

Promoting Quality Development through Accreditation –

5

A Focus on Teacher Education Programs

A Guide¹

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¹ Published by the Accreditation Council on September 23, 2022

0 Preamble

This guide was prepared by the Teacher Education Working Group of the Accreditation Council.²

It is intended for a broad audience, including

5 higher education institutions, the agencies, the evaluators, and the members of the Accreditation Council. The guide can fulfill different functions depending on the intended audience. It provides an overview of the specific features of teacher education in the accreditation process and is intended to serve as a guide for those involved in the accreditation process. In particular, the guide highlights specific features of
teacher education programs and offers suggestions on how these should be addressed in the accreditation process. Finally, it can serve as a starting point for further engagement with the challenges of accreditation in the field of teacher education.

This guide provides recommendations for addressing specific challenges in the accreditation of teacher education programs. It is not intended to formulate normative

15 requirements that go beyond the provisions of the relevant legal regulations. Regarding the extent to which the recommendations in this guide should be applied in specific accreditation procedures, higher education institutions may consult with the agencies conducting the procedures on a case-by-case basis.

20 1 Framework Conditions for the Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs

Teacher education is fundamentally defined by the state. Information on this is provided by the teacher training laws of the federal states as well as the joint regulations within the framework of the KMK. The first phase of teacher education (university studies) is completed with the Master of Education (entry requirement: successfully completed teacher-related or polyvalent,

25 i.e., a bachelor's program containing teacher-training elements) or the first state examination (state examination program).

The following resolutions of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) are used to define teacher training (Phase 1). The relevant requirements of the KMK are essentially:

- 30
- Key points for the mutual recognition of bachelor's and master's degrees in programs that provide the educational prerequisites for a teaching career

² The Working Group on Teacher Education includes members and guests of the Accreditation Council as well as external experts, including representatives of students and of professional and accreditation practice.

(Decision of the KMK dated June 2, 2005; the so-called Quedlinburg Decision) This decision stipulates, among other things, the following requirements for the recognition of degree programs and degrees by the KMK: integrated teacher education programs at universities or equivalent institutions of higher education covering at least two subjects, subject-specific pedagogy, educational sciences, and practical school studies already during the bachelor's phase.

- Resolution of application issues regarding the Quedlinburg Resolution (KMK resolution of February 28, 2007)

The states recognize accredited teacher training programs for upper-level teaching positions that have been duly completed with at least 210 ECTS credits as a prerequisite for admission to the preparatory service, provided that they grant access to the preparatory service in the state where the institution of higher education was last attended. As a prerequisite for admission to the school service, a minimum of one and a half years of practical school training is required, including at least one year of preparatory service. The states have the option of agreeing with their universities to award a master's degree if, after earning at least 240 ECTS credits at the university, a total of 300 ECTS credits are achieved.

- Mutual Recognition of Teacher Certification Examinations and Qualifications (Decision of the KMK dated October 20, 1999, as amended on February 7, 2013)

This decision specifically concerns the mutual recognition of first state examinations for teaching professions as well as the second state examinations (teaching qualifications) in order to ensure freedom of movement.

- Framework guidelines for teaching professions 1 through 6

The framework guidelines include, in particular, principles for training and examination of the individual teaching qualifications, guidelines on the structure and duration of training as well as on recognition; furthermore, an appendix containing an overview of the respective designations of the teaching qualifications under state law and their prevalence; in addition, for teaching qualification type 5, a further appendix on the professional fields and for teaching qualification type 6 a further appendix to the Key Areas of Support:

- Framework Agreement on Training and Examinations for Teaching in Elementary or Primary Schools (Teaching Type 1)
(Resolution of the KMK dated February 28, 1997, as amended on March 14, 2019)

