

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Department for Education and Research Policy

TEACHER EDUCATION
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

1. PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE TEACHING PROFESSION

1.1. The basis of the teaching profession

The teacher's idea of man and conception knowledge and learning are the foundation on which teaching is built. The teacher's idea of man creates the basis for understanding different kinds of learners. The teacher's conception of knowledge in turn underpins his or her conception of learning. It is on this foundation that the teacher bases all problem-solving in the line of work. Consequently, these principles must be included in all initial and further training given to teachers. A teacher aware of his or her work and its meaning is one of the foremost objects of teacher education.

Being a teacher means encountering change, living with change and influencing change. Changes in pupils, in their living environments and in society as a whole require sensitivity and willingness to anticipate future developments. One important skill for the teacher is to analyse changes in the environment together with other members of the work community, to see them in relation to the teachers' and the school's possibilities and to determine which changes and outcomes are of the greatest relevance to the development of teaching. Teachers' professional competence is seen in their ability to make use of the learning opportunities available in the environment.

The teacher's work is linked to society in many ways. In the future, being a teacher will mean willingness to take actively part in and influence social development. The teacher influences the kind of value world pupils adopt and how education for democracy is effected in the school. This requires a sound idea of education and the future. The basis for it is built during teacher education.

Teacher education needs close contacts and diverse interaction with its environment in order to be able to anticipate and influence factors which will bear upon teaching in the future. Teacher education must assume a more active social role in producing research, in debates and in edification. This will for its part promote the development and general appreciation of the teaching profession. All teacher education and training must include contents which help teacher trainees to interpret and influence current phenomena in society, in the economy, in culture and in working life. Prospective teachers must gain an awareness of the ethical responsibility intrinsic to the teaching profession not only in theory but also through experience. The models assimilated during teacher education constitute a crucial basis for future work.

1.2. Teaching as encounters

Teaching is a human relations profession, in which encounters and interaction are at the very core of daily work. The teacher needs an ability to cope with the growing diversity of learners, multiculturalism, changes in the work environment and diverse expectations emanating from the surrounding society. The ability to enter into dialogue with parents, local business and industry and organisations derives from teacher education, which must focus on developing interpersonal, interaction and communication skills.

Educational institutions have growing responsibility for preventing exclusion. Expertise in special pedagogy and development psychology play an important part in all teachers' work. Every teacher must have basic knowledge and skills needed to identify and prevent learners' social problems, learning difficulties and exclusion. Solving such problems requires active cooperation with pupil welfare professionals. Social problems, learning difficulties and risk of exclusion are a major challenge for in-

service training.

The teacher needs skills in taking part in international cooperation and working in a multicultural institution. Knowledge of cultures, intercultural action and multicultural aspects must be included in all teacher education and training. In-service training relating to minority languages and cultures must be increased without delay.

The need for guidance will grow as learning is increasingly based on flexible teaching arrangements and individual study plans. This means that relevant knowledge and skills must be included in all teacher education and training.

1.3. Teaching as a communal effort

The particular strength of an educational institution is its communality. Educational institutions are faced with a situation where they must be capable of renewal, discussion and problem-solving. The procedures used to this end are reflected as a model in the learner's day-to-day work. Future teaching will entail an ability to influence actively the work community and to take decisions. A sense of being part of a community is the key to preventing teachers' burn-out.

Teacher education must provide a model for a communally working organisation. Both initial and further training must deal with the operation of the work community and means of solving problems in it. A more community-oriented approach in continuing professional education will contribute to the development of work communities.

The future asset of educational institutions will be advanced management methods and institutional governance. Leadership culture must be vigorously developed towards a system which encourages all the members of the work community to commit themselves to development, shared responsibility and decision-making. Knowledge of the teacher's work is an important precondition for successful school management training and the head teacher's work. It is necessary for teacher trainees to become acquainted with the work of head teachers, but actual training for institutional governance belongs to continuing professional education.

