Initial teacher training for pre-primary teachers and teachers in basic and upper secondary education leads to a teaching qualification at the respective level of education or teaching.

Initial teacher training aims at providing candidates in the profession with basic scientific, technical and pedagogical skills and know-how so that they may embark upon teaching activity with respect to the following dimensions: professional and ethical competences; developing teaching and learning; taking part in school life and relating to the community; and lifelong learning.

Currently, Decree-Law no. 79/2014, 14th May [1], amended by Declaration of Rectification no. 32/2014, 27th June [2], determines that a professional teaching qualification is essential to teach in public, private and cooperative education and teaching establishments that provide pre-school, basic and upper secondary education. The same qualification level is demanded for all teachers – Master’s degree – in conformity with the principle adopted when changes were made in 1997 to the Fundamental Law on the Educational System [3].

For teachers recruited for special education purposes, in conformity with Ruling 212/2009, 23rd February [4], it is necessary to have a teaching qualification in any other recruitment group plus specialised training in the area of Special Education according to the terms foreseen by the legal framework of specialised training.

**Institutions, level and models of training**

Initial teacher training for pre-primary teachers and teachers in basic and upper secondary education is the responsibility of universities and polytechnics.

In Portugal, initial training course accreditation is the responsibility of the Agency for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education [5] (Agência de Avaliação e Acreditação do Ensino Superior - A3ES), which is subject to private law and a public utility that boasts scientific and technical, whose core mission is ensuring the quality of higher education in articulation with the Ministry of Education [6].

With the implementation of the Bologna process, two cycles were adopted for initial teacher training courses. Professional teaching qualifications are obtained via attending 2nd cycle (Master’s level) higher education courses according to the terms stipulated by Decree Law no. 79/2014, 14th May [1], amended by Declaration of Rectification no. 32/2014, 27th June [2].

According to this legislation, the purpose of the Master’s is to ensure that a training complement that strengthens and extends academic training, covering the knowledge required for teaching in the content areas and subjects covered by the recruitment group that it aims to prepare students for. The second cycle should also ensure overall educational training, such as specific teaching of the teaching
area, training in the cultural, social and ethics areas and an introduction to professional practice, which culminates with the supervised practice.

Within this context, institutions providing pre-school, basic and upper secondary education have a particular relevance owing to the fact that they are the places in which the trainee’s pre-service teaching practice is perfected – they are the cooperating host schools – and in which the respective cooperating teachers are located.

Higher educational institutions (HEIs) to organise and administer initial teacher-training programmes have to draw up cooperation agreements with schools willing to cooperate in the courses. Such agreements should take into account initial pre-teacher training activities including supervised teaching practice, and research and development in the field of education.

The agreements should specify indications such as:

- Areas of professional teaching qualifications including educational and teaching levels and stages and the respective programmatic areas or subjects in which the supervised teaching practice will take place;

- A description of the school teacher-training supervisors in the area of qualification needed, and eventual advantages obtained by each cooperating school;

- The number of places available to trainees in their particular areas of specialisation;

- The duties, responsibilities and competences of everyone taking part in the process, including the trainees;

- Conditions under which supervised teaching practice is held in the classes given by co-operating school clusters, always in the presence of the co-operating supervisor;

- Conditions allowing the trainees to take part in other activities based on curriculum development and tasks organised outside the classroom, provided that they receive the help of the supervisors;

- Advantages offered the school by the HEI.

It also falls to HEIs to actively take part in enhancing the quality of teaching in the cooperating schools in collaboration with the schools’ respective leadership bodies.

**Admission requirements**

By taking into account the characteristics of the curricula or subjects covered, the type/level of school and the kind of courses offered, it falls to the HEIs to check whether the credits awarded in a particular training area in the Master’s degree courses that provide teaching qualifications match up
with the demands laid down in the specific teaching profiles in each recruitment group.

In order to enrol in one study cycles that will lead to a Master’s degree in General Education (pre-school education, 1st cycle of basic education or a joint qualification for both pre-school education and the 1st cycle of basic education and for the 1st and 2nd cycles of basic education). it is necessary that the future Master's student has a Bachelor degree (Licenciatura), i.e. a first degree in Basic Education.

