



EdUSchool

July 2021



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*Enhancing European
Teacher Education
through University
Schools*



Final Results of IO 3: Educational Module for Teachers and Leaders in University Schools

Kari Smith and Ingrid Stenøien, NTNU

The goal of IO3 is to develop an educational module for teachers at University Schools. In the IO3 document we present a framework for an educational module which can be adapted to various national and local contexts. This is done in acknowledgement of the fact that education, including teacher education, is contextualized, however, our aim is to propose a shared European framework in the effort of the EdUSchool project to develop a shared understanding and language of the University School concept in Europe.

The proposed educational module is a continuation of IO1 and IO2 in the EdUSchool project and supported by a theoretical backdrop. As an example of adaption, we have presented a case from NTNU, the USSiT Educational Module, and in the document we have presented some lessons learned from the implementation of the NTNU USSiT model. Furthermore, the four other partners in the EdUSchool project present their adaption of the EU based module. To support other university/school partnership contexts globally, we finally suggest implications at relational, knowledge, and contextual levels which might be useful to take into consideration when adapting the proposed framework. The overall conclusion is that we strongly recommend a school-based approach as a principle for implementing the EdUSchool Educational Module.

To be more specific about the IO3 document, we establish a knowledge base for the development of an educational module (the EdUSchool Study-Program) for teachers and leaders in University Schools, followed by a presentation of a framework for such a program. The knowledge approach is threefold; firstly, we present a general theoretical backdrop, secondly knowledge implications generated through IO1 (Gerholz et al., 2020) and IO2 (Bader et al., 2020) are used in the proposal of, thirdly, a framework for an educational module for school-based teacher educators.

Teacher education institutions are expected to establish partnerships with the practice field (schools), as suggested in EU documents, such as Supporting Teacher Educators (2013) and Strengthening Teaching in Europe (2015), and in Norwegian national steering papers (Norwegian Ministry of Knowledge, 2017). Recently a report, Partnerships in Teacher Education (Norwegian Ministry of Knowledge, 2020) which stresses the importance of establishing partnerships between universities and the practice field and highlights the many challenges, has been published.

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There are tensions in such partnerships as the partners have two different foci, educating children and educating teachers, which represent different cultures and different expertise. However, they also have a shared primary goal, to improve education at all levels.

Partnership is defined as ‘a relationship resembling a legal partnership and usually involves close cooperation between parties having specified and joint rights and responsibilities’ (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/partnership>). Smith (2016) defines partnership “as an agreement between teacher education institutions and stakeholders of education who work together towards a shared goal to improve education” (Smith, 2016, p. 20). Sandholtz (2002) suggests that there are basic conditions that need to be in place to strengthen school-university partnerships. The partners should trust each other and be open to listening to and accepting different opinions and solutions. Partners should be acceptive of and respect different forms of expertise and see value in it for the common interest. Likewise, partners often represent various types of organisations or institutions with different missions and limitations, however, instead of seeing differences as an obstacle to cooperation, it can be viewed as a benefit and provide opportunities for mutual learning (Sandholtz, 2002). Furthermore, a partnership involves risks, especially when the aim is to develop, to go beyond the comfort zone of all partners, and it can be time-consuming (Lemke & Sabelli, 2008)

In a University School partnership, mentoring student teachers is a central activity, and school-based teacher educators must be empowered with the competence to act as teacher educators. However, there are university-based teacher educators with little or out-dated experience with the school of today (Ulvik & Smith, 2019). They have to be empowered with knowledge about a culture and expertise to which they have become distant. Thus, structured mutual competence building is therefore a fundamental requirement for a successful University School partnership. This can only be done when mutual meeting points are created, in what Zeichner (2010), among others, calls the third space.

The goal of IO3 was to develop an educational module for teachers at University Schools. In the IO3 document we have presented a framework for an educational module which can be adapted to various national and local contexts. This is done in acknowledgement of the fact that education, including teacher education, is contextualized, however, our aim is to propose a shared European framework in the effort of the EdUSchool project to develop a shared understanding and language of the University School concept in Europe.

In awareness that teaching and teacher education differ from country to country and even from institution to institution, IO3 includes suggested models from all the partner institutions, and the extent to which they have been implemented varies greatly.

However, there are some conclusions to be drawn which might serve as guidelines for international colleagues who aim to develop their version of University Schools:

- Establish co-creation arenas (third spaces) between actors from universities and schools that allow for renegotiation and contextualization when implementing EdU-school Educational Modules.
- EdUSchool Educational module is based on the integration of the knowledge areas mentoring, R&D and school development. The integration is reflected in all aspects of the module (goals, working methods and syllabus).
- Developing a contextualised educational module for teachers and leaders at University Schools. One size does not fit all.