- Framework Agreement on Training and Examinations for Cross-Curricular Teaching Positions at the Primary Level and for All or Specific Types of Schools at the Lower Secondary Level (Teaching Position Type 2) (Resolution of the KMK dated February 28, 1997, as amended on March 7, 2013)
- 5 ○ Framework Agreement on Training and Examinations for a Teaching Qualification for Lower Secondary Education (Teaching Qualification Type 3) (Resolution of the KMK dated February 28, 1997, as amended on September 13, 2018)
- Framework Agreement on Training and Examinations for Teaching Positions in Upper Secondary Education (General Education Subjects) or Gymnasium (Teaching Type 4) (Resolution of the KMK of February 28, 1997, as amended on September 13, 2018)
- 10 ○ Framework Agreement on Training and Examinations for Teaching Positions in Upper Secondary Education (vocational subjects) or at vocational schools (Teaching Type 5) (Resolution of the KMK dated May 12, 1995, as amended on September 13, 2018)
- 15 ○ Framework Agreement on Training and Examinations for Special Education Teachers (Teacher Type 6) (Resolution of the KMK dated February 18, 1997, as amended on September 13, 2018)
- 20 • State-wide content requirements for subject-specific sciences and didactics in teacher education (Resolution of the Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of October 16, 2008, as amended on May 16, 2019)
With a view to the overarching goal of ensuring mobility and permeability within the German higher education system and the mutual recognition of the academic achievements and degrees obtained that prepare students for the teaching profession, the KMK has defined so-called subject profiles that provide a framework of content requirements for subject-specific studies in all general education subjects, special education, and vocational disciplines . The states and the teacher-training universities can define specializations and differentiations, as well as additional requirements, within this framework. The list of subjects for general education teaching degrees is limited to those subjects that appear in the examination regulations of (almost) all states. The subject profiles for vocational fields of study are based on the in the Appendix to Framework Agreement on Training and Examinations for Teaching Positions at the Upper Secondary Level (Vocational Subjects) or at Vocational Schools – Teaching Type 5 (Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of May 12, 1995, as amended) – the vocational subject areas specified therein. The requirements for
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subject-specific sciences and didactics are intended to form a basis for the accreditation and evaluation of teacher education programs.

- Standards for Teacher Education: Educational Sciences (Resolution of the Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of December 16, 2004, as amended on May 16, 2019)

The standards define competencies in educational sciences that are of particular importance for the training and daily professional practice of teachers and to which continuing education and professional development can be linked. The standards are intended to serve as a basis for the accreditation and evaluation of teacher-training-related programs.

Also with regard to the federal and state quality initiative in teacher education (2013), the states have agreed on principles for the mutual recognition of teacher education across all states through regulations and procedures to increase the mobility and quality of teachers (Decision of the KMK dated March 7, 2013, as amended on December 27, 2013)

and has committed, among other things, to granting applicants who have completed a teacher training program in accordance with the guidelines of the KMK equal access to the preparatory service for the type of teaching position corresponding to their degree, regardless of the state in which the degree was earned, in addition to the formal recognition of degrees. The states and the universities ensure that the

graduates holding a Master of Education or a State Examination degree meet the relevant requirements of the Conference of Ministers of Education.

Note: Teacher training programs do not include degree programs that, although they lead to a “Master of Education,” but do not comply with the so-called Quedlinburg Resolution of the Conference of Ministers of Education (“Guidelines for the Mutual Recognition of Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in programs that provide the educational prerequisites for a teaching career” dated June 2, 2005) and do not grant access to the preparatory service in the state where the degree is earned, because this is reserved there for those who have passed a First State Examination (see Mobility Report 2020, KMK resolution of March 18–19, 2021).

Each federal state applies more or less different concepts, guidelines, and even designations for teacher education programs, which are further diversified by the individual study and examination regulations of the respective universities. For evaluators of teacher education or combined degree programs that can lead to teaching qualifications, it is therefore

It is very important that they can quickly familiarize themselves with the specific features³ of teacher education in the respective federal states. It is helpful—especially for the reviewers and

³ State-specific characteristics include, for example, the placement of school practicums within the bachelor’s or master’s program, the designation of such practicums, the possible combinations of degree programs, etc.

reviewers in the evaluation process—therefore, a brief description of the requirements for teacher education in the respective federal state should be included in the universities' self-reports. In addition, the accreditation report should highlight these state-specific characteristics if they are relevant to the evaluation.

- 5 Overviews of the various teacher education programs can be found on the KMK website⁴ or in an annual tabular summary⁵ of the current status.⁶

2 Evaluation Practice

2.1 Procedural Design

- 10 Pursuant to § 32(2) MVRO, the subject of accreditation is any combined bachelor's or master's program offered by a university within the framework of its teacher education model (e.g., a two-subject bachelor's program with a teaching option, a master's program for teaching at elementary schools). This includes the components required by the KMK and the respective state (educational sciences, practical phases,
- 15 academic subjects, vocational specializations, or special education specializations). The Accreditation Council makes accreditation decisions for each combined degree program as well as for the associated sub-programs.⁷ Sub-programs pursuant to § 32 (1)
- 1 MVRO represent the subjects or vocational specializations or special education specializations that students may choose.⁸ Whether the
- 20 Educational Sciences is considered a partial program or an integral part of a combined program, the university determines this—as well as the placement of the practical phases and any other interdisciplinary elements—in its presentation of its teacher education model, taking into account the respective state guidelines.