A graduate may gain access to a Master’s degree course in Education in other fields and at other school levels provided he/she has sat for a Bachelor degree and concludes a certain number of ECTS in a subject area, or ECTS in each of the subject areas covered by the degree. The minimum number of ECTS needed to enroll in these Master's courses varies between 120 and 180:

- When the field covers only one area, 120 ECTS in the teaching area are needed;
- When the field covers two areas, a total of 120 ECTS in the two subject areas are needed, where at least 50 credits have been obtained in each of them;
- When the field covers three areas, a total of 150 ECTS in the three subject areas are needed, where at least 40 credits have been obtained in each of them;
- Concerning the Languages field, a total of 160 ECTS are needed in the two subject areas.

Furthermore, the general condition for enrolling in a Master’s degree in Education is demonstrating mastery in the oral and written form of the Portuguese language.

**Curriculum, level of specialisation and learning outcomes**

Study cycles are organised in the terms and conditions as stipulated in Decree-Law no. 79/2014, 14th May [1], amended by Declaration of Rectification no. 32/2014, 27th June, [2] which includes the teacher-training components listed below. The trainee has to fully comply with the demands made in terms of his/her professional commitment/performance in:

- Teaching area;
- General education area;
- Specific didactics;
- Initiating teaching practice;
- Cultural, social and ethical areas;
- Introduction to professional practice.

Training in the teaching area aims to complement, consolidate and provide in-depth academic training for the knowledge required for teaching in the content areas and the subjects covered by the recruitment group. It also includes greater understanding of matters related to pre-school education and teaching areas, focussing on advanced reasoning, even when the material is basic.

Training in the general education area focusses on the knowledge, abilities and attitudes common to all teachers when exercising their profession in the activity or classroom, in institutions involved in
early childhood education or in schools, and in relation to family and the community. In particular, it involves developmental psychology, cognitive processes, such as those involved in learning to read and elementary mathematics, the curriculum and assessment, the school as an educational organization, special educational needs, as well as classroom organisation and management.

The specific didactics training covers all knowledge, abilities and attitudes related to content areas and the teaching of subjects of the respective recruitment group.

Training in the cultural, social and ethical areas covers:

- Raising awareness of the major problems of the contemporary world, including the core values of the Constitution, freedom of expression and religion and respect for ethnic minorities and gender equality;

- Extension of the areas of knowledge, culture, including scientific culture, the arts and humanities, beyond those of their teaching area;

- Contact with data collection methods and critical analysis of data, hypotheses and theories;

- Awareness of the ethical and civic aspect of teaching.

The introduction to professional practice is organised according to the following principles:

- Involves observation and collaboration in education and teaching situations and supervised practice in the activity or classroom, in early childhood education institutions or schools;

- Offers students experience of planning, teaching and assessment according to the work given to teachers both inside and outside the classroom;

- Undertaken in groups or classes of the different education and teaching levels and cycles covered by the recruitment group which the course prepares students for, and, if necessary, is undertaken in more than one education and teaching establishment, belonging, or not, to the same school cluster or the same body, in the case of private or cooperative education;

- Designed from a training perspective to coordinate knowledge and the way it is transmitted in order to facilitate learning;

- Designed from a professional development perspective for learners, encouraging them to have an attitude geared towards the continuous improvement of student learning.

Supervised practice is a professional-type internship with a final report (according to paragraph b) no. 1 of article 20 of Decree-Law no. 74/2006, 24th March [7], amended by Decree-Law no. 107/2008, 25th June [8], Decree-Law no. 230/2009, 14th September [9] and Decree-Law no.115/2013, 7th August [10]).
Pre-school and the 1st and 2nd cycles of basic education

Anyone who is duly qualified by having sat for his/her first degree - Bachelor in Basic Education - is entitled to a general teaching qualification in pre-school education (early childhood education) and in the 1st and 2nd cycles of basic education. It is possible to obtain a qualification at these levels of education and teaching in four areas which then lead on to a Master’s degree in Education (integrated Master’s Degree) in one of the areas.

