teacher education for inclusion COUNTRY report

norway

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1. Wider policy framework supporting teacher education for inclusion

As one of the nations signing the Salamanca statement in 1994, Norway has had inclusion as a guiding star. As early as 1976, Norway merged the Special Education School Law and the ordinary School Law into one: the Education Act, integration and later inclusion has been a central theme for schools.

*‘Although we have not had a national discussion concerning our understanding of the definition, the Salamanca statement’s main goals: to provide equal opportunities for all students, developing schools as safe, accepting, and stimulating communities where all students are appreciated, are indeed visible in governmental documents. Moreover, we will claim that the wider definition given by UNESCO in 2008 is also in line with our aims. In this widening, inclusion is understood as an ongoing process aimed at offering quality education for all while respecting diversity and the different needs and abilities, characteristics and learning expectations of the students and communities, eliminating all forms of discrimination’ (UNESCO 2008).*

For instance, in 2003 the Education Act got a new article targeting the students’ school environment. According to this article, all students are entitled to a physical and psychosocial school environment that promotes a healthy development as well as learning (The Education Act §9a). This implies the right to be free from bullying and all forms of discrimination. Through guidelines, schools are told how to put this article into practice and they have to report their work in this area.

In 2007, a committee (Midtlyng Committee) was appointed, to contribute to better learning for children, young people and adults with special needs. The committee’s report was received by the Ministry of Education in July 2009 – an Official Norwegian Report (NOU), ‘Right to Learning’. This report is part of the basis for a White paper expected to appear in 2011. Inclusion is a main principle in the NOU. According to the report, actions leading to inclusion are the teacher’s relations with the students, relations among students, participation, differentiation and securing for all students an education that gives results – in Norwegian termed ‘adapted education’, which is similar to the relatively new international concept of ‘personalised education’.

The following are some central passages from the ‘Right to Learning’ report :

*‘Inclusive education means that everyone participates in a community on an equitable basis – academically, socially and culturally. This makes demands on the educational institutions and on each individual’s ability to build good relations on the basis of people’s individuality and equal status. Inclusion is both a process and a goal, and is centred on how educational institutions can respond to the abilities and needs of the individual in the best possible way. This requires making adjustments for diversity and changes in the education provision so that individuals can participate more actively and benefit more from participating in a community. The consequence of inclusion is that the system must be adapted to the individual person or group. This does not, however, release the individual of the responsibility of willingness to participate.*

*In this context, inclusive education is a fundamental principle and not a concrete act. The acts that are necessary to achieving inclusive education are specified as relationship building, participation, differentiation, and safeguarding of learning outcomes. Inclusion is a framework for equitable and adapted education.*

*While the principle of integration has a relatively long history in Norwegian education, inclusion was first used in connection with Reform 97, at that time in reference to UNESCO*’*s Salamanca Statement and Framework from 1994.*

*The concept of inclusion presupposes that equity is understood as a right to be different, and not simply a right to be part of a community, as is the case with the concept of integration. The fact that the concept of inclusion has served as the basis for kindergartens and schools has therefore had a number of consequences. It means that all children and young people shall have a natural place in the kindergarten or school community and that the undertakings are organised in such a way that they work well for everyone. This will prevent marginalisation tendencies and cross-pressures and will contribute to ensuring full participation, mastering and learning outcomes for everyone. Inclusion ensures the protection of minorities by reducing the pressure of equalisation and equity. Within this framework of understanding, equity does not mean that everyone should be treated in the same way. Instead, everyone shall have the opportunity of and the right to support on their own terms, in compliance with the principle of adapted education. Inclusion therefore entails different measures as a prerequisite for equity and equal opportunity, but within the framework of the community. Children and young people who need additional help and support in order to be able to function within this framework shall receive it. Such positive discrimination means that kindergartens and schools must be in a continual process of change if the undertakings are to accommodate those who attend them at any given time.*

*The concept of inclusion has particular relevance and significance for the Sami people, the indigenous population in Norway. This provides a framework for placing kindergartens and schools into a human rights perspective that should secure minority protection of this indigenous group. This means that their language and culture should serve as a basis, that positive special measures are established and that active support is given to ensure that the Sami population can fully utilise the education provision.’*