⁴ e.g., <https://www.kmk.org/themen/allgemeinbildende-schulen/lehrkraefte/lehrerbildung.html>

⁵ e.g., from 2020 at https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/pdf/Bildung/AllgBildung/2020-10-07-Sachstand-LB_veroeff-2020.pdf

⁶ In addition, the German Education Server (<https://www.bildungsserver.de/>) serves as a comprehensive information portal covering, among other topics, teacher education. The Bertelsmann Foundation's Teacher Education Monitor (<https://www.monitor-lehrerbildung.de/>) is another resource for gaining an initial overview of the specific features of teacher education programs in a particular federal state and comparing them with those in other federal states. Since the data in the Teacher Education Monitor represents the results of regular surveys conducted on a voluntary basis, it is not always up to date or legally binding. In such cases, the respective regulations of the federal states must be examined in detail.

⁷ A special feature is the teacher education programs at the universities of education in Baden-Württemberg, which do not have sub-programs but are accredited as single programs with the subjects integrated into them.

⁸ FAQ 10 of the Accreditation Council also provides information on the accreditation of combined and partial degree programs: <https://akkreditierungsrat.de/de/faq/thema/10-kombinationsstudiengaenge-fristen-und-antragstellung>

Against this background, the institution should clarify the procedural design in consultation with its supervising agency prior to the accreditation process. This includes, among other things, the question of the chronological sequence of the evaluation of combined degree programs and partial degree programs, as well as the question of the composition of the bundles. In particular,

5, it should be clarified in what form the combined degree programs themselves (i.e., the interdisciplinary aspects) will be evaluated. This can, for example, take the form of a preliminary model analysis in which the overall structure of a university's teacher-training programs, their positioning within the university's profile, the interdisciplinary curricular components (e.g., educational sciences, practical training phases), central institutions such as a Center for Teacher Education or a School of Education, as well as interdisciplinary concepts—e.g., regarding program organization, quality assurance, and further development—are the subject of consideration. Likewise, the possible combinations of sub-programs within the combined degree programs should be presented, with attention also given to restrictions on

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Alternatively, the combined degree programs can be evaluated together with specific sub-programs, and interdisciplinary components such as educational sciences can also be assigned to individual subject clusters. Compliance with the criteria set forth in the MRVO is assessed at all levels. In accreditation procedures

20 that provide for the supplementation of combined degree programs with partial degree programs in separate evaluation procedures, the agencies and the evaluators must be aware of the evaluation results of the combined degree programs and refer to them in the accreditation report.

With regard to the tiered teacher education program, the review process

25 , it is recommended that the model assessment encompass both the combined bachelor's and master's degree programs offered by a university as part of teacher education, since only a comprehensive assessment of both levels allows for a determination of whether the requirements of the KMK and the respective state pursuant to § 13 (2) and (3) MRVO have been implemented. The state regulations governing teacher education

30 as well as any areas of specialization at the respective institution should be introduced to the reviewers in the self-evaluation report. Conversely, a joint evaluation of bachelor's and master's programs also requires that the orientation of polyvalent bachelor's programs toward non-teacher-training-related follow-up options (transition into the profession, subject-specific oriented

35 master's programs) is also given sufficient consideration. To this end, representatives from non-school professional practice may, among other measures, be additionally included in the group of reviewers.

Due to the large number of sub-programs, bundled review procedures are the norm when evaluating teacher-training programs. When compiling these bundles, factors such as school type-related aspects may play a role in addition to subject-specific affinity (e.g., when bundling different vocational disciplines). In the

- 5 When grouping programs, care should be taken to ensure that the review panel does not become too large (see below) and that the number of sub-programs to be reviewed remains manageable for the panel. For the same reason mentioned above, a joint review of bachelor's and master's programs is also recommended at the sub-program level. In case of doubt, the option to have the composition of groups approved by the Accreditation Council in accordance with § 30(2)

10 MRVO, should be utilized in cases of doubt.

Whether sub-programs within teacher education should be evaluated jointly with subject-specific programs or sub-programs should be decided by the institution based on its academic structure.

A joint

- 15 evaluation may be particularly appropriate when there are interconnections in content (e.g., within a combinatorial study model) that should be taken into account during the evaluation. In the case of a joint evaluation, care must be taken to ensure, on the one hand, that the partial degree programs in teacher education are evaluated in their entirety, taking into account their specific characteristics and on the other hand, the

- 20 sufficient attention is paid to the extracurricular orientation of the subject-specific degree programs. The connections between the degree programs should be evident from the self-evaluation report. Ideally, an (optional) application for bundle approval should already outline how the relationships between teacher education and subject-specific degree programs are structured, as this facilitates the decision regarding the composition of the bundle

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In the case of optional approval of the bundle composition by the Accreditation Council, feedback may also be sought from the Council regarding the extent to which the procedural design is effective.

