

**THE FLEMISH
TEACHER EDUCATOR
DEVELOPMENT PROFILE**

VELOV

Vereniging
Lerarenopleiders
Vlaanderen



FEBRUARY 2012



Why do we need a development profile for teacher educators? 3

How the project was carried out 5

The fundamentals of being a teacher educator 7

Flemish teacher educator development profile 8

Get going with the development profile 16

Literature consulted and recommended 18

Preface

Encouraging initiatives relating to the professional development of individual teacher educators is a major element of our mission at VELOV (The Flemish Association of Teacher Educators). Examples of such initiatives include: a teacher education program for teacher educators and mentors; preparing inventories of research topics; setting up databases in order to disseminate the results of academic research; developing a professional standard for teacher educators; and research into the necessary pre-conditions for professional development.

As one of its first action points, VELOV decided to investigate the possibilities of drawing up a professional standard for teacher educators. Given that the professional development of the teacher educator is also a major focus of the activities of the expertise networks for teacher education in Flanders, working together seemed the best way forward. When these expertise networks were first created, ELANT (the Antwerp-based Expertise Network for Teacher Education Degree Courses) was given responsibility for the 'professional standard for teacher educators' project. Those involved quickly realized that the term 'professional standard' is too static and was therefore not in line with VELOV's point of departure – namely: supporting the professional *development* of teacher educators. A standard refers more to a benchmark with which individual teacher educators (or teams of teacher educators) are required to comply, rather than an instrument for professional development. For this reason we decided to adopt the alternative term 'development profile'.

It is our intention that the development profile will eventually be expanded into a frame of reference for the professional development of teacher educators in Flanders. The profile provides an overview of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that a teacher educator needs in order to be able to function effectively. The profile is primarily aimed at teams of teacher educators, but it can also be used by individual teacher educators. In this regard, however, we would like to make it quite clear that the profile represents an ideal image: no one is ever going to be able to meet all of its criteria. The development profile takes institutional teacher educators (i.e. teacher educators who are on the staff of a teacher education institution) as its starting point. Yet even among this relatively specific group there are a variety of roles and functions, which are always performed in very different contexts. It is crucially important that the profile can accommodate this diversity. While institutional teacher educators may be the prime target group, a great many of the competencies will obviously be relevant to mentors (school-based teacher educators). The profile is, in any case, partly based on a description of mentoring competencies.

The staff of a teacher education degree course program can use the list to establish the profile of individual teacher educators or teams of teacher educators or to set the minimum pre-conditions that a beginning teacher educator is required to meet. Experienced teacher educators can use it to decide on areas to be worked on for their further professional development. Beginning teacher educators can use this overview as a means of establishing their initial situation at the start of their learning process. Finally, the list can also be used either after or during a supervision or teacher education process as a means of allowing existing and future teachers to assess the quality of teacher educators.

The development profile is not intended to provide the ultimate and definitive statement of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that a teacher educator or group of teacher educators should possess. Some teams may perhaps be lacking a number of the skills listed, while they might also wonder why other important skills have been left off the list. This is precisely the sort of discussion that the profile is intended to provoke. In other words, the important thing here is not so much the list itself, as a finished product, but rather the process that using the profile can lead to within teacher education teams.

This booklet starts by setting out the conceptual basis of the development profile and its background. We then go to present a detailed description of the profile. The closing section provides a few suggestions as to how the profile can be used.

A large number of teacher educators, teachers and policy officers have contributed to the creation of the profile. We would particularly like to thank the members of Elant: Annick Vlaminck, Sarah Neirinckx, Joris Van den Hauwe and Boris Mets and Paul Cautreels. Our thanks also go to the members of the steering group and to the more than fifty people who took part in the study day held on 24.02.2011. Their participation in the project is a reflection of the fact that the development profile set out in these pages is an instrument made by Flemish teacher educators, *for* Flemish teacher educators.

Steven Janssens
President of VELOV



1 Why do we need a development profile for teacher educators?

The professional profile and the basic competencies for teachers have been an established fact since 1997 and are used as basic instruments for curriculum design in teacher education degree courses. In 2008 all schools in Flanders were given a highly practical booklet published by the Department of Education and Training of the Flemish Community (Aelterman, A., Meysman, H., Troch, F., Van Laer, O., Verkens, A., 2008). The idea behind this booklet was to provide a clear statement of what teacher competencies schools are working on and how they do it. The professional profile (for the experienced teacher) and the basic competencies (for the beginning teacher) which are derived from it are both based on a vision of education which is pupil-oriented and emancipatory. This vision also underlies the final attainment levels and development targets for primary and secondary education. The professional profile and the basic competencies thus provide an answer to the question: which teacher for which kind of education?

