

Resolution of the
Senate of the HRK
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Lateral and cross-sector entry into teaching

HRK German Rectors' Conference

The Voice of the Universities

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Cross-sector and lateral entry into teaching: Academic standards are non-negotiable

1. There is expected to be a shortfall of 32,000 teachers between 2020 and 2025

The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) predicts a shortfall of approximately 32,000 teachers between 2020 and 2025. This is to be remedied with cross-sector entry into school-based teacher training and lateral entry directly into school teaching. The qualification of cross-sector and lateral entry is not governed by binding rules. Academic educational institutions are not systematically included in the qualification process. However, adequate post-qualification of cross-sector and lateral entrants is not feasible without the involvement of universities and other higher education institutions offering teacher education under any circumstances, even if it can be done at a high level on account of the experience and dedication of cross-sector and lateral entrants.

The performance of academically educated teachers in education and subject-related didactics has become evident during the suspension of regular teaching due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Society is becoming painfully aware that competent educational services that go beyond the transfer of knowledge are not only necessary, but also possible under modified circumstances.

The Gesellschaft für Fachdidaktik e.V. (GFD) is calling for guidelines on the development of supplementary professionalisation pathways based on academically founded concepts. Universities and other higher education institutions offering teacher education emphatically support this. They need to have sufficient staff and material resources in order to re-train lateral and cross-sector entrants, and to provide existing teachers with further and continuing education, as well as to train prospective teachers in line with the state of the art.

2. Basing qualification on academically founded concepts

In the **first phase** of teacher education, the knowledge-based establishment¹ of professional competence and its initial knowledge-based application in a classroom setting (practical placement) take place. In the **second phase**, teacher education institutions and the stage of school-based teacher training, serve to implement and routinise the skills acquired in theoretical studies for the purpose of developing expertise. The combination of the two phases facilitates skills and personal development, creating a foundation for teachers to develop strategies for handling precarious social situations and to put them into practice in educational work. The **third phase** of teacher training, specifically the further and continu-

¹ Example of knowledge-based foundation: A primary school teacher for the first two school years is responsible for assisting pupils with reading and writing acquisition. Children cannot be provided with personalised support without knowledge of linguistic and developmental principles and without knowledge of findings on the effectiveness of teaching measures: It must be determined whether children are still having difficulties with phonetic transcription or there are issues due to poor morphological strategy. The linguistic basics must be mastered before this can be diagnosed.

ing education of teachers, also draws on academically founded concepts. Updating the academic foundation ensures competent educational services in changing circumstances.

3. Technical consequences for the qualification of cross-sector and lateral entrants

Post-qualification for cross-sector and lateral entry is common practice in the **second phase**. It **fails** to adequately address the academic challenges of the skills and personal development of teachers. **Every** type of post-qualification must draw on the expertise of university teacher education in order to prevent teaching from becoming non-academic. Academic post-qualification concerns the elements of teacher education related to subject matter, subject-specific didactics and educational science.

- a) Complementary academic studies must not fall short of what is required for undergraduate studies.
- b) Post-qualification in subject-specific didactics is often ignored and academic study is often replaced with mentoring by experienced teachers. However, knowledge gained through experience alone, in the absence of an academic background, cannot result in professional knowledge that can be brought up to date over a lifetime.
- c) In the case of post-qualification in educational science, teacher training institutions and/or teacher education institutions of the federal states replace the academic basis at universities and other higher education institutions offering teacher education. The same is true for the educational science disciplines of General Education, School Education, Pedagogical Psychology and Developmental and Educational Psychology.

The fostering of general career-related skills, such as communication skills, the ability to work in a team, critical thinking and reflection skills, are just as much a key component of the skills and personal development of teachers as the reflective examination of one's own attitudes and convictions. Cross-sector and lateral entrants have these skills in a specific form thanks to their prior experience, however they require differentiation by school type. Exchange at this level is a starting point for analysing academically founded concepts and for their further development.

4. Developing supplementary professionalisation pathways under the responsibility and as a task of universities

The performance of academically trained teachers in education and subject-specific didactics lays the groundwork for the performance of our society. Universities should be given the authority and resources to systematically combine the teaching degree programme, the post-qualification of cross-sector and lateral entrants, and the further and continuing education of teachers. This will make it possible to link the **three phases** of teacher education in a more targeted manner. The qualification of heads of (specialist) teacher education institutions for the stage of school-based teacher training plays a key role in this.

Guidelines on the development of supplementary professionalisation pathways standardise and systematise integration and continuing education measures for cross-sector and lateral entrants, and ensure that the concepts underlying qualification are knowledge-based. The pooling of activities creates synergies between all participants in teacher education, combining resources and expertise in an effective manner.

5. Summary

Knowledge-oriented and evidence-based professionalisation is crucial to ensure that the potential of those entering the teaching profession laterally or from a different sector can be effectively harnessed in order to enhance all teachers' perception of themselves and their role. Universities must therefore play a key role in teacher education for the qualification, post-qualification, and further and continuing education of teachers. Creating a "further education limbo" will result in quality and acceptance issues and "second-class teachers" with unequal status, pay and career prospects. Quality-controlled teacher education with high academic standards is key to guaranteeing equal opportunities for the next generation, regardless of how they enter the academically founded teaching profession.