Norway prides itself of being an egalitarian society, in which the differences in living standards are smaller than in most other countries. The common man and woman have a relatively high standard of living and a high degree of education compared to people in many other countries. Around 86% of the Norwegian population have a minimum of upper secondary education (slightly less women than men). Around 30% of the population have a minimum of tertiary education (slightly more women than men). Norway ranges on 6th place if compared with 31 OECD countries[[1]](#footnote-1). The ideological values of inclusion, one school for all, no child left behind, equal rights …, fit quite well into Norwegian culture. Norwegian students in school are at the top of PISA rankings when it comes to well-being at school and the understanding of Democratic Citizenship.

1. Initial Teacher Education
2. Entry to teacher education

Applicants for the Differentiated Primary and Lower Secondary Teacher Education Programmes must have minimum mark of 3 in Norwegian and in Mathematics from upper secondary school (6 is the best mark) and a minimum of 35 study points in total (maximum is normally 60 study points) to qualify for entrance to teacher education. From 2009 these requirements are also valid for the 5-year integrated Master’s Programs in Teacher Education at the universities. For such Programmes in Mathematics and Natural Science, special subjects from Upper Secondary Schools are also required. By introducing these admission requirements, the teacher education institutions will have applicants with the academic qualifications and motivation deemed necessary for their studies and later work as teachers.

1. Models of initial teacher education

The National Curriculum Regulations do not prescribe what methods the teacher students should encounter during their education. This is up to the individual teacher education institutions.

The collaboration between teacher educators is also up to the individual teacher education institutions. The white paper on teacher education encourages such collaboration and multidisciplinary cooperation among teacher educators. [[2]](#footnote-2)

1. The initial teacher education curriculum

All higher education in Norway is regulated by the *Act relating to universities and university colleges* of 2005. According to this act, the higher education institutions themselves determine and are responsible for the content of their own education programmes. However, the act also states that special curriculum regulations can apply to specific programmes, when so decided by the Ministry of Education and Research. This is the case for all teacher education programmes. National curriculum regulations exist and set some important limitations for the freedom that the teacher education institutions have when constructing their more detailed programme and subject plans, which are the basis for the actual courses of study offered.

In the **National Curriculum Regulations** forthe 4 years programme*General teacher education* (2003), by which most Norwegian teachers in primary and lower secondary school are educated, inclusion is not used as a concept. However, bullying is a theme all teacher education institutions are expected to teach and in the wider definition of inclusion, anti-bullying is about respect for diversity and elimination of discrimination.

The General Teacher Education is, from 2010 on, replaced by new 4 year programmes, the *Differentiated Primary and Lower Secondary Teacher Education Programmes for Years 1–7 and Years 5–10*. The national curriculum regulations and guidelines[[3]](#footnote-3) for these new education programmes underline the importance of the above mentioned elements related to inclusion: teacher’s relations to students, relations among students, students’ participation in planning their own learning process, differentiation and to secure all students an education that gives results. Classroom management and development of an inclusive learning environment are both important underlying, and explicitly mentioned themes in the new teacher education.

The new regulations for the Differentiated Primary and Lower Secondary Teacher Education Programmes form a pattern for reforms in all other teacher education programmes in Norway and these processes are on-going (from 2010).

A research group has been appointed, to follow up the reform of teacher education for primary and lower secondary school. The objective of the research group is to help ensure that the teacher education reform is implemented in accordance with the intentions of the Norwegian Storting (parliament) and with prevailing policy documents, that is the national curriculum regulations and guidelines, by:

* gathering, analysing and spreading data about the implementation and results of the reform;
* advising the Ministry and if necessary proposing adjustments to and clarifications about the reform;
* advising the institutions in their reform work.