The starting point for the professional profile for teachers are the responsibilities which teachers have, with respect to pupils, with respect to the school and the educational community and with respect to society at large. It is not just a list of 'tasks'. Indicating responsibilities is also a way of giving due recognition to the professionalism of the teacher, expressed in an awareness of his or her own capacities and, above all, in a commitment to continually developing them further. The profile also shows confidence in the teacher's expertise: he or she is not a mere 'implementer' of teaching policy but someone who designs teaching, expressed in the concept of 'the teacher as creator'. 'This open-ended and extended professionalism finds expression in an emancipatory vision on the teacher's part. The key focus is on the teacher's responsibility and self-development (Aelterman, 1998). Teachers are given responsibility for the design, implementation and evaluation of teaching programs. They get the chance to make choices about education, in consultation with colleagues, which are to be implemented within the context of the classroom and the school. Among the necessary pre-conditions for this are a reflective, research-oriented attitude, as well as being prepared to justify and explain the choices made to pupils, parents, colleagues, the school management team and external stakeholders; an explanation and justification given by opening the pedagogic-didactic approach selected to discussion.

Being a teacher is a development process: as the explanatory booklet that accompanies the professional profile mentioned above puts it "being a teacher: that's something you become!"(p.70). It is a *continuous learning process*, 'a combination of formal and informal learning experiences, in which the teacher takes part from the moment he or she starts teacher education until he or she leaves the profession, voluntarily or compulsorily' (Clement et al, 1995, p. 216).

There is an obvious link here with the teacher educator. After all, it goes without saying that teacher education degree courses will only be able to instil these basic competencies if the teacher education didactics are in line with the expanded vision of professionalism and the emancipatory vision of education set out above which in turn determine the final attainment levels and the basic competencies (Aelterman, A. Daems F., Engels, N., Van Petegem, P., 2000, pp. 267-271).

'A teacher educator is someone who teaches as part of a teacher education program or who supervises students within the school and makes a substantial contribution to helping students develop into competent teachers' (Koster, 2002 in: Swennen, 2005, p.15). The role of a teacher educator is different from that of other teachers. Teacher educators 'are' what their students want to 'become'. In this regard Murray (2005, in Swennen, 2005) refers to teacher educators as engaged in 'second order teaching': teaching about teaching. While, on the one hand, they need to have explicit knowledge with regard to the teaching and supervision of pupils in a particular subject or discipline, at the same time they also need to have explicit knowledge about educating teachers.

A teacher will not be able to put together a powerful learning environment, if he or she has been trained under an opposed teacher education model. If teachers are expected to work together as a team, cooperative learning and intervision must be an integral part of the design of teacher education. If we assume that teachers should work in a pupil-oriented way, we also have to apply a system of teacher education didactics that starts from the student's own experiences, a teacher education didactic approach which genuinely values the teacher-trainee as a person and his or her input. If we expect a research-oriented, innovative attitude from the future teacher, then the teacher education program must be based on the reflective, research-oriented paradigm. It is important to stress here that the teacher education model must represent the way in which future teachers are expected to carry out their jobs. Everyone agrees with this in principle, but the reality is sometimes rather different. 'In his or her own teaching behaviour with respect to students the teacher educator must be the perfect didactic example' (Koster, 1998, p. 53). However, while demonstrating exemplary behaviour or models of behaviour is important, it is not enough in itself to qualify as congruent teacher education. It is not sufficient, therefore, just to be an example. Teacher educators obviously have to be capable of discussing this with their students. In the current teacher education didactics this is known as congruent teacher education (Lunenberg, 2002). Providing meta-commentary is an inherent part of this. This means that the teacher educator 'explicitifies' what he or she is doing - in other words, he or she explains his or her reasons for adopting a particular approach (i.e. the teacher educator explains the theory behind his or her classroom practice) and also 'legitimizes' the choices made.

The development profile set out below is intended to help the teacher educator become an example of good practice which will demonstrate how future teachers are expected to carry out their job. The knowledge, skills and attitudes described below are intended, using models, to give the teacher educator guidance as to how to go about explicitly explaining their own conceptions and legitimizing their own classroom practice. At the same time it is rooted in trust in the expertise of the teacher educator and supports his or her personal development. It goes without saying, therefore, that the professional profile and the basic competencies for teachers have been a source of inspiration in creating the development profile for the teacher educator.



2 How the project was carried out

The contents of this development profile are based on the results of two preparatory activities.

In the first phase of the project we organized a series of focus discussions with teacher educators, students on teacher education degree courses and teachers who are active in the professional field¹. In a subsequent phase a literature study was carried out which produced a comparison of existing professional standards with the results of the focus discussions. All the aspects of this comparative study that were relevant to the Flemish context were included in this draft, together with various data from other sources (e.g. a list of mentor competencies - for more information see: Cautreels, 2008). The existing professional profiles on which we based our own were:

- The professional profile of the teacher (VL)²
- The professional standard for institutional teacher educators (VELON)³
- The professional standard for school-based teacher educators (VELON)⁴
- The Association of Teacher Educators (ATE/USA)⁵
- The Second ATE standard⁶

The comparative study resulted in a first draft of the development profile. This initial draft was shown in first instance to the project steering group so that they could give their critical feedback. Thereafter participants in a study day held on 24 February 2011 organized by ELANT and VELOV were given the opportunity to see a second draft drawn up on the basis of this feedback. This also yielded a series of critical comments which were subsequently incorporated into the final version of the profile presented in this booklet.

