

MISSION STATEMENT FOR HIGH QUALITY IN TEACHER TRAINING



ENACTT

European Network Amongst Centres of Teacher Training
VG-BP-HB-19-24-059842
1.9.2019 - 31.7.2022



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

About the project

The main focus of the project ENACTT is to build a network between Teaching Training Centres (TTC) for the future and to exchange relevant questions in order to improve teacher training at each institute.

The partners of this project have almost the same structure in the field of TTC, but with very different realities. The location of these countries is widely spaced around Europe. We want to get to know each other's teacher training practice and improve and enrich our practice. We want to analyse the types of courses and the topics addressed and also the impact of these courses on the professional development on the teachers of the partnership.

The main goal of this project is to increase the quality of teacher training courses in our centres.

Particularly it is about...

- ❖ to develop **quality criteria** for our teacher training courses,
- ❖ to clarify **competencies**, that teacher trainer need for held effective lessons and
- ❖ to gather and to check useful **evaluation instruments** regarding to quality criteria and teacher competencies.

Part I

P r e a m b l e

Standards for our future training formats

When we talk about teacher training, we must understand that it is a gradual process for which it is necessary to acquire not only tools that allow us to act as teachers in a dignified way, but also strategies to develop, in depth, the skills and competencies required in this profession. In this sense, we refer to an integral development of oneself and within a group, the fruits of the interaction between ourselves, the new experiences and other's. That is, as a constant process of reworking one's own ideas and ways of seeing things.

This process makes it necessary for teachers to learn two key skills. The first being to distance themselves from their own ideas and ways of acting in order to analyze their practice with a critical and reflective eye, or equally, to learn from action-research. It is also a process that takes as a reference the quality criteria for teacher training developed in this project. Have a coherent curricular reference, focus on student learning, have a link between input, try-out and reflection, refer to prior knowledge, empower for autonomy and become aware of the own learning are the essential criteria when planning and developing successful teacher training.

One methodology that undoubtedly meets these criteria is the reflective practice (Esteve and Carandell, 2009; Perrenoud, 2004) it is considered that, in order to develop this perspective, interaction and collective reflection play a leading role. But for this to be efficient and meaningful in an educational center, it must take on a systematic character that requires a structure guaranteeing a constant process of tangible evolution and improvement, both individually and in groups. In this continuous and systematic process, the backbone is the reflective cycle where the following three steps are developed and interact:

Self-analysis: What do I think? What do I know? What do I do? Why do I do what I do? Awareness of one's own ways of looking at things in relation to the goal of improvement formulated or the topic being worked on. Interaction with other teachers and mutual enrichment. Asking self-diagnosis questions.

Contrast: What do the views of others bring me? What can I learn from the others? Bibliographic consultation, contrast with experts and new enrichment of their own practices.

Redescription: Comparing the past with the present, what can I change and why? Materialization and experimentation of a new classroom practice or strategy.

This cyclical conception of learning, therefore, connects with the quality criteria that determine the success of teacher training. Especially, by the link between the phases of the reflective practice and by the reference to the previous knowledge of the teachers, their formative needs and the context of their schools. The necessary conditions for a real transfer of knowledge in both the classroom and the school.

Orientation for new employers

One of the most important questions we need to answer when we decide to take a job in a teacher center is what the job will be, what skills and competencies are required, and how they will be expected to perform them. Having a defined standard of how to work in the different teacher training formats and taking into account the latest research carried out in this field, can be very useful. Both these previous points are key for those wanting to work as advisers in a teacher training center, to understand the challenges and the operation patterns in the job they are opting for, as well as for the incorporation of new team members, as they will have guidelines that can facilitate the development of their advisory role. Having this standard collected in a living and practical document can undoubtedly be a very useful tool in this regard.

Evaluation of our training courses

The evaluation of teacher training is a complex process involving transfer of knowledge in the classroom and the

training process itself. The model of formative evaluation that we propose in the different training modalities intends to have an impact on the improvement of professional practice through processes of reflection and shared construction of knowledge with the aim of empowering teachers. We focus assessment on two main functions: as a regulator of learning and to check how much progress has been made compared to the initial situation. We also consider it essential to take into account the emotions and attitudes of teachers in the construction of common projects and, consequently, in the processes of improvement individually and collectively.

This evaluative approach, in relation to the reflective practice mentioned above, must be connected to each of the phases of the reflective cycle.