The research group following the reform shall:

* monitor and evaluate the reform process and the results of the reform nationally regionally and locally in the light of the objective of an enhanced and improved teacher education that responds to the education system’s need for good teachers, and indirectly to society’s need for better quality in primary and lower secondary education (compulsory education);
* gathering data about the quality and relevance of the individual programmes, the number of candidates, their choice of subjects and functional skills;
* evaluate development at each educational establishment and within the regional collaboration groups, monitor and evaluate the education provided with regard to academic organisation and quality assurance of the programmes, internal management and organisation, ability to adapt, academic and professional renewal and competence development, institutional collaboration and internationalization;
* gather knowledge about and evaluate how the reform affects recruitment and national dispersion of educational capacity, as well as shed light on the students’ choice of subjects compared with the needs of the education system;
* evaluate the national provision of teacher education in the light of national and regional needs for teachers with different qualifications;
* facilitate an improvement in quality by creating arenas for communication, exchange of opinions and advice.

The group’s term of office is five years. The group is to work out a plan for its work and choose its own working method, but close contact with the educational institutions is a presupposition. A major aspect of the group’s commission is the sharing of knowledge about the implementation and results of the reform as regards relevant users and to stimulate the use of this knowledge.

The group itself prioritises tasks in accordance with the above-mentioned terms of reference. The group gathers material from relevant existing databases and surveys, and initiates its own quantitative and qualitative surveys when necessary. The gathering of data is to be carried out in a systematic and controllable manner.

The teacher education institutions are to construct their own study programme descriptions and syllabuses in accordance with the national regulations and guidelines. In these local programme descriptions and syllabuses, the institutions have to follow the qualification framework and to formulate detailed learning outcomes and set concrete learning outcome goals for their students, in the area of inclusion as well as in all other areas.

In the regulations and guidelines for the Differentiated Teacher Education Programmes, the future teachers’ ability to work with the students’ basic skills are strongly accentuated. Candidates in the TE program for years 1–7 should gain sound knowledge about elementary instruction for the youngest pupils in subjects reading, writing and numeracy, while candidates in the program for years 5–10 should gain knowledge about the further development of the pupils’ basic skills in expressing themselves orally, reading, expressing themselves in writing, numeracy and using digital tools in and across subjects. Both groups of future teachers should be able to further progression in development of basic skills in their students. The basic skills, understood in this way, are important as they are prerequisites for the learning of most subjects and the acquisition of many other skills. An inclusive learning environment is an environment where learning takes place. Teachers who are aware of each student’s basic skills are more likely to be able to personalise the student’s learning and thereby to create an inclusive learning environment.

Other formulations of learning outcomes in the National Curriculum Regulations that are of relevance in connection with teacher education for inclusion, are the following:

The candidate:

- has knowledge about the legal basis, including the objective of education, the value basis, curricula and all the pupils’ rights;

- has knowledge about children’s and young people’s learning, development and education in different social, multicultural and multilingual contexts;

- has knowledge about classroom management and classroom environment, and about the development of good relations with and between pupils;

- has knowledge about the importance of and pre-requisites for good communication and good collaboration between school and home;

- has knowledge about a broad repertoire of working methods, learning resources and learning arenas, and about the connection between objectives, contents, working methods, evaluation and the abilities of the individual pupil;

- has knowledge about children in difficult circumstances and about children’s rights in a national and international perspective;

- is able to facilitate and lead good, creative learning environments;

- is able to adapt his/her teaching to the pupils’ different abilities and talents, interests and socio-cultural backgrounds, motivate them to wish to learn by clarifying the learning objectives and using varied working methods so that the pupils are able to achieve the objectives;

- is able to evaluate and document the pupils’ learning and development in relation to the objectives of the education, give feedback that promotes learning and contribute so that the pupils can evaluate their own learning;

- is, in collaboration with parents/guardians and professional bodies, able to identify the pupils’ needs and implement necessary measures.

The new future teachers shall not only be able to recognise special needs in their students and take measures to meet them. The above formulations also, although more indirectly, express that they as teachers are expected to meet/prevent learning difficulties in their individual students and to adapt their teaching to the abilities and prerequisites of their individual students, yet preserving a good (inclusive) class environment.