- 30 For the case, where a institution offers only certain components of a combined degree programs (e.g., individual subjects or professional fields) as part of teacher training, while students complete the remaining components at another institution, the procedural design should, if possible, be coordinated by all participating institutions together with the agency, and feedback should be sought from the Accreditation Council. In doing so, it should be noted that a complete

- 35 Ensuring that the combinatorial degree programs and their associated sub-programs are evaluated in accordance with the MRVO. This also applies in cases where universities of

applied sciences offer optional modules in their bachelor's programs that facilitate the transition to teacher-training master's programs at universities.

2.2 Composition of the group of evaluators

- 5 The recommendations from the Accreditation Council's resolution regarding "Size of Review Panels in Bundled Procedures" dated March 21, 2019⁹, such as the recommendation that, in addition to the representative of the state authority, the panel should also include an expert with practical experience in the school environment. Implementing this recommendation ensures that professional practice is assessed not only by the competent state authority for the school system
- 10 , but also by representatives of everyday school life, in particular teachers or school principals.

When composing the group of evaluators for cluster accreditations, care must generally be taken to ensure that the various

- 15 subject-specific didactics are adequately covered by the evaluators. The evaluation panel must demonstrate teaching competence in its overall profile; in this regard, student evaluators should themselves be studying to become teachers, as experience has shown that evaluating teacher education programs poses a particular challenge for students in subject-specific disciplines.
- 20 The rules regarding conflicts of interest apply to church representatives in the same way as they do to other reviewers; this means, for example, that a church representative cannot simultaneously serve as a lecturer in the degree program under review.

With regard to the question of including representatives of the Islamic or Alevi faiths in the group of evaluators for

- 25 the evaluation of degree programs in the respective religious studies, the agencies may, in consultation with the universities, assess on a case-by-case basis whether a representative of the respective religious community should be included.

To ensure a differentiated evaluation of the individual sub-programs even within a large bundle, hybrid models are also conceivable in the composition of the group of

- 30 experts, hybrid models are also conceivable. In this case, a core group of experts who participate throughout the evaluation process—and thus also in the on-site visit—could be supplemented by additional experts who, however, base their assessment solely on the documentation and submit a written statement, which is included in the

⁹https://www.akkreditierungsrat.de/sites/default/files/downloads/2019/AR_Beschluss_Groesse_der_Gutachtergre_mien_in_Buendelverfahren_2019-03-21_Drs._AR_35-2019.pdf

accreditation report, must be submitted. An appropriate exchange between the reviewers regarding all study programs to be reviewed must be ensured. The decision as to whether such additional “external” reviewers

5 review process.

2.3 Ensuring the Feasibility of the Program

In teacher education, there are challenges in ensuring the feasibility of study that are specific to the teaching profession. Here, on the one hand, the question must be clarified as to how, in
10 teacher education programs can ensure that courses largely do not overlap—even in less common combinations of sub-programs. In the accreditation process, institutions must demonstrate the measures and systematic approach they use to address this challenge, such as whether program combinations or module groups are prioritized in terms of minimizing overlap

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On the other hand, cross-institutional collaborations in teacher education programs—such as those in physical education, music, and art; in teacher education for vocational schools; and between colleges of education and universities—represent situations that must be examined and reported on from the perspective of program feasibility.

20 Addressing the challenges of combining programs requires an appropriate degree of central coordination and oversight at various levels (including legal frameworks and practical implementation).

Legal frameworks (particularly study and examination regulations): In the absence of relevant state-level regulations, the distribution of the standard 180 (Bachelor’s) or
25 to 120 (Master’s) credit points (CP) across the individual fields be regulated centrally or university-wide, both in terms of quantity and timing, to ensure an even workload of approximately 30 CP per semester (provided that the respective state or university law permits this). This can be achieved, for example, through a comprehensive, binding framework regulation that specifies both the scope of the individual subjects and

other components of the program, as well as the proportions allocated to them in each semester. At the level of individual courses and sub-programs, this should be specified through corresponding subject-specific recommended study plans, which must adhere to the (CP) requirements.

