Institutions, level and models of training

Pre-primary teachers

Initial training of pre-primary teachers (Bachelor in Social Education) takes place at one of six university colleges in Denmark. The university colleges are independent institutions under public administration. The colleges provide professional bachelor education programmes with regional geographical coverage as well as continuing and further education in connection with these programmes.

The pre-primary teacher programme follows a concurrent model, i.e. a single programme in which students combine general education with theoretical and practical professional teaching.

The education programme lasts 3.5 years amounting to 210 ECTS credits. It consists of two parts: A common part that focus on basic professional competences and a specialization part. In both parts, the students must receive practical training at relevant institutions. It is a full-time programme. Hence, the students on average spend 37 hours a week studying. There are four periods of practical training during the programme. The total programme’s practical training amounts to one year and three months.

Teachers in primary and lower secondary school

Initial training of teachers in primary and lower secondary school (Bachelor of Education) takes place at six university colleges in Denmark.

The teacher education programme follows a concurrent model, i.e. a single programme in which students combine general education with theoretical and practical professional teaching.

The teacher education programme is a four-year programme amounting to 240 ECTS credits. It is a full-time programme. Hence, the students are expected to spend 37 hours a week studying on average. The programme consists of four main elements:

- The teacher’s foundational competences (60 ECTS credits)
- Main subjects (140 ECTS credits)
- Teaching practice (30 ECTS credits)
- Bachelor project (10 ECTS credits)

The structure of the teacher programme allows for the substitution of up to 20 ECTS points from the main subjects by placing them under “the teacher’s foundational competences” and/or the “Bachelor of education project” (see table above). This is to accommodate different kinds of teacher
profiles/specialisations. Irrespective of this, the total number of ECTS points in the teacher-training programme is always exactly 240 ECTS points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Basis</th>
<th>Flexibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers' fundamental comp.</td>
<td>60 ETCS credits</td>
<td>Up to 80 ETCS Credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Subjects</td>
<td>140 ETCS credits</td>
<td>Down to 120 ETCS Credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor Project</td>
<td>10 ETCS credits</td>
<td>Up to 20 ETCS Credits</td>
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</table>

**Teachers in general upper secondary education**

Initial training of teachers at upper secondary level (STX, HF, HHX and HTX) takes place at the universities. The students have to complete a three-year undergraduate programme as well as a two-year postgraduate programme.

The teacher programme for upper secondary education follows a consecutive model, which means that the students first undertake general theoretical education at the university to obtain a degree in their chosen subject followed by a programme of professional postgraduate teacher training aimed at teachers in upper secondary education (Pædagogikum).

**Admission requirements**

Admission to higher education programmes is coordinated by the Coordinated Admission (KOT) and is regulated by law. Regulations provide the entry requirements for the programmes. In most cases, the students must have an upper secondary school leaving certificate in order to apply. Students are admitted to bachelor programmes based on two quotas:

Quota 1 admissions are allocated according to the grade point average of an upper secondary education. The deadline for applications is early July. The specific date is published every year. Quota 2 admissions are allocated after an individual and specific evaluation of the application and depends on criteria set by each education institution. The deadline for application is mid-March. The applicants receive a decision letter by the end of July.

**Pre-primary teachers**

In order to be admitted to the pre-primary teacher programme (Bachelor in Social Education) students must have completed one of the following education programmes or subjects:

- An upper secondary education (a general upper secondary education, a higher preparatory examination, a higher commercial examination or a higher technical examination). A social and healthcare training programme, including C-level Danish, C-level Science and D-level English
- The basic educational training programme (PGU), including C-level Danish, C-level social science and E-level English
- Four individual subjects at upper secondary level: A-level Danish, B-level English, C-level social science and an elective subject at C-level

Applicants who based on an evaluation of prior learning, have qualifications that are equivalent to the admission requirements outlined above can also apply. The different university colleges can have different requirements regarding grade point average.
Teachers in primary and lower secondary school

Admission into the teacher education programme is conditioned by the eligibility of the applicant, involving both educational prerequisites and minimum grade point average requirements. For some applicants a passed entrance exam might be required.

Applicants wanting to attend the bachelor’s degree programme in Education must have completed an upper secondary education (a general upper secondary education, a higher preparatory examination, a higher commercial examination or a higher technical examination) or an equivalent education. The institution can allow the applicant to seek admission on a basis other than the established admission requirements if after an assessment of prior qualifications, the applicant is found to have academic qualifications that are comparable to the established requirements, and if the institution assesses that the applicant will be able to complete the education programme.