EdUSchool Multiplier Event

On June 18th took place the “Future of Teacher Education in Europe: the role of University Schools” EdUSchool multiplier event. Initially planned to be an in person event at the University of Lisbon, due to the current pandemic situation it was necessary to adapt and make this an online event.

The event proposed to present and disseminate the four Intellectual Outputs resulting from the project implementation. Furthermore, this event was also an opportunity to engage key actors in the discussion of the project results, including National Policy experts, School Principals, Student teachers, and University Professors.

The event constituted a privilege opportunity for discussion and dissemination of the University School concept and implementation and had 181 registered participants from 15 different countries.

Videos and presentations from the event are available at our website <https://www.university-schools.eu/multiplier-event/> and YouTube Channel.



Future of Teacher Education in Europe: the role of University-Schools

EDUSCHOOL MULTIPLIER EVENT

JUNE 18TH, 2021 (9H30-13H00 CET)
UNIVERSITY OF LISBON – ONLINE VIA ZOOM PLATFORM

PROGRAM

9:30 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION
9:45 PRESENTATION OF THE EDUSCHOOL PROJECT
10:00 KEY RESULTS:

- INSTITUTIONAL DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL CONCEPT
- GOOD PRACTICE COLLECTIONS
- EDUCATIONAL MODULE

10:30 SHORT ANSWERS FROM KEY ACTORS
11:00 THEMATIC BREAKOUT SESSIONS

- POLICY ISSUES
- SCHOOL PERSPECTIVES
- UNIVERSITY - TEACHER EDUCATION
- STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

11:45 BREAK

12:00 PRESENTATION AND DEMONSTRATION OF UNIVERSITY-SCHOOLS HANDBOOK
12:30 FEEDBACK FROM EDUSCHOOL EXPERTS
12:50 OUTLOOK
13:00 CLOSING



EdUSchool YouTube Channel





Interview with Jochen Hofmann

Ministry of Education in Bavaria, Germany

EdUSchool Project Team: To start, can you please make a brief presentation of yourself and of your work?

Jochen Hoffman: I'm a vocational teacher, I went on working for the Ministry of Education for some years, then went back to work as a teacher and a vice-principal at a vocational school. I was the principal in a German school in China and, when I came back, I was the principal of a vocational school in Bavaria, in Munich, and I have been working at the Ministry of Education for three years now. I'm responsible for the teaching staff, training teachers and in-service training of teachers for vocational schools since then.

EPT: How do you characterize University Schools?

JH: It's a very useful project of cooperation between universities and schools. It's a partnership that everybody should profit from. I'd say the main goal has always been to better prepare students for their practical work at schools. At my time, at the University, it seemed very theoretical and very separated from the reality of schools and that's not very motivating for many students. We didn't really feel very well prepared, even though we were well equipped with theoretical knowledge in many fields, but not so well prepared for actual work at schools. And that was the main purpose, I'd say, but it's not only internships at schools, it's a lot more structured. So, a second very important goal is to have a feedback loop between universities and schools. When students go into their practical work at schools, they have certain assignments... teaching, of course, always has to be one of the main priorities of the practical phase and then they can try what they have learnt at the University, they can talk it over with teachers and see what works and what doesn't, and then they go back and report that in their seminars at the University and we hope that universities profit from that constant feedback. It's not only via students. Usually there is, of course, a cooperation between mentors at schools who get some training at universities for what is expected from them and can give feedback directly back to staff at universities. So, there's that feedback loop. And the third goal is to have projects at those schools where we really develop practical, let's say, materials and concepts that can be used at University Schools but ideally could be disseminated to other schools as well.

And that's work in progress, I have to say, because we don't have as much output for other schools when it comes to concepts and materials, as should be possible, because there are great projects going on, but it's not the main focus of universities, they are not responsible for in-service training of other teachers or coaching other schools. And the schools or students involved are not responsible for that either, so here we have to work on this multiplication of knowledge to use it at other schools. But that might be the first thing you think when you come from the University, they say "Oh great, University Schools, now we can really do research". And that's true too, but that's not the main goal from our point of view.

EPT: Do you think those aspects that you mentioned are the main advantages of the University Schools?