1.4. New learning environments

Important partners in future learning environments will be experts, business enterprises and organisations, as well as students and teachers in other educational institutions. Learning environments will also keep opening up internationally. The learning community will increasingly be virtual and teaching will be partly given via information networks. The opportunities inherent in ICT must not, however, alone determine the course of education, which must have a solid basis in pedagogy and equal opportunity. Technology makes it possible to use several different learning methods and to differentiate contents, which will allow learners' different needs and learning capacities to be taken into account. This requires varied learning support and guidance.

The educational use of ICT must form part of all teachers' initial and further training. It must also include ethical and social points of view. The training arrangements in continuing professional education in particular must take account that as regards the educational use of ICT institutional development is a communal learning process.

1.5. Shared teaching

Teachers gain qualifications through different tracks. The teacher identity and conceptions of the teacher's duties may differ greatly, depending on the educational route chosen.

The learner has the right to expect that education forms a continuum and a meaningful entity. For the development of lifelong learning it is essential that teachers share and internalise a common idea of teaching. Teachers specialising in different forms of education must have a sufficient common background of shared experiences in order to be able to cooperate across institutional borders. This is particularly important in the nodes of education, in curriculum design and growing mobility. Flexible mobility for teachers from one level and form of education to another will gain ground with institutional networking and lowering administrative boundaries.

Apart from knowledge relating to learning and teaching, the teacher must also master educational content and have a conception of how subjects, vocations or vocational skills are learned. Teaching and guidance at different levels differ in some respects, which the teacher must know in order to be able to perform his or her duties successfully. Teaching competence combines solid content knowledge with teaching and guidance skills.

Broadly based teaching qualifications require training which both promotes a common teacher identity and enables the trainee to specialise in a given school form. This demands further development of pedagogical training. The aim of broadly based qualifications is not, however, achieved in initial training alone. Guidance for newcomers in the profession and in-service training must be geared to help teachers to work in different educational sectors and transfer from one type of institution to another.

2. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipation of teacher education and training needs and the evaluation of university and polytechnic teacher training have indicated several points where further development is needed. These particularly concern student selection, the content and implementation of pedagogical training, the status of teacher training, and teachers' continuing professional education. On the basis of anticipation and evaluation findings, the Ministry of Education proposes the following development measures in teachers' initial and further training. The implementation of the aims and recommendations will be reviewed in target outcome negotiations and in 2005 by means of a national evaluation.

2.1. Student selection

Student selection contributes to the development of teachers as professionals representing diverse outlooks, experiences and talents. Aptitude tests must be part of admission to all teacher education more clearly than now is the case.

The Ministry of Education supports research into and development of entrance examinations which improve the assessment of prospective teachers' aptitude, motivation and commitment.

Universities

Universities will develop selection models which take account of prior work experience and thus make it easier for professionals of other fields to become teachers.

Universities will make arrangements which enable both graduates and undergraduates to apply for subject teacher training at different stages of their education: at entry, during studies or after graduation.

Polytechnics

Teacher training institutes will intensify their cooperation in admission and clarify their division of work in response to various teacher needs.

2.2. Pedagogical studies

Pedagogical training qualifies for teaching posts in all types of educational institutions. This is why pedagogical training must promote the acquisition of both special knowledge and skills needed in different institution types and contain elements which reinforce the common teacher identity. This will be taken into account in all teacher training provided by universities and polytechnics.

Important pedagogical contents in all teacher education and training are the ethical and social basis of teachers' work; interpersonal, interaction and cooperation skills; an understanding of the learning process; and prevention of learning difficulties and exclusion. Other important elements are multiculturalism; guidance skills; ICT skills; skills relating to the work community and conflicts in it; curriculum design; and planning and assessment skills. The resources gained in pedagogical studies help teachers to cope with their work and promote their motivation and professional skills.

Universities and polytechnic teacher training institutes will develop their pedagogical programmes to prepare teachers to work at different levels of education and with learners of different ages. It is important for teacher trainees to gain experience of cooperation across institutional boundaries. Sufficient time will be reserved for teaching practice in both universities and polytechnics, with a view to providing experience of different objectives, contents and institution types and enabling teacher trainees to build up the versatility required in the profession. The development of practice teaching will take account of the long growth process involved in becoming a teacher, which necessitates individual guidance and support.