The new, compulsory 60 ECT subject of *Pedagogy and pupil-related skills (PPS)* is especially responsible for the integration of theory and practice in the primary and lower secondary teacher education programmes. A lot of the above mentioned themes and learning outcomes are traditionally parts of the subject of special needs education. They are now included in this new pedagogy subject. This is good news for all concerned with students with special needs and diversity, as all of the teachers from these new education programmes shall have the knowledge and skills described by them. Within both of the differentiated TE programmes, the students can, in addition, choose 30 ECTs special needs education as one of their study subjects in their fourth year of study.

Group work, log writing and other student active work methods are widely used in teacher education.

1. Attitudes and values in initial teacher education

All teachers are supposed to know and be following the Core Curriculum for primary and secondary education in their teaching activity. Knowledge of the Core Curriculum is therefore an important matter in teacher education, too. To what extent the attitudes and values mirrored in the Core Curriculum are modelled by teacher educators, we do not know.

The council of Europe gives the following overview of the Core Curriculum and of Citizenship education in Norway:

*‘The Norwegian Core Curriculum underlies the whole education system from grade 1 to 13. It is without subjects or time frames. One specific example from the core curriculum illustrates the emphasis it places on preparing the pupils for an active life in society through formal knowledge, a critical attitude, co-operation, gender equality and other values: ‘The aim of education is to expand the individual’s capacity to perceive and to participate, to experience, to empathise and to excel’.*

*The core curriculum states that the task of schools is to develop 7 human dimensions (spiritual human being, creative human being, liberally educated human being, working human being, social human being, environmentally aware human being, and integrated human being).*

*It also states that practicing democracy and democratic working methods in school (and within company training in the case of apprentices) furthers an active citizenship later in life.*

*A reform in 2006 within primary and secondary education (The Knowledge Promotion) has had an impact also on EDC and HRE. These have been strengthened with regard to the number of subjects which include EDC and especially HRE and in the amount of teaching time allocated to it.’*

Other aspects of Citizenship education are also referred to:

*‘Sami as first, second or foreign language is offered to all Sami pupils and others throughout the curriculum. Since Sami culture and social life are part of the common heritage that all pupils in the Norwegian compulsory school system should learn about, Sami culture language, history and social life comprise part of the common content of the different subjects.*

*Differentiation, adapting education to suit the needs, aptitudes and abilities of all pupils, has become a widespread method of making education inclusive for all. …’*

1. Teaching practice

In the Differentiated TE programmes, there is to be supervised, evaluated and varied practical training periods in all four years of study. The practical training is to be an integrated part of all the subjects in the programmes. The scope of practical training is to be at least 100 days spread over all four years. There must be progression in the practical training and it must be adapted to the students’ choice of subjects in all years of study and be linked to different parts of the school’s activities. Encountering different students and different students’ special needs and learning difficulties are part of the practical training, and of the preparations and follow up of the practice periods in the TE institution.

During the first year of study, the teacher’s role and work and the didactics are the main themes, while in the second year, the student and student diversity is the focus. In the third and fourth year, the school as an organisation and a professional community, and cooperation with parents and other instances outside of the school are the main themes. These themes correspond to main themes in the subject *Pedagogy and pupil-related skills (PPS)*. The practical training is to be closely linked to this PPS subject, and this link is intended to ensure an integrated teacher education where there are tight connections between the different elements and subjects.

4. Competences, assessment and accreditation

The learning outcomes stated in the National Curriculum Regulations and the national guidelines, can be said to describe competences. See 3c above.

5. Teacher educators

To facilitate collaboration between staff responsible for teaching subject based modules and courses and staff concerned with specialist content relating to inclusive and/or special needs education, equality and diversity is up to the individual teacher education institustions – see 3c above. But the white paper on teacher education encourages such collaboration and multidisciplinary cooperation among teacher educators. [[4]](#footnote-4)

The required competences of the teacher educators are first and foremost of academic kind: a masters or doctoral degree in the subject in question. Experience from school as a teacher, or having a diverse background oneself, may be reckoned an advantage when applying for a job as a teacher educator.