Self-analysis phase

The aim is to analyse the initial situation of the group with regard to the objectives and work contents in order to facilitate interaction during the process. In the same way, it is important to make visible the initial expectations and the degree of involvement and commitment of the teaching staff.

Contrast phase

Based on other contributions and external visions (experts, readings, videos, etc.), the aim is to improve the initial knowledge. Teachers evaluate with the intention of regulating their own learning process, especially the-

oretical-practical knowledge and attitudes, with the collection of evidence that makes this possible through reflection and experimentation.

Redescription phase

The objective of the evaluation in this phase of the process focuses on reflection on the knowledge gained by the teachers compared to the initial moment (theoretical and practical knowledge, skills and attitudes), the transfer of knowledge to the students and/or the school and the degree of satisfaction with the training activity. The aim is to collect information regarding immediate transfer of knowledge at different levels as well as to estimate the progress towards deferred transfer.

On the other hand, for the creation of the appropriate evaluation instruments, we will start from the quality criteria and indicators of the successful and effective teacher training model and develop it in relation to the six essential characteristics from international research.

Legitimation towards authorities et al.

The purpose of participating in this Erasmus+ project is to understand, reflect, evaluate and establish a contrasted theoretical-practical framework, based on international research, which can serve as a reference to improve our training actions. The aim is to provide a quality model for teachers. This collaborative work will allow us to have a vision that will contribute to improving our professional practices.

In order to legitimise this project to our collective and the educational authorities, we should base ourselves on the collection of evidence after the implementation phase in the training activity, proposing relevant aspects to be taken into account:

- Theoretical and practical framework established and applied to the training activities.
- Criteria and reference indicators agreed upon for the quality of teacher training (based on the six quality criteria).
- Evaluation of training activities throughout the process with the aim of training and regulating the learning that is acquired.
- Teachers' evaluations and results obtained in the classroom application phase related to student learning (immediate transfer of knowledge).

Part II

Our quality criteria

Starting from the premise that improving student learning is the touchstone of teacher training, successful training courses are hallmarked by six quality criteria which we consider essential:

1. Curricular reference
2. Focus on student learning
3. Linkage between input, try-out and reflection
4. Reference to previous knowledge
5. Autonomy support (promoting self-efficacy)
6. Competence support (raising self-awareness)

Curricular reference

Teacher training courses refer to curricular requirements on multiple levels. Generally speaking, as lessons do, courses should focus on specific issues or topics (e.g. the French revolution) and on specific competences (e.g. reading skills). These requirements are often to be found on a national or regional level in education plans and they may also be affected by international agreements like the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR) et al. For the students, these curriculums set the standards for learners to achieve in their respective

school years and they may determine skill levels needed for exams and graduation. For teachers, in turn, they provide orientation which topics and skills to consider most relevant from a didactic point of view. Successful teacher training courses can only be relevant and meaningful if they show an awareness of these requirements and if they are organized, advertised and executed with a clear reference to the curriculum.

On another level, specific teacher training curriculums may be enacted by regional or national education boards and, consequently, have an impact on the objectives and subject matter of teacher training with regard to particular universities or other teacher training facilities. If it is one aim of teacher training courses to consolidate, refresh and enhance the skills which teachers have acquired in their vocational training as a means to lifelong learning, curricular reference should also include these kinds of specifics.

Student learning

We agree with John Hattie that the quality of a lesson is measured by its learning effectiveness for the students. In that respect, making lessons better means improving the chance of a lesson to produce a higher learning outcome. Successful training courses support teachers by advising them to make their lessons facilitate student learning.

An adequate focus on student learning requires teachers to have a basic understanding of learning as a constructivist and individual process. Teachers need to be aware of the necessity to adapt their lessons, as the student-centred

learning offers they are, to multiple learner types and degrees of proficiency – both in terms of content knowledge and language proficiency – in order to be effective within an inclusive framework of learning.

With regard to the chosen topic of a training course, teachers should be encouraged to analyse their students' learning paths. The processes of comprehension of students have to be assessed formatively in adequate lesson settings and by experimenting with different learning designs in order to be able to cater to the given learner's (special) needs. Only by improving the teachers' diagnostic skills to assess their students' learning paths, progression and skill levels can future learning processes of students be anticipated properly and lessons be planned accordingly.