The final sub-division and arrangement of the development profile was inspired by the Flemish professional profile for teachers. This made it clear that teacher educators are teachers in the first place and points of divergence were noted.

In deciding on how to organize and divide up the various sections of the profile we took inspiration from McClelland's 'iceberg model' (Lingsma & Scholten, 2001) which makes a distinction between elements 'above the waterline' (knowledge and skills) and elements 'below the waterline' (self-image, standards and values, characteristics and motives). For each component we have placed knowledge and skills in separate sections (under the respective headings 'The teacher educator has knowledge and understanding of...' and 'the teacher educator is able to...'). We have put all the 'below the waterline' data into a third section (under the heading 'The teacher educator...'). These are elements that are naturally such an essential part of the teacher educator's professional practice that they 'breathe' through all the various components of the professional standard. Putting them together under a single component is thus arbitrary. The same also applies to the fundamentals of being a teacher educator which have been brought together in a first section.

We have tried to formulate the various skills at a comparable "average" abstraction level. In establishing that abstraction level we started from the assumption that standards which are too vague or too general are of little practical value (Vaughan, 1999).

¹ The results of this phase are set out in the interim project report 'Beroepsstandaard lerarenopleiders - met hart, handen en hoofd' (Antwerp, ELANT, internal document).

² <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/edulex/database/document/document.asp?docid=13942#244618>

³ http://www.velon.nl/beroepsstandaard/beroepsstandaard_instituutsopleiders

⁴ http://www.velon.nl/beroepsstandaard/beroepsstandaard_schoolopleiders

⁵ http://www.ate1.org/pubs/Standards_for_Teac.cfm

⁶ <http://www.ate1.org/pubs/uploads/tchredstds0308.pdf>

Presenting the development profile as a list of knowledge areas, skills and attitudes has a number of disadvantages.

1. a list creates the illusion of being comprehensive
2. the development profile risks degenerating into a mere checklist
3. it does not give an overall picture or 'Gestalt' of the teacher educator.

In order to avoid these pitfalls, each of the various components of the development profile begins with a short section setting out in global terms what kind of personal professional practice goes with that particular component. The list of knowledge, skills and attitudes which comes afterwards is to be regarded more as a source of inspiration than as a comprehensive summary. The highly complex task of the teacher educator cannot be reduced to a mere list of points and we need to keep its holistic nature in mind at all times.



The development profile provides a solid basis and a common language for teacher education, supervision and for the professional development of teacher educators. Beginning teacher educators can use it as a means of establishing their initial situation and experienced teacher educators can use it to identify which areas they wish to develop further. It can be integrated into HRM policy of teacher education degree courses – including into their recruitment policy – so that each institution can use this instrument in its own way and within its own vision of quality and professional development. Teams can use it to identify the competencies that they possess, establish priority objectives and use this as a means of adding to the continued professional growth of the team.

3 The fundamentals of being a teacher educator

Obviously the professional profile is also built on an overall picture of 'the teacher educator'. Apart from basing our profile on other professional standards and research into the application and formulation of knowledge, skills and attitudes we have also included the questions: 'what are teacher educators actually?' and 'what makes teacher educators different from other teachers?' The most important characteristics of teacher educators are as follows:

- **Mastery:** teacher educators have mastered the skills of the teacher to a greater extent.
- **Awareness:** teacher educators are aware of the choices that they and other people make and can clearly state what the ideas, conceptions, beliefs, research on which these choices are based are. Teacher educators can explain clearly why they make particular choices: this is part of the core business of their professional activity.
- **Technical repertoire:** teacher educators possess a bigger technical repertoire and can draw on this in order to come up with alternative ways of approaching situations for use in their own professional practice and that of other people.
- **Background knowledge:** teacher educators have a broad background knowledge of general and subject-related didactics, pedagogy, supervision, etc., and can draw on this for their own professional practice and that of other people.
- **Communication:** teacher educators are highly proficient in oral and written communication. They can quickly identify the strengths and weaknesses of teaching situations.
- **Congruence:** for a teacher educator the objective and the medium are the same: teaching is not just a medium to open up and to convey a particular content, but it is also the content itself. This places considerable demands on the teacher educator's professional practice and his or her capacity for reflection. There cannot be any contradiction between the explicit and implicit messages.
- **Helicopter perspective:** teacher educators must be able to think critically about the place of education in the society.

The development profile set out below has six characteristics.