Practical implementation: In practice, the respective provisions must
35 Modules, courses, etc. are assigned in accordance with the study plan and are also

actually offered in the respective semesters so that they can be taken in accordance with the study plan. A particular challenge here is the interdependence of teacher training programs and non-teaching programs that exists at most universities. Through appropriate course scheduling, e.g.,

5 e.g., through so-called “time window models,” it should be ensured that there are no scheduling conflicts, at least within the recommended plans, for courses for which there are no alternatives in the curriculum. For teacher education-specific course components with high credit hour requirements, such as practical training phases—particularly a practical training semester—it must be demonstrated how it is ensured that students can complete these without overlapping with other

10 complete coursework. The same applies if exams are retaken during such periods; the regulations and organizational procedures must be outlined. For courses or modules offered only in the winter or summer semester, respectively, only one is available within the four semesters of the master’s program (because the other winter or summer semester is necessarily occupied by the internship semester

15), which leads to delays, particularly in the event of a retake, and should therefore be avoided. The same applies mutatis mutandis to the prerequisites for module participation, which can disrupt the schedule even more significantly in the event that a failed module must be retaken than in non-teacher training programs.

Organizational measures: The university must, through appropriate organizational

20 Measures must ensure that the aforementioned legal and practical requirements for the feasibility of the program can be met. While there is considerable leeway here, the effectiveness of the structures must be demonstrable in concrete terms. When developing study programs and regulations, the needs of teacher education must be competently taken into account, especially since they often result in stricter regulations than those for the corresponding subject-specific degree program due to the requirements outlined above

25, the KMK guidelines often result in stricter regulations than those for the corresponding subject-specific degree program. In particular, this requires awareness, sensitivity, and understanding of the concerns of teacher education among those responsible for quality management (QM) or the development of study programs and regulations.

In addition, there are other specific situations that, in the view of the Accreditation Council, 30, which may lead to issues regarding the feasibility of the program, but over which the universities have only limited influence. These should be addressed in the context of relevant working groups of the HRK and KMK:

- Shifts in curriculum design that move training content from the first to the second phase of teacher education, including 35 including, where applicable, subject-specific didactics components, so that degree programs in the first phase of training do not, in individual cases, reach the specified number of credit points.

- Incompatibility when changing universities, particularly between federal states due to differing curricular standards, and consequently
- challenges in the application of the Lisbon Convention in recognition procedures following a transfer between German universities.

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2.4 Practical training phases

A separate point that must already be addressed in the model analysis is the consideration of practical phases and the preparatory service or teaching internship in the accreditation process. Here, there may be differing requirements regarding the

10-week practical semester on the part of the university and the school, or the practical school training involving institutions of the so-called second phase (which varies by federal state: teacher training seminars, centers for practical teacher training, etc.). Furthermore, different state-specific requirements also apply here.

Particular attention should be paid to teacher education programs that credit the preparatory service pursuant to § 8

15(5) MRVO and thus shorten the university training component to 240 ECTS credits; such models are found primarily in elementary school teacher education. This involves incorporating the teaching internship into the master's degree: In some federal states, particularly in primary school teacher education, the number of credit points in the first phase at the university does not meet the

20 Requirement of a total of 300 credit points for a master's degree. For example, in Baden-Württemberg, only 60 credit points can be earned in the one-year master's program for elementary school teaching. The master's degree is awarded after 12 months of preparatory service through the crediting of 60 ECTS credits and then qualifies the holder to pursue a doctorate. The 60 credit points "missing" for a master's degree are thus

25 automatically earned upon successful completion of two-thirds of the teaching internship—without the involvement of universities or their faculty. In Bavaria, by contrast, all teacher training programs for general education schools are completed with the first state examination; for a master's degree, additional credit points (e.g., 90 CP for elementary school teaching or 30 CP for high school teaching) must then be earned at the university

. In addition to the salary grade in the teaching profession, eligibility for a doctorate also depends on the acquisition of 300 credit points at the university.

In the accreditation process, such models pose a challenge to the comparability of elementary school teacher education programs, since the review can only examine and evaluate the university-based components or the actual program components. In the

35 the institution's self-report, the entire training model must nevertheless be presented in order to

ensure transparent information for the evaluators. This also includes a description of the training formats and examination procedures agreed upon by the universities and the institutions of the second training phase, based on the

state-specific qualification framework. Ideally, the universities will also take this phase of training into account in their quality assurance measures, e.g., in graduate surveys. Corresponding data protection regulations for this would need to be established in the states.