Linking student learning to curricular reference, teachers should also be encouraged to design their classroom programs and develop learner settings from a transversal point of view that takes into account more than one area of learning or subject. At the same time, training courses work best as in-depth workshops instead of staying cursory or general.

Teachers should be aware of the major influences and effect sizes related to student achievement according to John Hattie, most importantly: (a) student feedback, (b) formative evaluation of lessons, (c) achieving awareness of learning goals on behalf of the students, (c) teacher clarity and quality of instructions, (d) cooperative learning and complex learner tasks, (e) scaffolding, (f) classroom man-

agement and (g) the vital importance of nourishing a proper the teacher-student-relationship.

Linkage between input, try-out and reflection

Success of teacher training courses is not only linked to their student-centred composition and accurate curricular focus, but also to a particular mode of action in which they are organized and conducted. Effective courses allow for phases of input, try-out, transfer and reflection to take turns and be linked to each other.

We want to support teachers to become reflective practitioners. Hence, training courses need to be designed in a systematic and structured way of linking these phases in a cycle of continual improvement and analysis. New information, activities or skills have to be presented, room for experimentation has to be given in ways of immediate transfer in the course itself as well as deferred transfer when new knowledge is applied in the classroom, and experimentation has to be analysed in feedback-loops subsequently in order to make decisions for improvement.

Effective training courses usually extend over a longer period of time to allow for more opportunities of being inspired by and trying-out new ways of classroom practice and to reflect more deeply on the scope, conditions and consequences of the changed actions. This implies that “one-shot-courses” held in one afternoon with no follow-up appointments are mostly ineffective. Instead, successful training courses consist of a series of individual training events and the structure of a programme makes it trans-

parent that the course will grant enough time for each of the aforementioned phases.

On top of that, a lot of training courses benefit when they are offered to groups of colleagues and rather than individual teachers. By training in teams we want to encourage teachers to become each other's critical friends or to form professional learning communities as a means to growing in professionalism.

Reference to previous knowledge

What focus on student learning implies for lessons, reference to previous knowledge of teachers implies for successful training courses. Effective trainings take into account that teachers, too, each have an individual track record and professional background, and that they come to trainings with individual levels of experience, preconceptions, professional beliefs and attitudes. It is important to design training courses in ways which activate and value prior knowledge, enrich it through contrasting influences and point out where specific connections to the content and goals of the course can be made. Taking up the idea of the critical friend, cooperative structures in the training course may be planned to encourage peer learning.

Also, reference to previous knowledge may include going beyond the scope of the individual teacher and to assess the state of affairs of a team or an entire school with regard to any given subject matter. In that respect, teacher training course may be placed within the milestones of specific

classroom or school development processes, and as such have to be oriented towards particular needs or necessities and to determine the resources required for achievement as well as the actions necessary for implementation.

Autonomy support (promoting self-efficacy)

A key idea behind successful training courses consists in supporting empowerment, professional advancement and self-efficacy. Training courses have to address the actual everyday-life challenges in schools and to adapt to the specific needs of teachers as much as possible. This implies that, on the one hand, successful courses have to offer ideas which can readily and relevantly be put into practice. Training courses have to encourage teachers and instil in them the motivation to try out something new which they believe can actually make a difference in their classrooms. On the other hand, good courses also have to open up spaces for discussion, for developing visions and for reflecting on self-conceptions and values. In this respect, training courses contribute salutogenically to individual job satisfaction, maybe even create a sense of belonging and help teachers to stay mentally healthy.

Competence support (raising self-awareness)

It is a part of teacher professionalism to be made aware of the importance of how methodology affects students. What teachers do has a direct and substantial influence on the students and their learning processes. Hence, teachers have to be sensitive towards the value of educational

modelling and teaching attitudes. Speaking with John Hattie, learning outcomes of lessons significantly depend on the teachers – at the end of the day, teachers do matter. With regard to teacher training courses, time should be allocated for meta-reflection, analyzing teaching attitudes and consciously introduced methodological changes based on training, self-inquiry and (collegial) supervision.