- It relates to all types of teacher educators on the staff of a teacher education institution.
- The profile must be flexible: it has to be capable, at particular moments, of being adapted to changes in society and developments in the profession and must lend itself to being used by teams and be capable of being adapted to meet their own purposes.
- The profile is not intended as a selection instrument, but as a developmental instrument: teacher education degree courses can use it when mapping out collective and individual professional development routes.
- The profile is a starting point for self-evaluation, feedback by peers and intervention.
- The conception of the profile is broad and deep. No one can fulfil this ideal type. Many of these competencies will only be acquired by a teacher educator in the course of his or her teaching career. It is completely unreasonable to expect would-be teacher educators to meet all the criteria included in this list at the start. Becoming a teacher educator is a learning process and for that reason continuous professional development is an absolute requirement for teacher educators.
- The profile has to be a tool that individual teacher educators or teams of teacher educators can apply to their professional development, one that provides them with a language in which to talk about that professional development and which gives them direction. With this in mind, in the final section of this booklet we have provided several methods that can be used in order to put this profile into practice.

4 Flemish teacher educator development profile⁷

We have broken the profile down into 10 different sections:

- 1 **The fundamentals of being a teacher educator**
- 2 **The teacher educator as a supervisor of learning and development processes**
- 3 **The teacher educator as a supporter and supervisor of personal, social and interactive processes**
- 4 **The teacher educator as a teacher education specialist (an expert in teacher education didactics)**
- 5 **The teacher educator as a content expert**
- 6 **The teacher educator as an organizer**
- 7 **The teacher educator as an innovator and researcher**
- 8 **The teacher educator as a member of a teacher education team**
- 9 **The teacher educator as a partner for external stakeholders and as a member of the educational community**
- 10 **The teacher educator as an involved and critical social participant**

Each of the ten sections is introduced by a brief exposition of what it means for teacher educators to be competent in each area, in global terms.

1 The fundamentals of being a teacher educator

Competent teacher educators are aware of their role in setting an example. They recognize the importance of good teachers for children, teenagers and adults. For this reason they are strongly committed to being teacher educators and to the development of both beginning and existing teachers. Teacher educators continue to work on their own professional development in a systematic manner throughout their entire career, inter alia, by reflecting on their own core qualities and shortcomings. Teacher educators are teachers, but they are different from other teachers in that they exhibit the following characteristics:

- **Mastery:** teacher educators have mastered the skills of the teacher to a greater extent.
- **Awareness:** teacher educators are aware of the choices that they and other people make and can clearly state what the ideas, conceptions, beliefs, research on which these choices are based are. Teacher educators can explain clearly why they make particular choices: this is part of the core business of their professional activity.
- **Technical repertoire:** teacher educators possess a bigger technical repertoire and can draw on this in order to come up with alternative ways of approaching situations for use in their own professional practice and that of other people.
- **Background knowledge:** teacher educators have a broad background knowledge of general and subject-related didactics, pedagogy, supervision, etc., and can draw on this for their own professional practice and that of other people.
- **Communication:** teacher educators are highly proficient in oral and written communication. They can quickly identify the strengths and weaknesses of teaching situations.
- **Congruence:** For a teacher educator the objective and the medium are the same: teaching is not just a medium to open up and to convey a particular content, but it is also the content itself. This places considerable demands on the teacher educator's professional practice and his or her capacity for reflection. There cannot be any contradiction between the explicit and implicit messages.
- **Helicopter perspective:** teacher educators must be able to think critically about the place of education in the society.

⁷ We have used the following abbreviations: TE = teacher educator, FET = future or existing teacher (sing), FETs = future or existing teachers (plural)

The following list of areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes makes no attempt to be comprehensive. The items included are intended as a source of inspiration for the development of this competency or the supervision of development processes.

- A competent TE makes the development of FETs his or her prime focus and encourages them to assume self-direction of that development.
- A competent TE is prepared to work on his or her own professional development on a life-long basis and in a systematic manner.
- A competent TE is capable of reflecting on his or her own core qualities and shortcomings, in accordance with the profession and diversity among FETs.
- A competent TE is aware of his or her role as an example to FETs: in his or her pedagogic-didactic practice he or she demonstrates the knowledge, skills and attitudes which reflect the best available practices in education.
- A competent TE shows a strong engagement with his or her subject and/or being a teacher educator; and is firmly committed to providing good quality teacher education as a means of ensuring good teaching for children, teenagers and adults.
- A competent TE uses suitable language in both oral and written communication which is adapted to the different professional contexts in which he or she operates.

2 The teacher educator as a supervisor of learning and development processes

Teacher educators are master-teachers. They have mastered the skills of teachers to a greater extent. They are aware of the choices that they themselves and other people make in teaching situations. They provide explicit explanations of learning processes so that beginning and existing teachers can see what these are. They possess a broad repertoire of didactic methods and methods for practice supervision that they can deploy in different ways in accordance with the needs of beginning and existing teachers. Teacher educators serve as an example to beginning and existing teachers in the area of reflecting on their own learning, teaching and supervision styles.