Applicants that fulfil the educational prerequisites will be eligible for admission into the teacher education programme through one of two selection processes:

First, available study places will be reserved for applicants who have achieved a grade point average (GPA) of at least 7.0 (‘C’ on the ECTS scale) from their qualifying upper secondary education. The available study places will be offered to applicants based on their GPA from high to low.

Second, any remaining study places will be granted to applicants based on an entrance examination. The entrance exam is based on two interviews. The first interview focus on the applicants’ motivation for becoming a teacher while the second interview focus on the applicants’ ability to read and analyse professional texts. The exam tests the applicants’ performance in the following dimensions:

- Motivation
- Analytical capacity
- Cooperation and personal integrity
- Communicative ability
- Ethical capacity
- Understanding of professional texts

The applicant is given between 1 and 7 points in each of the six dimensions, with 1 being a poor performance and 7 being an outstanding performance. An applicant must score at least a total of 30 points to become eligible for an available study place. An applicant who scores below 30 is rejected and can apply again the following year. Available study places are offered to applicants based on their total score from high to low.

Teachers in general upper secondary education

The students have to fulfil the requirements for a university undergraduate degree as well as the requirements for a university postgraduate degree. The specific requirements varies from education to education. In order to teach at the upper secondary education institutions, graduates must also complete the professional postgraduate teacher training (Pædagogikum). The admission criteria for the postgraduate teacher training states that the applicant must have a university degree in at least one of the subjects that is a part of the curriculum in the general upper secondary education. Furthermore the applicant must be employed at an upper secondary education institution, the
Curriculum, level of specialisation and learning outcomes

Pre-primary teachers

The programme lasts 3½ years, amounting to 210 ECTS credits, and consists of two parts: a common part on basic professional competences and a specialisation part.

The specialisation part, which is 140 ECTS credits, contains specialization courses, an interprofessional course, four practicum periods, and a BA project. The student must choose and commence one of the following three areas within the specialization part:

- Day care education, aimed at pedagogical work with children aged 0-5
- School and leisure education, aimed at pedagogical work with school children and young people aged 6-18
- Social and special education, aimed at pedagogical work with children and young people with special needs and people with physical or mental disabilities or social problems

The student acquires competences to participate in and lead developmental processes within the chosen competence area:

1. Creative expression
2. Nature and outdoor life
3. Healthcare and physical stimulation
4. Media and digital culture
5. Cultural projects and cultural entrepreneurship
6. Social innovation and entrepreneurship
7. Cultural encounters and intercultural relations

Each education institution draws up a curriculum formulating the key requirements of the programme’s content and structure. The Ministry of Higher Education and Science is obliged to supervise the educational institutions with respect to both the education and training programmes and the institution’s finances.

Teachers in primary and lower secondary school

The Bachelor’s Degree Programme in Education last four years and amounts to 240 ECTS credits. It consists of the following four main elements:

- The teacher’s foundational competences (60 ECTS credits)
- Main subjects (140 ECTS credits)
- Teaching practice (30 ECTS credits)
- Bachelor of education project (10 ECTS credits)

There is no standard curriculum defining the content of the teacher education programme. Instead, the programme is centrally defined through output-based areas of competence, each constituted by a
number of practice oriented skills and corresponding knowledge objectives. The university colleges are therefore responsible for creating a curriculum that meets the requirements of output-based areas of competence.

The teacher’s foundational competences

This part of the education programme is mandatory for all students; however, there is a possibility for different kinds of profiles and specialisations.

The teacher’s foundational competences consists of two clusters: “Pedagogy and the teaching profession” and “general education”.

The cluster “pedagogy and the teaching profession” develops the students’ fundamental teaching competences that is needed to ensure the pupils’ learning, development and well-being. It consists of four areas of competence:

- Pupils’ learning and development
- General teaching proficiency
- Special needs and remedial training
- Danish as a second language

“The general education” prepares the student for implementing the mission statement of the Danish school system: to develop professional ethics and to deal with complex challenges within the teaching profession in the context of cultural, value-based and religious pluralism. It consists of one area of competence:

- Studies of Christianity/ philosophy of life/ citizenship (KLM)

Main subjects

The main subjects provide the student with subject-specific knowledge and skills. They constitute the student’s primary areas of teaching. The student is expected to be qualified to teach at least two main subjects, with three main subjects being the norm. A student with only two main subjects is expected to have significant specialised knowledge of their chosen subjects. All main subjects in the education programme correspond directly to the core subjects taught in Danish schools. The students choose their main subjects among the following options:

