

***The common European principles in more depth***

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A PROFESSION BASED ON PARTNERSHIPS

a) Introduction

A profession based on partnerships focuses on two interrelated areas of practice in teacher education: partnership with people - higher education institutions work collaboratively in partnership with schools, colleges and work-based training providers; and partnership with knowledge - teachers are encouraged to review evidence of effective practice and engage with current innovation and research in order to keep pace with the evolving knowledge society. Higher education institutions ensure that their teaching benefits from their knowledge of current school practice. Teacher education, in itself, is an object of study and research.

b) Ideas behind the principle

Partnership is contextually bound from the broad to the individual:

Partnership with society: teachers contribute to the economic but also to the cultural aspects of the knowledge society. They should, therefore, be able to work effectively with their fellow human beings – pupils, trainees, adult learners, colleagues and other partners in education; and work with and in society - at local, regional, national, European and broader global levels. Their work in all these areas should be embedded into a professional continuum of lifelong learning and linked to the European framework for qualifications.

Partnership with people: teaching, training and education should be seen in their broadest sense. Teachers work with fellow human beings in a profession which is based on the values of social inclusion and nurturing the potential of every learner. They are able to work with learners as individuals and support them to develop into fully participating and active members of society. They also develop collaborative types of work to increase the collective intelligence of learners. They have knowledge of human growth and development and demonstrate self-confidence when engaging with others. They co-operate and collaborate with colleagues to enhance learning and teaching.

Partnerships between institutions: both those where teachers will be employed, and colleges, training providers and higher education institutions should be encouraged to support high quality training and effective practice, and to develop networks of innovation at local and regional levels. These partnerships should be based on mutual respect for the contributions made by all participants to the development of future professionals, and on a shared agreement/understanding of the professional standards and values we are seeking to uphold.

Partnership with knowledge: theory underpins practice and teachers must have a high level of understanding and expertise in the generation and delivery of knowledge through pedagogy and the transfer of subject matter. In addition, teachers should have the knowledge, skills, norms and attitudes which are necessary for active citizenships in Europe. The concept of knowledge has also changed. It no

longer refers primarily to static, transmitted contents, but instead, to knowledge that is ever renewable and construed together with other learners.

### *c) How the principle addresses the issues*

The principle addresses the issues in that it underpins the nature and content of teacher education. As stated, Teachers' work has components that are based on the different types of knowledge. This can be described in a generic sense as designed and implemented in the content of the teacher education curriculum (initial and post qualification) encompassing practical, mediation, declarative and recursive types of knowledge.

The content (declarative and recursive) knowledge consists of

- meta-knowledge of teaching and learning - key elements to advance life-course learning
- knowledge of subject and pedagogical contents and how knowledge is construed
- knowledge of the social and moral code of the teaching profession
- ability to reflect on the teaching profession

In considering the interrelatedness of these partnerships the urgent and important task of societies in Europe is to bring teacher education to such a high standard that it really can compete for highly talented young candidates, including those who want to become teachers later in life.

It is axiomatic that teacher education programmes must give future teachers opportunities to learn practical skills that will enable them to convey their academic and professional knowledge to others. Teachers have the important task of mediating something to different learners and teacher's practical skills will enable them as professionals to mediate something to individuals or groups or to create or interpret knowledge jointly with them. These practical skills should equip future teachers to:

- deal effectively with different learners (age, gender, cultural background, learning difficulties, etc.)
- cooperate with other teachers and work in schools or other educational communities
- cooperate with a variety of educational stakeholders
- participate in processes of developing curricula and learning environments
- participate in processes of solving problems in school life or educational institutions
- develop their professional identity.

This kind of knowledge can be described as procedural knowledge. Academic contents and practical skills must not be seen as separate or exclusive. In the teaching profession they are always complementary.

The quality framework of teachers and teacher education must consist of components that are generic to high standard teacher education. In addition to these core components, the quality framework must also to include those determinants which influence the status of teachers and teacher education.

The content of the curriculum should reflect the status of teachers as professionals which relates to partnership and is dependent on the following determinants:

1. Status of the teaching profession in a society

2. Tertiary level teacher education providing high-level academic and professional competence
3. Quality components that are generic to teacher education programmes
4. Considerations of the continuum of a teaching career, including teachers' opportunities for life long learning
5. Working conditions of teachers in schools and other educational institutions
6. Educational outcomes to which teachers contribute
7. Quality assurance - The public must have confidence in teachers' work based on interaction between representatives of the teaching profession and other partners and stakeholders in society
8. Salary and other rewards that make the profession competitive with other high-level professions

In practice, teaching is a profession based on partnership as determined by investment in:

Admission - High-level academic qualities, Social qualities (such as interaction skills)

Initial teacher education - Research-based second-cycle education, subject content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, social and moral knowledge, skills to develop ones own teaching and the teaching profession

Orientation to a new school community - introduction to school community and partners, introduction to local contexts and stakeholders, support for teachers' own professional development

In-service teacher education - systematic support for teachers' own life-long learning, development of a portfolio for teaching professionals, participation as partners in school development processes, participation in research-based development projects

Building from the principles the framework should provide each teacher with:

- tools to work in partnership with other human beings
- tools to work with knowledge
- tools to work with society

Each of the tools should rest within a common typology for teaching based on what society expects from education:

- Transmit knowledge
- Prepare the learner for a job
- Prepare the learner to become global citizens

### ***d) Possible discussion questions***

- do delegates think this principle is important enough to be emphasised in this way?
- should it be kept as one of the four principles?
  - if yes, can the text describing it be improved?
  - if not, why not. Does the principle need to be replaced with something else?
- is the principle visible throughout the paper, and reflected in the competences and recommendations?
- to what extent will acceptance of the proposed recommendations help to ensure that the principle is embedded in policy developments?