The following list of areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes makes no attempt to be comprehensive. The items included are intended as a source of inspiration for the development of this competency or the supervision of development processes.

2.1 The TE has knowledge and understanding of...

- learning theories and their significance for the supervision of FETs
- different visions of teacher education and the supervision of FETs
- the historical and social background of learning theories and visions of teacher education
- learning processes in adults, pupils and FETs
- the diversity in the initial situation of FETs regarding their personal and professional development
- the most common professional impediments among FETs
- the development phases that students go through on their way to becoming teachers
- methods for making sure that FETs learn both in and from practice situations
- different sorts of feedback and the necessary pre-conditions for achieving effective feedback
- a varied repertoire of methods that stimulate FETs' learning
- a variety of sources with theoretical and practical material for teacher education and the supervision of FETs
- a variety of conceptions of reflection and the pre-conditions for an effective reflection process
- methods for documenting and assessing the development of FETs

2.2 The TE is able to...

- explain and defend his or her own vision of the professional development of teachers
- explain the theoretical aspects of learning processes in pupils and FETs
- can adapt his or her supervision to the personal situation and needs of FETs
- can achieve differentiation in the practice supervision of FETs, thanks to his or her broad repertoire of supervision methods for learning and development processes
- encourage FETs to reflect on their own personal and professional capabilities and needs
- encourage FETs to assume self-direction of their own learning process
- evaluate and discuss the progress and results of FETs

2.3 The TE...

- has an appropriate self-image
- is prepared to reflect on his or her own learning, teaching and supervision styles and to adapt these to the needs of FETs
- sees the mistakes or shortcomings of FETs as a learning opportunity, in the first instance

3 The teacher educator as a supporter and supervisor of personal, social and interactive processes

Teacher educators are good coaches of beginning and existing teachers. They can supervise both individuals and groups in their personal, relational and professional growth, in a way that is respectful and genuine. They see what the needs, capabilities, limits, ambitions, etc... of beginning and existing teachers are. They know how to deal with the emotions, conflicts and problem situations which arise during the coaching process in a professional way. As coaches teacher educators can express their views regarding the suitability and growth potential of beginning and existing teachers.

The following list of areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes makes no attempt to be comprehensive. The items included are intended as a source of inspiration for the development of this competency or the supervision of development processes.

3.1 The TE has knowledge and understanding of...

- discussion and coaching techniques
- the theory of adult education and group dynamics
- a variety of instruments and methods for self-evaluation

3.2 The TE is able to...

- create a safe atmosphere for working and studying in a group of FETs by initiating and supervising group dynamic processes and by stimulating interaction between him/herself and FETs and among the FETs themselves.
- adapt his or her supervision method to the development phase that the individual FET has reached and to the questions, needs, problems and learning questions of the FET
- show empathy, acceptance and genuineness to the beginning teacher
- cope with conflicts and problem situations that arise in his/her relationship with the FET in a professional way
- use instruments for the assessment and self-assessment of professional expertise (and where necessary develop these him/herself)
- encourage FETs to reflect on their experiences, to assume self-responsibility for their learning process and to engage in self-assessment of their professional development
- assess the suitability of FETs using the relevant criteria

3.3 The TE...

- has a strong capacity to empathize: he or she sees what the needs, capabilities, emotions, limits and ambitions of FETs are
- shows respect
- has faith in the talents of FETs and their capacity to develop further

4 The teacher educator as a teacher education specialist (an expert teacher education didactician)

The teacher educator's subject is teacher education. His or her subject didactics is second order didactics: the study of learning and teaching. Teacher educators thus have an extensive didactic repertoire that they actively renew. In that sense the input is broader than just their own discipline and they renew it actively by 'looking over the wall'. Their approach to teacher education is in accordance with their own conceptions about learning and teaching. They explain and defend these conceptions and choices, as they do those of other people in different teaching situations, and analyze and assess these with beginning and existing teachers. Via reflection they encourage beginning and existing teachers to explain their didactic and educational choices and the underlying conceptions, values and standards in explicit terms and do that themselves too.

The following list of areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes makes no attempt to be comprehensive. The items included are intended as a source of inspiration for the development of this competency or the supervision of development processes.

4.1 The TE has knowledge and understanding of...

- the social and historical context which influences conceptions about teacher education and its structures
- the teaching and supervision of pupils in the various school subjects
- a variety of discussion formats (and the pre-conditions that need to be met) for the discussion of teaching situations
- the development, implementation and evaluation of teacher education programs

4.2 The TE is able to...

- translate new developments in education and in their own area of expertise to their teacher education practice
- renew and develop their own didactic repertoire
- provide teacher education based on their own conceptions about good teaching and explicitly explained
- describe, explain and justify didactic choices in teacher education
- reflect on didactic choices with FETs and challenge them to make their own choices
- use the experiences of FETs, deepen these experiences and link these to educational theories and thus encourage FETs to draw general conclusions from these experiences
- assist the FETs in the planning, execution and evaluation of lessons
- use a variety of techniques in observing, analyzing and discussing teaching situations
- analyze, assess and discuss teaching situations with FETs based on his or her subject didactic insights
- provide alternatives and encourage FETs to reflect on their own performance and approach and the underlying conceptions, values and standards, when discussing teaching situations

4.3 The TE...

- is aware of his or her own conceptions about what constitutes good teaching and good teacher education and is prepared to explain these explicitly to FETs and to his or her fellow teacher educators
- is prepared to actively seek input for the renewal of his or her own didactic repertoire and is prepared to 'look over the wall' to do so.