The evaluators in the accreditation process have the opportunity to

10 The higher education institution should incorporate this aspect of quality assurance for this phase of training into its evaluation of the degree program. The agencies, for their part, are requested to explain the specific structure of the degree program in the audit report when addressing the criterion under § 8 MRVO, provided such a model exists, so that this is also reflected in the accreditation report.

15 Furthermore, consideration should be given to how the internship phases, as prescribed by the respective state guidelines, are structured and how students are supported during these phases. This includes, in particular, internal university cooperation between central institutions (Center for Teacher Education, School of Education, or similar) and teaching in the subject areas and educational sciences. In this context, it is important to illustrate the location-specific

20 distribution of responsibilities in the supervision of practical phases. Since such centers have only been established at many universities in recent years, it is helpful for accreditation not only to learn which new structures have been established, but also how the new structures have impacted operations, how collaboration has developed, what improvements but also problems have resulted from them, and

how further development is planned. It should be noted that at many institutions, the evaluation apparently fails to capture precisely this dynamic: both from the students' perspective and from that of the departments or faculties.

In addition to the number and scope of internships—and thus the associated workload—the following criteria can play an important role in quality assessment:

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- Supervision of internships: Are students supervised during their internship by university staff, by members of teacher training seminars or supervisors from the second phase, and/or by school teachers, or are they not supervised at all? In the case of university staff, a distinction should be made between academic/research staff and those specifically assigned to the university
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- insofar as the latter are employed solely for teaching duties. Furthermore, when assessing quality, the

training of supervising teachers at schools be included; for example, is regular participation in the university's mentor workshops or continuing education courses mandatory before beginning supervisory duties, or are these even offered?

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- Successful completion of internships: Are there requirements for passing an internship that go beyond mere attendance, or is it possible to fail an internship, and what are the consequences (retaking the internship, number of allowed retakes, withdrawal from the program, ...)?
 - Bridging the Gap Between Academia and Practice: How Can the Academic Content of a Degree Program Be Linked to
- 10 teaching and learning in the internship? And how do experiences from the internships feed back into academic work (e.g., master's theses)?

2.5 Internationalization

Internationalization is weighted differently in teacher education; for example,

15 in modern foreign languages, there are precise guidelines on how and to what extent study abroad periods must be completed. School pedagogy, on the other hand, is traditionally oriented toward the nation-state, and it is repeatedly pointed out that training must be aligned with the conditions of the national school system. This cannot be denied.

20 On the other hand, however, it can also be observed that school research has increasingly taken on an international focus in recent years. This applies not only to large-scale studies of school achievement and research on school systems, but also increasingly to (subject) didactic research as well as to research on professionalization, transfer, and implementation—which has gained prominence in recent years—including both quantitative

25 as well as qualitative studies and those employing mixed-method designs in light of the complexity of the field of schools and education. Consequently, it has also become common in teaching to address issues of schools, instruction, teaching, and learning, as well as the societal and systemic conditions, when examining problems, innovations, and solutions in other

30 education systems. Internationalization is thus not merely a matter of relocating practical training phases abroad, but also a matter of the academic perspective in which practical experiences are embedded and reflected upon in order to develop a professional habitus as a teacher.¹⁰

¹⁰ Furthermore, it must be taken into account that the integration of internationalization windows into teacher education at universities faces particular logistical and, in particular, time-related challenges precisely because of the complex study conditions involving two subjects—educational sciences and the respective state guidelines for the organization of practical training phases. The Accreditation Council

The implementation and accreditation of teacher education programs offering double degrees or joint degrees pose a particular challenge due to country-specific regulations. For the development of such programs and the accreditation process, it is recommended that education policymakers from

5. It is recommended that stakeholders explore options for flexibly adapting the respective country-specific requirements and coordinate any challenges in the process or regarding accreditation criteria with the Accreditation Council and the involved agency at an early stage.

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2.6 Cross-Curricular Tasks

The evaluation should also address the implementation of cross-cutting tasks in a university's teacher education program. In doing so, it should be clarified how current cross-cutting tasks—beyond subject-specific, subject-didactic, and educational science competencies

- 15 existing tasks—such as inclusion, but also intercultural learning, media literacy, education for sustainable development, German as a second language, and the challenges of digitalization—are currently being addressed in teacher education.¹¹

3 System Accreditation / Alternative Procedures

20 3.1 Model: Structure and Quality Assurance in Teacher Education

In the system accreditation process, the overall model of teacher education and its place within the university's profile must be presented. It must also be clear how the quality assurance system takes into account the specific characteristics of teacher education; this is reviewed during the evaluation. A restriction to individual subjects within the

- 25 teacher education sample is not sufficient.

wishes to encourage universities to propose creative and bold solutions in this regard and to explain how they address this issue while taking into account the diverse interests of students—namely, avoiding unnecessary delays in their studies while still integrating international perspectives into their education. This applies not only to the organization of study abroad programs but also to their integration into the subsequent course of study at the German university, the recognition of academic and practical experiences abroad, as well as the promotion and support of processing these experiences, e.g., in the context of theses.