- Art
- Biology
- Studies of Christianity and other religions
- Crafts & design
- Danish (1st – 6th grade)
- Danish (4th – 10th grade)
- English (1st – 6th grade)
- English (4th – 10th grade)
- French
• Geography
• German
• History
• Mathematics (1st - 6th grade)
• Mathematics (4th - 10th grade)
• Music
• Natural science/ technology
• Nutrition knowledge (home economics/ domestic science)
• Physical education (1st - 6th grade)
• Physical education (4th - 10th grade)
• Physics/ chemistry
• Social studies

All main subjects are based on subject specific knowledge, didactics and pedagogy. In addition, the main subjects each include subject specific knowledge and skill objectives aimed at inclusion, information- and communication technology as a teaching tool, teaching bilingual pupils, innovation and cross-professional cooperation.

In addition to the four main elements, the students can sign up for voluntary classes relating to the following aspects:

• Road safety education as well as first aid
• Health and sex education
• Education and job
• Music
• Writing and rhetoric

**Teachers in general upper secondary education**

To teach in upper secondary education, the students must first gain a university degree in their chosen subject and then complete a programme of postgraduate teacher training (Pædagogikum).

The professional postgraduate teacher training consists of a theoretical part and a practical part and last a year. The theoretical part of the postgraduate teacher training consists of both pedagogical courses and courses regarding professional didactics. The practical part of the programme provides the candidates with an insight into and a routine in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the teaching.

**Teacher educators**

**Pre-primary teachers**

The pre-primary teacher programme is a professional bachelor programme. The teaching staff of the programme as a whole must have a level of qualification that is higher than that of the final level of
By level of qualification is meant educational competence and documented theoretical, academic and/or professional competence.

A teacher at a pre-primary teacher programme is usually appointed as an assistant lecturer. After four years of employment teachers appointed to positions as assistant lecturer must have acquired the necessary qualifications for transferring to the position of associate lecturer. An academic assessment committee appointed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science assesses the lecturer’s qualifications. Should approval as senior lecturer fail to be granted, the teacher then have the opportunity to continue in the same position for two more years. If the approval is not granted after the two extra years, the teacher is dismissed.

**Teachers in primary and lower secondary school**

The Bachelor of Education programme for primary and lower secondary school teachers is a professional bachelor programme. The teaching staff of the programme as a whole must have a level of qualification that is higher than that of the final level of the programme.

By level of qualification is meant educational competence and documented theoretical, academic and/or professional competence.

Teachers at the teacher education programme will typically have a university degree at Master’s level that is relevant for the teaching profession or teacher education supplement by relevant in-service training. An increasing number of teachers also have Ph.D. qualifications.

A teacher at a primary and lower secondary school programme is usually appointed as an assistant lecturer. After four years of employment teachers appointed to positions as assistant lecturer must have acquired the necessary qualifications for transferring to the position of associate lecturer. An academic assessment committee appointed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science assesses the lecturer’s qualifications. Should approval as senior lecturer fail to be granted, the teacher then have the opportunity to continue in the same position for two more years. If the approval is not granted after the two extra years, the teacher is then dismissed.

**Teachers in general upper secondary education**

Please see section 9.4 Initial Education for Academic Staff in Higher Education [1]

**Qualifications, evaluations and certificates**

**Pre-primary teachers**

In terms of qualifications, the programme is to provide professional qualifications for working with development and care assignments within the following areas:

- Children and young people (including working in day nurseries, day-care centres, pre-school classes, recreating centres/school-based leisure time facilities, after school clubs, 24-hour service institutions).

- Institutions for children, young people and adults with reduced psychological or physical capacities, adults with social problems (homelessness, substance abuse and mental disorders), family institutions and child and youth psychiatric hospitals.

- Additionally, the education provides qualifications for working in the field of crime prevention in, for example, neighbourhoods as well as working within the Prison and Probation Service.
The programme provides students with the foundation for further education and training, for example in a range of educational diploma programmes within psychology, educational work, social psychiatry, social work, special needs and youth education.

In terms of evaluation, the assessment of the practical training periods is on a passed/failed basis. The education institution assessment is based on recommendations from the faculty of the institution as well as the staff of the institution where the practical training took place.