5 The teacher educator as a content expert

Teacher educators have mastered their subject (see point 4 above) and the disciplines they impart to beginning and existing teachers. They convert that knowledge and their skills into a sound course of instruction for beginning and existing teachers. They explain in detail and justify the choices they make in this regard. Teacher educators reflect on the didactic value for teacher education of new areas of subject content and new skills and include them, where necessary, in their own teacher education.

The following list of areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes makes no attempt to be comprehensive. The items included are intended as a source of inspiration for the development of this competency or the supervision of development processes.

5.1 The TE has knowledge and understanding of...

- the current structure of education in Flanders
- the legislative framework for teacher education degree courses in Flanders
- the professional profile and basic teacher competencies (relating to the level for which he or she is training FETs)
- the professional profile of teacher educators
- the development targets and final attainment levels of the educational level for which he or she is training FETs
- the contents of the subject or discipline in which he or she is training FETs
- recent developments relating to contents and skills in his or her own field of study or discipline(s), subject didactics and teacher education didactics

5.2 The TE is able to...

- convert his or her knowledge of the subject and subject didactics into teacher education for FETs and explain and defend the choices made
- reflect critically on the value of subject contents in terms of learning psychology and didactics
- encourage FETs to continuously develop their knowledge of the subject content and general/subject-related didactics

5.3 The TE...

- is prepared to continuously develop his or her knowledge of the subject content
- is prepared to take part in professional development activities relating to being a teacher educator

6 The teacher educator as an organizer

Teacher educators organize their work time in a professional manner so that they perform their tasks efficiently and effectively. They have an understanding of schools as professional organisations that enables them to link the functioning of beginning and existing teachers at micro-level to processes at meso-level.

The following list of areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes makes no attempt to be comprehensive. The items included are intended as a source of inspiration for the development of this competency or the supervision of development processes.

6.1 The TE has knowledge and understanding of...

- the logistical and organisational pre-conditions for good teaching and teacher education
- the policy implementation capacity of schools and teacher education programs
- the procedures and agreements within his or her own organisation and the organisations with which he or she frequently cooperates
- efficient meeting techniques and decision-making procedures

6.2 The TE is able to...

- organize his or her own work and time effectively
- improvise when necessary
- carry out the administrative tasks assigned to him or her properly
- analyze and explain explicitly the logistical and organisational aspects of teaching situations

6.3 The TE...

- is aware of the his or her own strengths and weaknesses in terms of organisation

7 The teacher educator as an innovator and researcher

It is part of the core business of the professional practice of teacher educators to be able to explain and justify their conceptions, ideas, choices, recommendations in detail. Teacher educators should be conversant with research results relating to learning and teacher education. They integrate these research results into the teacher education of beginning and existing teachers. Teacher educators should also engage in research (both practical and theoretical). By consistently adopting a research-oriented and innovation-oriented attitude themselves, they also help to foster this necessary attitude in beginning and existing teachers.

The following list of areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes makes no attempt to be comprehensive. The items included are intended as a source of inspiration for the development of this competency or the supervision of development processes.

7.1 The TE has knowledge and understanding of...

- the results of recent educational research relating to learning, teaching and teacher education of FETs
- how educational research (both theoretical and practical) is carried out and how results are arrived at
- the determining factors relating to the implement of educational innovations

7.2 The TE is able to...

- integrate the results of recent educational research into the teacher education of FETs and in the implementation and design of the curriculum
- renew his or own teaching practice on the basis of additional training, his or her own experience and creativity
- carry out research or make an academic contribution relating to topics relating to education, learning and/or teacher education
- supervise FETs in developing a research-oriented attitude and in the execution of practice-oriented research
- set up, execute and evaluate a research project (action research) with FETs

7.3 The TE...

- has an experimental, research-orientated, evaluative and cooperative approach to the teaching profession and being a teacher educator

8 The teacher educator as a member of a teacher education team

Teacher educators are good colleagues and loyal team players. They believe in consultation and working together with colleagues in order to decide on the best approach to teacher education and the supervision of beginning and existing teachers regarding their professional development. Teacher educators share their work with colleagues and provide induction supervision of new colleagues. Teacher educators participate constructively in the necessary work-related consultation with colleagues. They do their best to maintain a good professional atmosphere in the team, among other things by reflecting on the organisational culture and their own part in this.