The Ministry of Education will look into the financial and other arrangements needed to promote versatile teaching practice.

2.3. The status of and cooperation in teacher education

Evaluations show that there are clear differences in how the status and value of teacher training are perceived in different universities and polytechnics. Some of them regard teacher training as an important mission, others accord it a secondary status. Such valuations influence not only resource allocation, but also the inclination to develop teacher training. They also influence the recruitment base in admissions.

Closer cooperation is needed both between universities and polytechnics and within these two sectors. Teacher education needs to network more effectively with educational institutions, different industrial sectors, and local organisations.

With a view to qualitative and quantitative development, universities and polytechnics must clarify their objectives in both initial and continuing teacher education. One means to this end is to devise development strategies, which will require active support from university and polytechnic leadership.

Cooperation in teacher education between universities and polytechnics will deepen and diversify educational R&D. One important object of joint development is pedagogical training.

Universities

Universities will enhance cooperation between faculties, subject departments, teacher education institutes and practice schools. Important areas of cooperation include student selection; practical teaching arrangements; research; supervision of theses; pedagogical training and its links with subject studies; and continuing professional education.

Universities will make it easier for class teacher trainees to study subject modules and for subject teacher trainees to study multidisciplinary programmes. This will create a basis for unified basic education. Universities will intensify their internal cooperation in order to enable teacher trainees to study different subjects and to practise their teaching. The virtual university will also promote these objectives.

The Ministry of Education and universities will clarify the role of teacher education in the target outcome agreements. They will also assess the appropriateness of university core funding model to teacher education.

Polytechnics

Polytechnics must recognise the strategic importance of teacher training and to see it as one of their strength areas. The Ministry of Education and polytechnics will clarify and strengthen the status of teacher training in the system of target outcome negotiations. Polytechnics and their teacher training institutes will enhance cooperation with a view to efficient and appropriate use of resources.

2.4. Continuing professional education

Development as a teacher must be seen as a gradual process of studies, teaching and continuing professional education. The changes in the teaching profession necessitate up-to-date and constantly developing teaching skills. Teachers themselves must be willing to renew and to assume responsibility for developing their own work. In-service training is, in fact, a duty for all teachers in Finland. For the educational institution, it is important that staff development is carefully planned and linked to institutional development. This requires individual and institutional training plans and the possibility of requiring that teachers develop their own professional skills. In-service training is an important factor in preventing burn-out.

Topical subjects in continuing professional education are the development of the pedagogical use of ICT; subject- and field-specific knowledge and skills; special-needs pedagogy; immigrant education; cooperation with business and industry; and the development and management of school communities. Vocational teachers must have opportunities for secondment in their fields. Studies show that in-service training opportunities vary greatly between different teachers groups, different municipal cities and different parts of the country.

The Ministry of Education considers it crucial that local authorities and other education and training providers systematically develop in-service training and allocate sufficient resources to it.

Continuing professional education will take account of the different training needs teachers have at different points of their careers. The guidance of newly graduated teachers will be intensified. Programmes geared to teachers who have been in the profession for a longer time will support them in coping with their work and renewing teaching content and methods.

The focus will be shifted from one-day and short-term training towards work community training and the development of educational institutions.

Measures will be taken to ensure that teachers in different parts of the country and in different education sectors have equal access to training. The responsibility for this primarily lies with the employer, but also with the national education administration as regards adequate resourcing of government-financed training and its distribution. The Ministry of Education will monitor the situation in continuing professional education and look into ways to ensure the development of different teacher groups' professional skills.

Universities and polytechnics will take measures to bring continuing professional education closer to initial training. This will create a training continuum in support of lifelong learning and make it easier to determine which content is best provided during initial training and which in continuing education. Creating a continuum of initial and further training will entail close cooperation between universities, polytechnics, local authorities and other education and training providers.