JH: Those are the main advantages and, of course, there's a lot of network building involved and a lot of transfer of knowledge. When it comes to teacher training, we have basically three phases. We start at universities, then we have a two-year period of teacher's seminar. That's very practical and takes place at schools, and at least once per week we have one day of reflection and input, not from universities, but from especially assigned teachers who work in those two years. Teacher's seminar is also part of the University Schools project, so another advantage is that we have this dialog between universities and teacher's seminar and that's also something that we have improved and can further improve. That's very important, that all these partners have common projects, that they know what they're doing, that they realize there are some frictions between their programs, that they can learn from each other and could coordinate their efforts in teacher training. So, this networking, this constant dialogue between all the partners and the three main goals that I described are the main advantages.

EPT: What are the main challenges facing University Schools?

JH: One challenge I mentioned, or one potential that we haven't fully realized, is that it's not a program to create elite schools from partner schools. We have to be a bit careful because other schools might feel second class, or left behind, because they can't be University Schools. So, we have always been careful to stress out that is mainly about practical experience and making universities better. The main purpose is not to make schools better. We have to be careful here and if we manage to find some best or good practice projects at University Schools, make those projects and that knowledge available to other schools, and integrate it in our in-service training of teachers, I think we can make further progress.

Interview with Jochen Hofmann

Ministry of Education in Bavaria, Germany

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So, at the moment, I think it's our main next goal and our main challenge, if you will. And the other thing is quite complex and we don't have a very centralized structure. I think that's a good thing but it also means that the things that are going on from one University School to the other, and specially from one University to the other, those projects can be very different from each other. It also means that the benefits are not the same. Maybe the practical experience some students gain is a lot more valuable at one University than at the next one. But one research project can be more interesting at the other University and I think it's ok and necessary that we let our universities and schools find their own path within certain boundaries. It's something we have to keep in mind and we have to try and keep our universities in a feedback loop as well. We did a workshop, I think, one year ago, with all the professors from our University Schools to work on those challenges and to have them share their knowledge and their concepts, so that they can also profit from each other. There's also a complexity in teacher's seminar, there's a lot of players involved, it's very difficult to transfer knowledge. Realistically, 95% of all the knowledge that is created cannot be spread over the rest of the system because it's way too much. So, we really have to identify the best things and make sure that those best results are shared and that everybody is constantly updated in that feedback loop and well connected.

EPT: How can University Schools contribute to school development and innovation?

JH: The main focus is to better prepare teachers for all the challenges ahead, especially for being good teachers at the classroom, but not just that. In vocational schools in Bavaria, we have quality management system of schools and it's very important that every teacher has theoretical knowledge about how to structure things, how to be efficient in their processes, how to cooperate with other teachers and not to be only interested in their own challenges in their own classrooms. So, being a good teacher is, of course, complex. It's not only a thing that Bavarian teachers have to learn, but all over the world, and this helps a lot to update universities constantly about schools, and the principals of schools, I think it would be more important in our teacher training. Secondly, it's the challenge we talked about before.

For example, when you look at the present time, the current challenges of integrating digital tools, and more importantly in vocational schools integrating the change in practically every profession, the processes that digital tools are used, you would expect to integrate that knowledge into our schools, so that our students at vocational schools don't acquire old knowledge or just fact-based knowledge, but they get really well equipped with all the competences to be effective in their fields and to be adaptative to the fast change of their work environment. So, that's a very dynamic process at the moment and it's a very big challenge for our schools, to keep up with these changes. And University Schools have more man power, so to speak, and more help from the University side, so that the students involved, the University staff, professors and teachers, work together and create new teaching materials, for example, new concepts for a subject or for professions, to identify what we want to achieve in those subjects, and how can we do it ideally, and test it systematically. And also, really good teaching materials, and good concepts should be developed a lot better than if an individual teacher or one school did it by themselves. This, of course, can be used by other schools and in teacher training as well. So, that's how all the schools can profit from University Schools.

EPT: In your perspective, what kind of improvements does this model still needs?

JH: The dissemination. That's the main point, how we can improve that? We are working on it at the moment. From my point of view, that was the most important goal of our workshop last year. Universities should see that as one more objective of the project, to identify good practices to present it to the Ministry of Education, and to present it to the teacher's seminar, saying "we think this project is something that could be used, for example, in teacher's seminar, in-service training, or to develop coaching sessions for other schools with similar problems". As soon as we identify those good practice projects, we have to use our other system to implement that in other schools. We have regional teacher training, we have centralized teacher training, we have resources that we can offer... One thing that we do is that we can assign teachers for a certain period of time to work together with universities, not specifically for the University School project. We can assign those teachers to get something done in cooperation with universities. And, of course, the dissemination of these best practice ideas should be one of the most interesting projects for teachers to do in cooperation with universities. That's something we are doing at the moment, trying to improve the dissemination of good practices.

EPT: Thank you very much!