The following list of areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes makes no attempt to be comprehensive. The items included are intended as a source of inspiration for the development of this competency or the supervision of development processes.

8.1 The TE has knowledge and understanding of...

- a variety of formats for collegial learning
- basic organisation theory
- the micro-political and socialisation processes in organisations
- the influence of the hidden curriculum on their own teacher education
- effective communication within their own school organisation
- collaborative processes within the organisation and their own role in these

8.2 The TE is able to...

- relate his or her own vision of education to that of his or her colleagues and the organisation and communicate this
- examine the culture of his or her own teacher education institution and the teacher education concepts it applies in a constructively critical manner
- contribute, within his or her own organization, to policy and vision development and policy implementation inter alia by working with colleagues on the development, preparation, implementation and modification/innovation of teacher education
- participate constructively and effectively in a variety of consultative bodies and collaborative structures within his or her own organisation

8.3 The TE...

- is prepared to work with teaching colleagues to supervise the professional development of FETs.
- is prepared to share the results of his or her own work with colleagues
- is prepared to ask advice from colleagues about a variety of topics regarding learning, teaching and teacher education
- regards the induction supervision of new colleagues as a responsibility of the entire teacher education team and is prepared to help beginning colleagues settle into their duties, teacher education and school culture
- regards a good atmosphere within the teacher education team as an important pre-condition for the well-being and learning of all involved

- is open to consultation and collaboration with all the members of the teacher education community
- adopts a critical attitude with regard to the culture (explicit and implicit rules) of the organisation and is prepared to reflect on his or her own part and his or her own responsibility in this
- is a loyal team member

9 The teacher educator as a partner for external stakeholders and as a member of the educational community

Teacher educators collaborate constructively with stakeholders within and outside education. They engage in debate with other people about educational topics, present their work to colleagues outside their own organisation. Teacher educators make a contribution to knowledge production about learning and teaching and take the lead in educational innovation.

The following list of areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes makes no attempt to be comprehensive. The items included are intended as a source of inspiration for the development of this competency or the supervision of development processes.

9.1 The TE has knowledge and understanding of...

- the broad educational field
- the functioning of relevant knowledge networks
- the significance of the policy implementation capacity of school organisations
- developments in the wider educational field: regional, national and international

9.2 The TE is able to...

- work together with representatives of schools, universities, policy-making bodies, professional organisations and other groups with a view to improving learning, teaching and teacher education in a regular and meaningful manner
- take part in the social debate about educational topics
- make a contribution to the implementation or discussion of educational innovation and teacher education
- make a contribution to the knowledge production about teacher education and teaching
- reflect on the teaching profession, the TE and their place in society
- build and maintain a regional, national or international network that is relevant for the performance of his or her duties

9.3 The TE...

- is a well informed and constructively critical advocate of good quality teaching for all pupils and future teachers
- takes a critical look at the mechanisms within school organisations which might constitute obstacles to a continued evolution towards a more humane and just society
- is sufficiently micro-politically literate to 'read' the context of his or her own organisation and to take action based on this
- is prepared to provide an explicit and substantiated explanation of his or her own standpoint with regard to topics of educational policy

10 The teacher educator as an involved and critical social participant

Teacher educators do not shut themselves away in their professional field. They are open to the outside world for its own sake and not merely in as far as it affects their work. They take an interest in the world in general and in the position of children and teenagers in particular. They are also curious about things that are not immediately useful in their daily work. They set an example in the area of cultural participation. They inform themselves about current affairs with an open mind and reflect critically on changes in society. Teacher educators take an active part in the public debate about the place of education in society and vice-versa. This attitude permits them to link processes at micro-and meso-level to the macro-level.

The following list of areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes makes no attempt to be comprehensive. The items included are intended as a source of inspiration for the development of this competency or

the supervision of development processes.

10.1 The TE has knowledge and understanding of ...

- the relationship between education and other social sectors
- the democratic and emancipatory contribution which FETs and TEs can make as part of the fight against injustice and discrimination in education and in society at large
- current affairs
- the administrative organisation of contemporary society and how it has evolved into its present form
- human rights and the rights of the child
- the various types of education (environmental, peace, human rights, global, ...)

10.2 The TE is able to ...

- reflect on new social developments and their possible impact on the teacher education of FETs
- supervise FETs in arriving at an understanding of the influence which social, cultural and historical factors have on education
- explain the relationship between current or existing topics in a variety of social sectors and educational practice
- adopt a critical approach with regard to the media

10.3 The TE ...

- is prepared to follow current affairs critically
- has an eye for interesting and relevant developments in a variety of social sectors
- supports the emancipation of children, teenagers and adults
- sets a good example in the area of cultural participation

5 Get going with the development profile

In this final section we suggest a number of possible ways of using the development profile to work on professional development. Here again, it is not our intention to be comprehensive. After all, teacher educators and teacher education teams have more than enough inventiveness and creativity when it comes to designing their own professional development route(s).