¹¹ Reference is also made here to the various recommendations of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, e.g., on “Teaching and Learning in the Digital World” (Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs dated December 9, 2021). On the topic of inclusion, see also: “Teacher Education for a School of Diversity. Joint Recommendation of the German Rectors’ Conference and the Conference of Ministers of Education. Resolution of the Conference of Ministers of Education dated March 12, 2015 / Resolution of the German Rectors’ Conference dated March 18, 2015.”

Incidentally, the same criteria apply to the internal accreditation procedures for teacher education programs at system-accredited universities as to the external program accreditation of such programs; no further differentiation is necessary here. However, the different practices of teacher-training universities regarding

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The institutional requirements for quality assurance in teacher education must be clarified. This concerns, in particular, the description of how teacher education centers or comparable structures (e.g., schools of education) are integrated into the

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Specific requirements for the implementation of internal procedures or the preparation for accreditation may arise, in particular, from the interaction between the Center for Teacher Education (or corresponding institutions) and the other actors responsible for quality management. Whether and what role the Center for Teacher Education can play, for example as the lead

15 institution, also depends on its specific tasks and responsibilities with regard to the degree programs to be accredited, which generally arise from state law and/or the university statutes.

In Alternatives Methods are first the relevant guidelines of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs and the state-specific requirements for teacher training

20 . In the preliminary consultation with the Accreditation Council Foundation pursuant to Section 3(1) of the Rules of Procedure for Alternative Accreditation Procedures (VoAAv), the consideration of teacher education in the Alternative Procedure must be addressed separately. When seeking approval from the competent Ministry of Science to conduct the Alternative Procedure, explicit reference must also be made to

25 teacher training, as well as in the application for approval to be submitted to the Accreditation Council. The Alternative Procedure must, as a matter of principle, take into account the approval requirements of state and church authorities in the accreditation of teacher training programs in a manner analogous to program and system accreditation; at the same time, the institution of higher education should retain the freedom to design the Alternative Procedure

30 can leverage their teacher training, for example by implementing project-based, cross-school-type or cross-subject, ongoing quality circles instead of situational accreditation packages. The consultation with the Accreditation Council, to which the relevant Ministry of Education and the relevant Ministry of Schools may be invited, can serve to discuss challenges in addressing

35 teacher education in the run-up to the evaluation of the alternative procedure.

3.2 Sample

It is recommended that the sample intended for teacher education programs pursuant to § 31(3) MRVO focus in particular on specific characteristics in order to meet the requirement of considering the overall model of teacher education in the evaluation.

- 5 The subject of these samples could include, in particular, the integration between the training phases as well as between subject-specific didactics, subject-specific academic training, and educational science training; the function of teacher training centers or schools of education; practical training phases during the program; and the opportunity to participate in study abroad programs.
- 10 In addition, the provision under Section 31(3) MRVO must be taken into account, namely that one degree program from each type of teaching qualification offered must be included in the sample. In doing so, combined degree programs and a selection of their associated sub-programs should be examined as representative examples where possible.

15 3.3 Profile of the Reviewers

In addition to the remarks in section 2.2, it is strongly recommended that the panel of reviewers include individuals with a background in teacher education, i.e., that there should be a sufficient level of expertise in teacher education. This can be demonstrated, for example, through experience in teaching, academic studies, or committee work in the field

- 20 teacher education at the university.

4 Facilities and Quality Development

4.1 Facilities and Connection of Subject-Specific Pedagogy, subject-specific research and educational sciences

- 25 In recent years, partly due to the accreditation of teacher education programs, subject didactics at universities has gained greater prominence. This positive development is to be welcomed. Consequently, the accreditation process can now focus more strongly on the integration of subject didactics, educational sciences, and subject-specific disciplines in teacher education programs.
- 30 This applies both to the integration of specific issues addressed across all program tracks (e.g., questions of assessment and competency evaluation, classroom organization, the incorporation of instructional innovations into school development, and the integration of current challenges such as inclusion, German as

a second language, intercultural education, and digitalization) as well as cooperation structures, formats for exchange and coordination, and decision-making processes to address the integration of new challenges, conflicts, etc. This also includes defining the respective identity of the sub-programs and ensuring transparency