There are 180 ECTS in the stages leading to a Bachelor (Licenciatura) degree in Basic Education, where the ECTS credits are divided up in the following way:

- Teaching area – minimum of 125;
- General education area – minimum of 15;
- Specific didactics - minimum of 15;
- Introduction to professional practice - minimum of 15.

Regarding the credits earned after training in the teaching area, the minimum number of ECTS are as follows: 30 credits in Portuguese; 30 credits in Mathematics; 30 credits in Natural Sciences and the History and Geography of Portugal; 30 credits in Expression. ECTS based on cultural, social education and ethics are included in the remaining ECTS.

Exceptionally speaking, there are 90 credits awarded for studies leading to the Master’s degree in Early Childhood Education, are divided up into the following educational components:

- Teaching area – minimum of 6;
- General education area – minimum of 6;
- Specific didactics - minimum of 24;
- Supervised practice - minimum of 39;

The number of credits from the study cycle that confers a Master’s in Education in the 1st cycle of basic education is 90 divided in the following way:

- Teaching area – minimum of 18;
- General education area – minimum of 6;
- Specific didactics - minimum of 21;
- Supervised practice - minimum of 32;

There are 120 ECTS awarded studies leading to the Master's degree in the speciality of Early Childhood Education and the 1st cycle of Basic Education. The credits are divided up into the following components:

- Teaching area – minimum of 18;
- General education area – minimum of 6;
- Specific didactics - minimum of 36;
- Supervised practice - minimum of 48;

There are 120 ECTS awarded studies leading to the Master’s degree in the speciality at the 1st and 2nd Cycles of Basic Education, distributed by training components as follows:

- Teaching area – minimum of 27;
- General education area – minimum of 6;
- Specific didactics - minimum of 30;
- Supervised practice - minimum of 48;
The 3rd cycle of basic education and upper secondary education

The number of credits from the study cycle that confers a Master’s in Education not mentioned in the previous paragraphs is 120 ECTS and are divided in the following way:

- Teaching area - minimum of 18;
- General education area - minimum of 18;
- Specific didactics - minimum of 30;
- Introduction to professional practice, including supervised teaching - minimum of 42;

Teacher educators

The teaching staff in initial teacher education courses in higher education institutions (HEIs) should be duly qualified and in adequate number. The majority of the teacher educators should hold a PhD or be deemed a specialist of recognised experience and professional competence.

Teachers in cooperating schools who are helping out as teacher-training supervisors, called cooperating supervisors, should be chosen by the lawful, legally-competent body in the HEI on the basis of having obtained the prior agreement of the teachers and the approval of the cooperating school’s leadership body. The cooperating school-supervisors should comply with all the following requirements:

- Training and experience suitable for the duties to be performed;
- Teaching practice at the respective education, teaching and subject levels and cycle of a minimum of five years.

When choosing the co-operating supervising, factors of preference, such as post-graduate training in the respective teaching area, specialised training in pedagogical supervision and professional experience in supervision should be considered.

Qualifications, evaluation and certificates

A Master’s degree in Education is awarded to trainees who have obtained the required number of credits – ECTS - established for a particular stage of studies in the Master’s course. They need to have passed all the curricular units in the Master’s degree study programme as well as passed the public defence of their report on the supervised teaching practice based on the pertinent unit in the curriculum.

Evaluating the trainees’ performance in their supervised teaching practice is undertaken by the teacher educator at the HEI who is responsible for the curriculum unit in question. Evaluating the trainees' progress necessarily means taking into account the information supplied by the cooperating school which is given by the teaching-practice supervisor in the corresponding department or by the coordinator of the teachers’ council, or in the case of private or cooperative education, the teacher who performs equivalent duties.

The decision to pass the supervised teaching practice curricular unit/subject depends upon how well-prepared the trainee has been in fully satisfying a set of demands based on his/her teaching ability.
Alternative training pathways

In Portugal, there are no alternative training pathways.

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