-curricular models.

> *'Lectures, exercises and seminars are divided in a way that creates the impression that the subjects intend to simply transmit knowledge and not construct new knowledge through discussion of different viewpoints, which would have made the lessons more attractive. A more rightful division in favour of exercises and seminars will be more acceptable, if we take into consideration the fact that the student must deal with home work most of the time and come to the auditor to hold discussions and not reproduce lectures, or what is written in books'* (Musai *et al*., 2005).

According to the key policy documents, teaching methodology did not resemble an interactive and student-focused model, and did not promote thinking skills, but rather fact retention.

> *'As with much of the rest of higher education, the style of teacher training is old fashioned and not very interactive: it tends to push facts and not encourage creative analytical thinking or problem solving. This style of teaching is thus perpetuated in schools once the students graduate'* (Hatakenaka & Thompson, 2006).

Hatakenaka and Thompson added two more concerns to the issue of teacher education in Albania. According to them, the subject content was provided in narrow specialisms, which reduced the flexibility of the teacher to teach inter-related subjects. Moreover, teacher education in Albania lacked a standard curriculum and national standards.

> *'In part this is a reaction against any form of "central control" and the desire for "academic freedom" at all costs. However, the cost of this particular academic freedom is simply too high: Albania is a small nation that needs a degree of consistency about what pupils are taught in its schools. Further, the government is the main purchaser of the services of teachers and so it is reasonable for it to specify the content of teacher qualifications'* (Hatakenaka & Thompson, 2006).

Furthermore, these authors point out the limited contact that the universities have with schools, which limits the effectiveness of teaching practice. According to them, this is in part due to the reluctance of some senior university staff to follow the practices in schools in person. The position appears to have worsened in recent

years, as schools no longer receive additional funding or any privileged status by agreeing to accept trainee students. The experts proposed that a separate 'Faculty of Education', offering a series of modules to be taken by prospective teachers, could be an alternative to the current system.

> *'The suggestion for Tirana University was to have a 3+1/2 arrangement, in which the 1/2 would be for additional pedagogical courses. Such an arrangement would also allow the development of real subject based faculties in regional universities (not just teacher training ones), which could then play broader regional development roles- not just for teacher training. On previous occasions, such proposals have met resistance within universities because of the restructuring implications; there is also a fear that insufficient numbers of students would choose the pedagogical modules'* (Hatakenaka & Thompson, 2006).

The 2007 Albanian report on the Bologna process states that in the academic year, 2005-2006, all public universities had adopted the new curricula according to the Bologna Chart. Curricular reform resulted in common study plans and programmes (70 per cent of them) for the same subject.

With regard to the vocational education training sector, it was recognised that no formal initial teacher training (pre-service) system existed. However, considering the difficulties in establishing such a system, and the fact that the number of teachers in this sector was relatively low (less than 1000), one option was to design the first level of in-service Vocational Education teacher training (VET) with the intention of applying it as a pre-service qualification mechanism (European Training Foundation, 2006).

Evolving trends of pre-service teacher training

Teacher training issues and concerns are not only new to Albania. In most European countries, evolving trends of teacher education have not always had consistent patterns. The teaching role in European countries has faced several challenges. Knowledge-based teaching has become obsolete. The orientation towards pedagogical professionalism has replaced these conceptions, and more focus is being given to building teachers' ability to develop professional autonomy and become pro-active agents of change. Changing reality, expectations and tasks need to be addressed with teachers acquiring new skills.

> *'Three aspects seem to be of the utmost relevance:*
> *• Teachers are supposed to acquire competence to establish powerful learning environments in order to make high quality education and training a reality*
> *• Teachers should be able to transform academic knowledge into teaching and learning situations in order to make provision of a broad knowledge base (cf. the concepts of holistic education, erudition and "Bildung")*

• *Co-operative problem-solving and teamwork seem to be indispensable to meet the challenges of teaching and learning'* (Buchberger *et al*., 2000).

The Green Paper on Teacher Education in Europe (Buchberger *et al*., 2000) also stated a number of key trends, which are relevant to developments in Albania:

• the duration of programmes of initial teacher education was gradually prolonged

• the criteria for admission to teacher education were tightened;

• new systems of initial teacher education were introduced in many countries

• the incorporation of all types of initial teacher education into the higher education sector and into university faculties

• more elements of professional relevance were added to many programmes of teacher education, especially to teacher education for secondary level and in the sector of vocational education (Buchberger *et al*., 2000).