First of all: avoid misusing it!

As we pointed out at the start, we have deliberately chosen the term ‘development profile’ rather than ‘professional standard’. Nevertheless, it is worth reiterating the dangers of unwittingly using the profile as an implicit standard. Equally, the profile should not be used as a selection instrument. It is intended as a point of departure and a source of inspiration for professional development.

The profile is not always going to be suitable for everyone and in every context, nor can it always be applied in its entirety. It has both breadth and depth so that it offers individual teacher educators and/or teacher education teams sufficient scope to stress those aspects within the profile that they deem most useful and appropriate. The profile thus lends itself to a wide variety of different uses.

The profile may not be used as a justification for designating specific ‘roles’ within teams (e.g. ‘you’re responsible for section 4.3.1’). Every teacher educator and every team needs to have the full profile in mind at all times, in all its complexity.

The profile is not a list of boxes to be ticked for carrying out checks on individual teacher educators. However, it can be used as a means of establishing a profile for individual teacher educators or a team of teacher educators or in order to set a series of minimum pre-conditions that a beginning teacher educator has to satisfy. Beginning teacher educators can use it to establish their initial situation, while their more experienced colleagues can use it to identify points to be worked on as part of their continued professional development. It also serves as a reference point for future and existing teachers for the assessment of their teacher educators during or after receiving teacher education or supervision.

The profile has been developed for teacher educators, by other teacher educators. They ‘own’ it. This is therefore not a ‘bureaucratic’ instrument created by an external body which is sooner or later going to be used against them. Using the profile must therefore always be the result of the teacher educator having freely chosen to do so.

A few suggestions for possible ways to use the profile

Teacher educators can ‘measure’ their own expertise against the development profile and take the opportunity to examine and further improve the quality of their own professional practice in a systematic manner. Discussing this with colleagues from their own teacher education institution or from other teacher education institutions can also be a stimulating exercise.

The profile can be used by **individual teacher educators**, groups of teacher educators (e.g. in pairs) or **complete teacher education teams**. Fisher (2005) stresses the importance of collective use. The profile thus serves as a compass for teams to see whether they are on course.

You can use either **the profile in its entirety or one or more sections**. If you are using the profile for the first time it might be a good idea to ‘scan’ the entire profile. You can then opt to explore a number of selected sections in more depth later.

⁸ With a few modifications the various work formats set out in the following article would be suitable: Van Petegem, P., & Cautreels, P. (2006). Activerende werkvormen voor zelfevaluatie (Activating work formats for self-evaluation). *Kwaliteitszorg in het onderwijs*, 14, 79-101.

Obviously, the first phase in using the profile will involve some form of self-evaluation. A proper self-evaluation should begin with an **informatory and sensitizing phase**. Teacher educators who are intending to use the profile individually may well be sufficiently informed after having read through this booklet and will hopefully be sufficiently motivated to make a start. However, this will not be the case if the intention is to use the profile with an entire teacher education team. We strongly recommend that, in this case, you allow sufficient time for this first phase so that every team member is properly informed and motivated at the start of the route. There are then a variety of possibilities for proceeding in a creative manner⁸.

The second phase should consist of a **self-research or self-assessment**. This allows teacher educators to analyze their own functioning (strength-weakness analysis). Individual teacher educators can, for example, choose certain sections and indicate how far they believe that they possess the competencies listed. You can use a simple code (e.g. XX = more than sufficient; X = sufficient; O = room for improvement). Equally, a complete team can use this system to establish to what extent the entire development profile is represented within the teacher education staff.

The third phase consists of **information collection**. This involves collecting data from a variety of sources in a systematic way. For example, the development profile could be put to colleagues, students, superiors..., with the request that, just as in the case of the self-research initiative, they should indicate to what extent they feel that the individual teacher educator or the teacher education team possess the competencies listed.

During the fourth phase a **value judgement** is made: the comparison of the newly acquired information with the data resulting from the self-research gives you the opportunity to draw up expected (although perhaps also unexpected or less expected) strengths and weaknesses.

Finally, you can establish **priority work points or development targets**. These can then form a basis for the drafting and execution of an individual or collective **professional development plan** or **personal development plan (PDP)**. The process can then be repeated again from the beginning.

A record of the entire process can also be kept in a **portfolio**.

The Flemish teacher educator development profile set out in this booklet has not yet reached its final form. It is a 'profile 'in development'. For this reason we would welcome any feedback from users. This can be done by sending your comments to: ontwikkelingsprofiel@velov.eu



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THE FLEMISH TEACHER EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT PROFILE

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Deze uitgave is tevens elektronisch beschikbaar op www.velov.eu

Design: Erik Desombere

Photography: PhotoAlto

D/JJJJ/XXXX/YY

ISBN xxx-xx-xxxxx-xx-x