- 5 of responsibilities, so that students do not experience their studies as a disparate field, but rather as a degree program with distinct areas and requirements. Certainly, for many universities, this is a developmental task in which one can be “on the way.” And that is precisely what should be illustrated.
- 10 Universities are therefore asked to illustrate this connection between the various sub-programs using examples they consider meaningful; in doing so, they should address established structures as well as established collaborations and ongoing development tasks. This also applies to the qualifications of the teaching staff, particularly in subject-specific pedagogy. Here, it is important to demonstrate to what extent teaching
- 15 is anchored at the faculty level and to what extent this teaching is integrated into academic research, rather than being provided exclusively by lecturers or seconded teachers (with heavy teaching loads) from school practice or the second phase of teacher training who do not themselves engage in academic research.

Despite the growing prestige of subject-specific pedagogy, these departments are often not

20. The requirement that teaching be carried out primarily by full-time academic staff with responsibilities in both teaching and research—particularly professors—must also be met in subject didactics. This does not constitute a blanket rejection of the use of adjunct instructors or teachers for special assignments, provided that this serves the practical relevance
- 25 of subject-specific didactics, for example by employing schoolteachers in higher education on a part-time or temporary basis while they continue their professional careers. However, a professorial affiliation is indispensable to ensure research in the field of subject-specific didactics. In particular at universities, the representation of subject-specific didactics should be ensured through dedicated professorships.

30

4.2 Evaluations

Evaluations are essential elements of quality development. In the context of teacher education, however, they have some distinctive features, such as in the case of course evaluations: In the evaluation of courses that are designed to be polyvalent

- 35 , i.e., those attended by both students of the subject disciplines and teacher education students, the question arises regarding how to distinguish the evaluation of the two

student groups. It should also be examined to what extent the specific requirements of teacher education are sufficiently taken into account in the course evaluations.

Course evaluations alone, however, are not in themselves a sufficient tool for assessing program quality. In addition, tools should be used

- 5 that measure the quality of degree programs at different levels and at different points in time, such as student and faculty surveys conducted throughout the course of study, surveys of graduates, or studies on specific issues, such as workload, internationalization, and others. Furthermore, it is essential to use different
- 10 methodological approaches and not rely exclusively on standardized assessment tools. It is also desirable that quality assurance not only adopt an internal disciplinary perspective, but also take into account cross-disciplinary elements and thus the functioning of the teacher education model as a whole, such as the collaboration between different institutions and stakeholders in
- 15 teacher education.

Particularly with regard to issues of employability, special attention should be paid to conducting evaluations of degree programs at different points in time. For example, surveys of graduates reveal, depending on the timing of the survey, sometimes significant differences in the retrospective evaluation of

- 20 degree programs and the transition into the profession, which suggest nuanced conclusions regarding the design of the degree programs.

4.3 Colleges of Art and Music

With regard to art and music colleges¹², for single-major or double-major

- 25 In degree programs such as those offered in some federal states, care must be taken to ensure that educational sciences are adequately represented as independent fields of teaching and research. Compliance with minimum standards is expected in this regard, which also includes staffing levels in educational sciences. To meet these requirements, however, collaborations with state universities that maintain the necessary
- 30 resources. Such collaborations would need to be documented in the accreditation process.

¹² The same applies to sports universities.

4.4 Teacher training programs at non-state universities

For non-state-run universities that provide training for teaching at general education schools as defined in Chapter 1¹³, the criteria specified in the Model Statutory Ordinance, including the state-specific structural

5 requirements pursuant to Section 13(2), shall apply.

In the case of other teacher education programs that do not qualify for teacher training at public schools, all criteria listed in the MRVO continue to apply, though without taking into account the requirements for public school teaching positions pursuant to § 13(2) MRVO.

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4.5 Teacher Training and Teaching in the Field of Waldorf Education

The bachelor's and master's degree programs in Waldorf-specific teacher training at state-recognized universities must, in principle, be guided by the requirements of the Model Statutory Ordinance during the accreditation process. When accrediting these programs,

15 care must be taken, on the one hand, to ensure that sufficient space is given to the content-related and methodological particularities of Waldorf education, and on the other hand, that educational science competencies and knowledge are also imparted to a sufficient degree to allow for and promote discourse with educational science as a whole. Furthermore, for reasons of quality assurance, the awarding of academic

s in cooperation with non-academic institutions be clearly documented and appropriately reviewed during the accreditation of degree programs.

¹³ For example, church-affiliated colleges in the field of religious education.