In the midst of the evolving dynamics of teacher education in Europe, as well as with a strong understanding of the need for change, the teacher education reform was launched in 2010, although the stage was set a few more years before. It is seen as complying with the strategic development of education in Albania, the European dimension of education, the Lisbon Strategy and the Europe 2020 Strategy. It has a focus on key knowledge-based economy features such as innovation, education, training and lifelong learning and the digital society. For the first time, teacher education faculties have a unified structure and the necessary space to adapt to tradition and capacities. Musai (2010) elaborates on the innovations of the new model:

• introduction of a minor discipline on the second level Master studies, which aims at increasing competences of future teachers

• introduction of the subject of *Research* from the first year of Bachelor studies

• introduction of the subject of *Information and Communication Technology*

• institutionalisation of the school's professional practice by having it divided into specific stages suitable for the teachers of elementary or middle high-school levels

• conclusion of the studies with a research thesis

• establishment of teaching- and learning-excellence centres for equipping students with teaching skills

• introduction of professional competency-based learning and standards-based assessment.

Teachers in Albania attend pre-service training at Tirana, Elbasan, Korça, Vlora, Shkodra and Gjirokastra Universities and at the Academy of Sports. The teacher education faculties and departments within the University structures are responsible for organising and designing the programmes. The main activity of these institutions

is the theoretical and practical preparation of the students in teachers' professional skills. The teaching faculties at Elbasan, Gjirokaster, Korca, Shkodra and Vlora universities prepare pre-school teachers and elementary school teachers are prepared by Elbasan, Gjirokaster, Korca, Shkodra and Vlora universities. Teaching faculties prepare teachers of the lower middle school at Elbasan, Gjirokaster, Korca, Shkodra and Vlora universities and teachers of the higher middle school are prepared at the University of Tirana. Teachers of physical education are prepared at the Sports Academy.

It was a 2008 Council of Ministers decision to set out the '3+N structure' for the initial teacher education model. According to this decision, the first three years will coincide with the first cycle of education on a specific subject and with a modular flexibility to study more than one subject. The '+N' period coincides with one or two additional years and focuses particularly on teaching pedagogy in high school; it is compulsory only for those wishing to teach at this level. The decision presented a rationale for the need to reform university curricula and teaching methodology.

Again in this year, the *Higher Education Strategy Action Plan* envisaged the establishment of an Initial Teacher Education Working Group for developing clear guidelines relating to the core curriculum. This curriculum needed to contain a reduced number of subjects, avoiding irrelevant issues and focusing more on pedagogical aspects, key skills, ICT and English language. The group was supposed to define a higher ration of teaching practice in schools. The group is still working today to develop the full scope of the implementation of the reform.

As elaborated in the previous section, under the Bologna process all the teacher education faculties and departments launched their work on reforming curricula in compliance with the objectives of the Bologna Charter. The academic staff admitted that, in spite of the achievements, it was high time for reviewing the curriculum.

Higher-education experts suggest that the long-term plan for teacher training should cover the improvement of:

- the style of teaching

- the structure of provision within universities

- the arrangements for links with schools

- the form of a national curriculum for teacher training

- the possibilities for the licensing arrangements for teachers.

The issue of subject overload was foreseen to change with introduction of core teacher training through the first cycle of studies. During this cycle, the main subject-related and pedagogy-related content for preparing a basic education teacher will be conducted. This model is adopted from other European countries and is in compliance with the Bologna Process.

Some challenges will be faced and, consequently, the recommendations mentioned at the time are relevant to a greater extent to 2011 as well. The change in teaching methodology is crucial again. New teaching methods are required in the universities especially because the prospective teachers should be able to adopt the same methods in their future work.

Professionalisation of Teaching

The National Education Strategy gives a detailed rationale on why the teaching profession needs a special status. According to the Strategy, the teaching profession is not considered a full-time profession. In order to comply with the education systems of EU countries, teaching must be seen as a public service. Teachers should work 30-40 hours per week. This would increase their engagement, the teaching hours and justify a salary increase.

According to the Strategy, there is a need to introduce cross-curricular competences for basic education teachers and subject integration competences for lower middle school education. This may affect the total number of teachers, but at the same time, it may have an impact on the teacher-student relationship and the education system in general.

A very recent initiative of the Ministry of Education and Science, with regard to the regulated teacher profession, is the drafting of the provision on, *The Organisation and Conduct of Professional Practice for Teaching as a Regulated Profession.* The regulation is a comprehensive guiding and explanatory document on what professional practice should, and will, look like in Albania. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of the actors involved, mentoring standards and responsibilities, application procedure guidelines, as well as applicant assessment procedures. *Article 3* of this regulation states that the professional practice aims to assure: the quality of teaching and learning for young teachers and high performance in the teaching profession, the delivery of the professional theoretical knowledge and acquisition of practical, ethical and behavioural skills and building the capacities of prospective teachers for optimal adaptation to the curricula, teaching and learning changes. *Article 5* of the provision defines the roles of higher institutions that have teacher education programmes. These institutions are required to collaborate with partners in developing guiding programmes, based on teacher competences, and to ensure that students learn the best professional practice.