Examinations in different subjects can be written, oral and practical, or a combination of these forms. Depending on the subject the examination can either be conducted with an extern or intern marking. The bachelor project for the programme is assessed at an external oral examination at the end of the programme. Marks are giving according to a 7-point grading scale, with marks between -3 and 12. All examinations are in Danish. However, it is possible for the examinations to be in Swedish, Norwegian or English, unless the aim of the examination is to document the student’s skills in Danish. The Ministry of Higher Education and Science appoints external examiners that participate in the assessment of the student’s performance. The overall purpose of the external examiners is to ensure that the exams are in accordance with the set academic objectives and the criteria for achieving them, and that the students receive uniform and fair treatment at the exam.

**Teachers in primary and lower secondary school**

In terms of qualifications, the objective of the Bachelor’s Degree programme in Education is to educate teachers for the primary and lower secondary school and to provide a basis for continued professional development.

The provision governing the education of teachers in primary and lower secondary education states that the purpose of the programme is to provide the students with the knowledge and skills that are necessary in order to function as a professional, didactically and pedagogically competent teacher.

The programme provides a general qualification for teaching in the primary and lower secondary school. However, from 2020, the goal is for teachers to teach their main subjects only.

The examinations can take on a number of different forms. The study programme lists the specific examination mode(s) for each subject. Most examinations are conducted with an external examiner. All examinations in competence objectives are graded on the Danish 7-point grading scale.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Science appoints external examiners that participate in the assessment of the student’s performance. The overall purpose of the external examiners is to ensure that the exams are in accordance with the set academic objectives and the criteria for achieving them, and that the students receive uniform and fair treatment at the exam.

**Teachers in general upper secondary education**

In order to obtain permanent appointment, teachers in general upper secondary education are required to have a master's degree, normally in two subjects (major and minor) and to have completed a 1-year (60 ECTS credits) professional postgraduate teacher training (pædagogikum) subsequent to their appointment at the school.

Teaching specialised subjects in the HHX and HTX programmes is possible without holding a master's degree if the teacher has completed at least 3½ years of higher education at an engineering college, a business school or a university followed by professionally qualifying employment and/or further education. In each subject, the HHX/HTX teacher must have a professional level at least corresponding to 90 ECTS credits of university education.
Alternative training pathways

The merit-teacher education: an alternative pathway to being a teacher in primary and lower secondary school

The merit-teacher programme offer an alternative pathway to achieve teacher qualification in the primary and lower secondary school.

The merit-teacher programme is for students who have previous vocational work experience and/ or a higher education degree within a different field of study. The student receives study credits from previous relevant work and/ or studies.

The following criteria determine eligibility for the programme:

- The applicant must have completed a Master’s, Bachelor’s or Professional Bachelor’s degree

Or the applicant fulfils the following criteria:

- Is at least 25 years of age
- Has completed a vocational training programme (at upper secondary level or above)
- Has at least two years of work experience

Applicants can also be accepted to the programme based on an individual evaluation of the applicant’s qualifications and competences.

The merit-teacher education is considered as continued professional development and students are charged a tuition fee.

The merit-teacher programme is a 2.5 year programme corresponding to 150 ECTS credits. The programme consists of the following three main elements:

- Pedagogy and the teaching profession
- 2-4 main subjects
- Teaching practice

The directives concerning modules, exams and competence objectives are the same as for the ordinary teacher education programme.

Teachers in vocational education and training programmes (VET)

The initial education of teachers in vocational education and training programmes does not fall under any of the categories in chapter 9. However, it will briefly be explained.

Teachers who are to teach general subjects must have a level of education that as a minimum is comparable to a bachelor in education or a bachelor’s degree and at least two years of working experience.

Teachers who are to teach specialised subjects must have completed a VET programme in the relevant vocational field and normally hold further education in the same field, such as a short-cycle higher education technician's qualification. Furthermore, they must have a minimum of five years of relevant work experience.
All VET teachers are required to have at least two years of relevant work experience. If they have not already taken a teacher training course, they must also complete a Diploma of Vocational Pedagogy. The Diploma of Vocational Pedagogy is a one-year education corresponding to 60 ECTS credits. It consists of obligatory modules (25 ECTS credits), elective modules (20 ECTS credits) and a final thesis (15 ECTS credits). In general, students will complete one module per six months. The standard time limit of the programme is therefore 3 years.

In addition, VET teachers must have (or acquire within three years of employment) qualifications at vocational upper secondary level including two subjects at the highest level from among the subject areas Danish, foreign languages, natural sciences, social sciences, business economics, marketing and information technology.

References

Bibliography


Legislation and official policy documents


