

ENTEP MEETING

CONFERENCE

“TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THE QUALITY AND EQUITY OF LIFELONG LEARNING”

Lisbon, September 27, 28, 29, 2007

HOMEWORK from **Germany**

Brief overview on initial teacher education.

In Germany, teacher education is organised by state bodies and teachers are integrated in the state administration just like any other civil servant. As Germany is a federal state, schooling and teacher education are the responsibility of the 16 Länder. Academic supervision over schools for each Land has a legislative basis in the Basic Law.

Higher Education Institutions are subject to state supervision exercised by the Länder as well, which has its legal basis in the Framework Act for Higher Education and the Higher Education legislation in the individual Land.

Basically the statutory provisions of the Länder follow the same general idea in curricula requirements, structure, content and output standards and competences. The "Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder" coordinates the specific variations. **In 2002 this Conference decided to introduce educational standards which are binding for each Land as well for Teacher Education as for the Schooling Sector. In Schools such standards in the upper second level for example are referring to the subjects German, Mathematics and First Foreign Language (in most cases English or French).**

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In recent years in all Länder a number of initiatives have been undertaken to evaluate research and teaching in the higher education sector, especially since the amendment to the Framework Act for Higher Education in 1998.

In the context of the Bologna Process most Länder are implementing the two cycle system with the BA/MA structure, some as a pilot and others as the final structure with effects of reducing the Second

Phase of teacher education accordingly (from normally two years to now one and a half or one year). There are different approaches and models of TE study programmes with different allocations of credits with a range from 180 ECTS for the BA and a total of 240 to 300 ECTS after the MA.

In a resolution of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs in 2002 the future development of Quality Assurance (QA) for all the Länder and their Higher Education Institutions had been decided upon.

An increasing number of evaluations, internal and external as well, are now widely applied in Germany, and in the field of Teacher Education recently a more systematic analysis of the performance of students, teacher trainees and the regarding faculties, institutions, seminaries etc. has been initiated in several Länder with a focus on content and qualification matters.

The need to redefine the role of and obligation for CPD is a hot topic for debate at present and highly regarded in the public with great consensus on many demands. Providing in-service-teachers with such economical and organisational means to enable them to attend research-based study programmes which enforce a vision of schools as a learning environment also for teachers is one of the main challenges.

But to respond to specific needs for further education, like improving teaching and the actual classroom situation, the learning outcomes, dealing with heterogeneity and cultural diversity etc. is in the focus of present reform efforts in teacher education as a whole.

The framework and nature of mentoring and coaching student teachers in the context of initial teacher education:

German teacher education is organised in two "phases" and universities are the institutions for Initial Teacher Education. This part of education is called the First Phase including the scientific subject matters and subject didactics as well as pedagogical studies. In that stage of education the practical studies at school in at least two parts of five weeks each

(organised and accompanied by teacher educators from the universities and experienced teachers at school, **the so called mentors**) are included as well. This phase ends with the final examination, the "First State Exam".

This initial phase follows the concurrent model, which implies that academic study courses are carried out in at least two subjects and in educational theory, educational psychology, general and subject-oriented didactics and sociology at the same time. In the case of teacher education for primary schools three subjects have to be chosen and the pedagogical studies include general didactic matters when teaching younger children.

Which is the required school teachers' profile to be a mentor and a coach of student teachers in the schools context and how are they prepared to organise effective mentoring:

Mentors have to be experienced and engaged teachers who have passed a certain amount of CPD courses (now they have to acquire a certain number of CPD credits in Hesse) and should be involved in the cooperation structure and projects between the different TE institutions and certain schools.

They also should be recommended by headmasters concerning their knowledge of counselling and diagnostic competence, school development and quality assurance.

The Universities in their cooperation structures under the responsibility of the Centres for TE offer workshops and conferences for potential mentors and those with experience as mentors already. Several projects within the cooperating institutions are following such topics like 'effective mentoring' and 'coaching'. As in our Second Phase of TE this is one of the important approaches, there is a lot of experience in this field and the trainers of the Second Phase as well as the department for CPD and Further Qualification are involved in preparation courses.

The relationships between teacher education institutions

Since the end of 2004 Hesse for instance has a new law which regulates **the quality assurance of all the phases** of teacher education and gives a new legislative and policy basis for the reform efforts and the mandatory modularized structure of TE with a reference to the European Higher Education Area.

In this "Framework Act for Quality Assurance in Hessian Schools", Teacher Education in all Phases, Schools and Higher Education are related to.

The first article deals with the basic legislation of Teacher Education in Hesse and is divided into three sections; Initial TE (First Phase), Teacher Training in the Second Phase and Further Education (Fortbildung) as well as Further Qualification (Weiterbildung). Special Decrees regulate details of the requirements for graduation, which are not defined in the above mentioned law.

This step marks an important stage in the present Hessian **reform period toward a closer focus on collaboration and cooperation among the three phases in TE. Hence, “Hessen establishes “Integrated Teacher Education” by linking these phases in one institution, concentrating on teachers and their Continued Professional Development as a basis for quality in classrooms.**

Mandatory standards in this field as well as a conceptual and organisational networks will then further promote and strengthen the quality in Hessian schools”! (Minister Karin Wolff in her Press Conference January 12, 2005)

Partnership agreements between teacher education institutions and schools: the different roles played by each partner:

Teacher educators at the universities are mainly professors or academic personnel, like pedagogical and scientific collaborators. The professors for didactics and pedagogy are members in their specific institutes and at the same time members in the so-called "Centres for Teacher Education and School Research" in Hesse (other Länder have invented such an institution as well or are presently doing so). The idea is to better institutionalise teacher education at the universities, to have a more effective platform, to emphasise the basis in the academic system between scientific subjects and subject didactics and to **include schools in projects and workshops and within an institutionalised cooperation structure.**

The above mentioned Board of Teacher Education in Hesse in this context is organised in a cooperative system with all the key players of the phases including the continued professional development (CPD) and life-long-learning.

There are offers for trainers in the Second Phase of TE, who will function as multipliers to in-service teachers at schools, who are engaged in the Second Phase as well as being Mentors in their schools. The trainers of the so called Study Seminars are teaching a certain amount of lessons at schools also.

To enhance further professional development in this field the Board of Teacher education and Training offers the so-called didactic platforms or a forum with workshops and panel discussions. They all function within the cooperation structure either regionally or within the participating institutions and among different school models for best practice.

The Board of Teacher Education also has a department, where seminars and CPD offers are designed and organised for this group of educators as well as for teachers in the field of further professional qualification.

Experts throughout the country are invited to conferences with workshops (sometimes there is a whole week for this purpose) and participants receive a certificate in the corresponding field.

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