Government-financed continuing education will focus on themes of relevance to education policy, topical issues and preparation for reforms. Training for institutional management requires nation-wide development measures.

Training provision will be quantified and funded so that a minimum of 22,000 teachers take annually part in government-financed in-service training. The provision will be planned to support the creation of a continuum from initial to further training and to respond to the needs of both individual teachers and educational institutions.

2.5. Continuing professional education of teacher trainers

The primary responsibility for teacher trainers' professional development rests with themselves and their work communities. Universities and polytechnics must assume greater responsibility for the continuing professional education of teacher trainers. This requires staff development strategies which take account of both individual training needs and those of the work community. One important aim in these strategies is to prevent burn-out. It is important for teacher trainers to take actively part in the production of new knowledge in R&D projects.

Universities

Universities must see to it that their teaching staff have sufficient pedagogical training. Their staff development must cater for teacher trainers' need for professional development.

There are certain priorities in teacher trainers' continuing professional education which are best addressed in nationally coordinated training and with recourse to the combined know-how of universities. These include the development of practice teaching and the implementation of major projects of national relevance. The Ministry of Education will support such continuing education financially.

Polytechnics

Owing to changes in working life, it is vital that teacher trainers keep in contact with the field. Care must be taken to ensure that teacher trainers have up-to-date information about the everyday operation of educational institutions.

3. INCREASES IN TEACHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The need for teacher education is influenced by various factors, such as demographic developments; economic factors in general and those affecting the education system in particular; changes in the industrial structure and relevant labour needs; and amendments to educational legislation. Teacher training needs also emerge from different decisions taken by education providers and local authorities; regional characteristics; language groups; immigration; the age structure and qualifications of the teaching profession; intakes; and decisions concerning subjects, the allocation of classroom hours and curricula. Mobility within and from the teaching profession and retirement schemes are also important factors.

Changes in any of these factors have an impact both on the overall need for teacher education and on the proportions of different teacher groups. This requires up-to-date information about the teacher situation, as well as monitoring and anticipation of educational needs.

The educational need in this decade will be 7,500 class teachers and 2,600 special-needs teachers. This entails that class teacher education is annually available to 700-750 students. Qualification training must be provided annually for 100 unqualified teachers. The annual intake in special-needs education should be 250-300.

In mathematics and sciences the need is 2,800 teachers. Much more efficient recruitment is needed for the present annual quota of 400 to be filled. In the present situation, qualification training is needed for 50-80 teachers.

The combined need for teachers in Finnish/Swedish and literature and in modern languages is 5,400. This entails that teacher training is available to 600 students annually, which means an increase of 100 from the present figure. Most of this should be given in the form of qualification training. More efficient student recruitment is needed in modern languages.

The need for teachers in the humanities and social science, religious education, biology and

geography is 2,200. No great changes are needed in the present intake of 250. Qualification training must be available to enable some 50 unqualified teachers.

Some 3,200 art and skill subject teachers will be needed by 2010. This means a minimum increase of 50 in the present annual quota of 250. Most of this should be qualification training in music, art and physical education.

The need in guidance and counselling will be around 600 during this decade. Relevant training must be available to 80 persons annually, 25% of which must be qualification training.

Pedagogical training for vocational and polytechnic teachers needs to be provided for 15,000 persons during this decade. The teacher training institutes concerned will take account of the need for different vocational teacher training in their profiling and strategy choices.

The Ministry of Education will set quantitative targets for teacher training in target outcome negotiations with each higher education institution.

The expansion of teacher education will require several different solutions. In addition to increases in intakes and practice teaching, it will entail flexible arrangements which enable employed teachers to study the modules they need to be fully qualified and for professionals in other fields to take up teaching.

One crucial aim in terms of teacher supply is to shorten study times.

Attention will further be paid to regional accessibility of teacher training and the need for teachers in the education of linguistic minorities and immigrants.

The educational administration will see to it that data on the teacher situation in all the educational sectors is up-to-date and that training needs are anticipated regularly.