Part III

Core competencies for teacher trainer

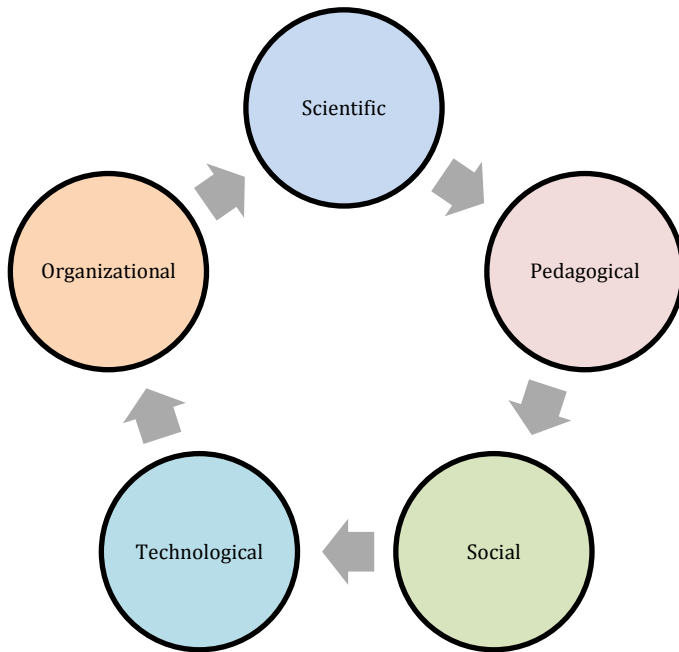
Nowadays, the teacher trainer addresses multiple challenges and needs to be prepared to cope with the extremely demanding Education and Training System.

Therefore, it is very important to understand who a teacher trainer is.

In general, we can say that a teacher trainer is a qualified professional, with specific academic and professional qualifications, whose intervention supports the trainee (teacher) in the acquisition of knowledge and/or development of skills, attitudes and forms of behaviour.

However, taking into consideration the current demands and requirements, schools in general and teachers in particular expect more and more from the trainers. Indeed, trainers are required to be an inspiring, motivating, proactive, and creative "force", capable of proposing "ready" solutions that teachers will implement in their classrooms. Teaching and transmitting knowledge is no longer enough, it is now necessary to be a learning "facilitator", a stimulator for the creation of new behaviours and attitudes, a professional who exerts an excellence-related influence on his trainees, who observes and studies the individual differences of the learners, as well as the causes and consequences of these differences.

Thus, the trainer is considered to be a multitasking professional who must simultaneously mobilise several competences, namely in the "Scientific, Pedagogical, Social, Technological and Organisational" dimensions, in order to correspond to the ideal teacher trainer profile.



Taking into consideration all the reflections brought about this profile, we have defined a matrix that systematises the contents of the competencies dimensions:

Dimension	Macro competencies	Units of competence
Scientific	Master the subject contents	Explore the subject creatively in the school curriculum (curricular reference).
Pedagogical	Facilitate the learning process	Apply differentiated techniques of pedagogical interaction and group dynamics. Promote individual and peer critical reflection. Monitor and assess learning.
Social	Communicate and manage diversity	Communicate and interact with the group. Apply diversity management methodologies in the context of training.
Technological	Use digital resources didactically	Explore multimedia resources Manage collaborative and learning platforms.
Organizational	Comply with processes and deadlines	Organisation and time management.

Given the importance of his role, the trainer is responsible for the up-to-date technical mastery of the area in which he is specialized (*Scientific Dimension*), mastery of pedagogical methods and techniques appropriate to the type and level of training he develops (*Pedagogical Dimension*).

He also needs to mobilize skills in the field of communication and socio-emotional skills (*Social Dimension*) that provide a facilitating environment for the teaching-learning process. In the current digital era, trainers are also required to have a set of digital skills specific to their profession, in order to be able to take advantage of the potential of digital technologies to innovate and enhance learning. The training process requires that the trainer also possesses organizational and time management skills (*Organizational Dimension*) in order to be able to guarantee all the formal requirements of teacher training.

Lead partner

Schulamt Bremerhaven, Bremerhaven (Germany)

Partners

- ❖ Casa do Professors, Braga (Portugal)
- ❖ Centre de Professors D'Eivissa, Ibiza (Spain)
- ❖ Dieftinsi Defterovathmias Ekpaidefsis Magnisias, Volos (Greece)
- ❖ Istituto per la Ricerca Accademica Sociale ed Educativa – IRASE, Viterbo (Italy)
- ❖ Landesinstitut für Schule (LIS), Bremen (Germany)