Continuing Development

In-service education in Albania has undergone recent reforms as well. One of them is out-sourcing the teacher development task to non-governmental service providers. A prospective structure of training accreditation is envisaged by the policy document, *The Regulation of the Functioning of the Committee for the Accreditation of the Training Programmes.* This document has already been issued as a provision by the Ministry of

Education, and the decision body is expected to summon and, take into consideration, the modules delivered by the applicants and take the initial decisions in the January 2012.

Initial Teacher Education Standards

Experts admit that the government, as the main employer of qualified teachers, is entitled to define the requirements for teachers and specify the core curriculum for their preparation. A key decision to be taken for the Albanian teacher education system is the introduction and implementation of the initial teacher-training standards. A model for teacher education standards has been presented by Musai in recent years. The Standards define the criteria and identify the requirements for a quality programme for initial teacher education. These standards are defined in three categories: entry standards, process standards and completion standards. They all contain seven key areas such as: curriculum, staff, students, collaboration with school, infrastructure, management and quality assurance (Musai, 2007).

An indication of teacher education paths and their implications

The reform in teacher education will need a few more years for the results to show. The situation is clearly still fragile and underlying conceptions, typical of a minimum-competency model, interfere with progress. The National Education Strategy lists a number of models for teacher education that could be promoted in the system, such as the 'collective-classrooms training model', 'distance-learning' or 'subject-based training model'. At the same time, a comprehensive list of teacher education scenarios is elaborated in *The Green Paper on Teacher Education in Europe*. Elements of such scenarios are relevant to the case of Albania and can be summarised as follows.

Establishing coherent and clear goals and tasks for the entire system of teacher education and the systemic relationships of its components and contributions is one scenario. It is necessary to clarify which competences and attitudes prospective teachers should develop during initial teacher education. Initial teacher training standards need to be finalised and approved. However, it is noted that this scenario has several implications in terms of the actions needed to be undertaken and readiness of the current model of teacher education to meet these requirements. Thorough analysis is required regarding teachers' roles, tasks and qualifications, as well as which specific models to adopt for equipping teachers with the proper qualifications needed. The recent attempts to professionalise teaching in Albania all contribute to meeting the requirements of such a scenario.

A second scenario, as described by the Green Paper, focuses on linking teacher education and the teaching profession through a well developed knowledge base, and

by studying the learning processes of students and the design of learning situations. These activities would enhance skills creation within the profession. Therefore, a key intervention includes changing how academic disciplines are introduced, organised and delivered, how they are transformed into human-knowledge structures and into clear teaching, studying and learning realities in classrooms. The need for integrated curricula is a clear and immediate pre-requisite for this to happen. Efforts for reforms need to focus both on the pre-university and university level in order to ensure coherence and continuity.

Introducing subject-matter didactics which provide the scientific knowledge and empirical practices to be used in effective teaching and learning contexts is another scenario described in the document. This could lead to a lack of integration, however, and needs very careful consideration before it is adopted. An alternative to subject-matter didactics is by adopting a thematic approach, which has more potential for ensuring integration. The paper suggests that teacher education institutions should engage further in the production and design of scientifically validated practices and educational software that primarily lead to more efficient teaching and learning aids. This should be followed by establishing research-based structures at the teacher education institutions.

Other scenarios include enabling teachers to act according to context-oriented dynamics, through developing a collaborative problem-solving capacity, by adding a research and development component to teacher education, by building partnerships between institutions of teacher education and schools, by introducing the concept of Professional Development Schools, by better induction into the professional cultures of schools, by aiming at continuous development and systemic conceptions of in-service education, through the diversification of the professional tasks of teachers, by having a greater focus on teacher educators and through accreditation of teacher education programmes.

Currently, there is not enough research- and evaluation-based data to confirm which decisions are the best to take or to revise. It is advisable, in the context of reform implementation, that a careful process analysis and evaluation is carried out with the two-fold purpose of increasing stakeholders' participation and defining which potential path, or elements of it, are needed in our teacher education system. The contribution of such educational institutions and consortia as CIDREE, in providing reciprocal assistance for the development of such reforms, is crucial.

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How to cite this chapter

Aʙᴅᴜʀʀᴀʜᴍᴀɴɪ, T. & Bᴏᴄᴇ, E. (2011). Pre-service, teacher training reform in Albania: a review. *In* P. Picard & L. Ria (Eds.), *Beginning teachers: a challenge for educational systems – CIDREE Yearbook 2011* (pp. 209-222). Lyon, France: ENS de Lyon, Institut français de l'Éducation.