Most TE institutions offer some ECTs in special needs education as a subject that the students can choose. These institutions have accordingly qualified staff to teach these courses. Otherwise, there are no demands that the teacher educators have knowledge of special needs, disability or other kinds of diversity.

6. Quality assurance and follow up of new teachers

Experience and research shows that the sudden confrontation with classroom realities and total teacher responsibility can be traumatic for new teachers. Classroom experience during teacher education is from a controlled environment, with highly competent instructors at hand. Lessons are meticulously prepared and approved in advance and there is no long-term responsibility. A qualified teacher, on the other hand, operates with no safety net and has to account for the use of time and effort in terms of lifetime competence for young students. No wonder then, that many find it overwhelming.

The White Paper from 2009, *The teacher – the role and the education,* mentioned above, recognises as serious challenges the drop-out rates among teacher students as well as the high number of teachers who leave the profession. Therefore, one important ambition for our teacher education reform is to provide a softer start to a teaching career and to follow up with a new and better approach to life-long development of professional competence for teachers. In brief: We want teachers to learn as well as teach!

From August 2010, all newly qualified teachers who start a teaching career will be offered follow-up by a qualified *mentor*, an experienced colleague from the same or a neighbouring school for the first few weeks on the job. The task of the mentor will be to help the new recruits understand and manage the challenges that come with the new responsibility and role. The aim is to give professional and practical support on a one-to-one basis and help newcomers build confidence through access to the collective competence and experience of the school community.

We think a good mentoring system can make the start-up of a teaching career seem less daunting to students and teachers and eliminate the wastage of teaching resources through attrition. But in addition it is of course an important quality measure. Good guidance makes better teachers. The quality of teaching is our main objective for the reform, and bringing new teachers up to speed more quickly will give more children a better teacher. If we can also make the good teachers stay in a teaching career for longer the quality effect will multiply.

Basic education in Norway is the responsibility of the local communities. They employ teachers and they will organise the mentoring programme in schools. Teacher education institutions and asked to develop a 30-ECT, part-time study programme for teachers willing to become mentors. The programme will provide the actual and formal qualifications for teachers who want to take up mentoring, and we hope it will also stimulate interest among teachers for quality development in teaching.

7. Representation from minority groups

The number of students with immigrant background in higher education in Norway is increasing. From 2000 to 2008, the number of students with an immigrant background increased from 4000 to 19000, or from 4% to almost 9% of all students. Most of these had a non-western background. Students with a non-western background are often ambitious, and tend to start their higher education straight after finishing secondary education, to a greater extent than young people with a majority background. Statistics from 2007 shows that 27% of immigrants and 46% of persons born in Norway whose parents are immigrants, go on to higher education immediately after secondary education. Out of all students, only 24% do.

Many of the students with an immigrant background choose the more prestigious studies and professions like law and medicine. While 9% of all students have an immigrant background, they make up only 6.4% of all students of pedagogy, educational science and teaching.

8. Policy into practice examples

Linguistic and cultural diversity in the multicultural classroom – Examples from teacher student projects at Oslo University College, Norway

General background:

The examples referred to below stem from the primary and lower secondary teacher education program at Oslo University College, Faculty of Education and International Studies. One of the examples belongs to the teacher education programme which is now being phased out, the other example represents a somewhat transformed continuation of that practice, brought into the new teacher education programme, being implemented 2010/2011.

As is probably known, teacher education in Norway (both old and new) is basically a four year programme, with the possibility of completing with a master´s degree from year three, making a total of five years. The examples referred to below are both linked to the second year in the teacher education programme at Oslo University College, and they are thematically linked to the fact that Oslo is a multicultural city.

During the last forty years, due to immigration processes, Oslo has increasingly become a multilingual and multicultural city. Statistics show that in 2010 around 27% of the city´s population has immigrant background (while 11% on the national level). In the primary and secondary schools in the city, more than 30% of the students have immigrant background.

The faculty of Education and International Studies at Oslo University College, educates teachers for the primary and lower secondary school, and has, although the educational task is national, adapted to this multilingual and multicultural situation, in its approach to teacher education. Consequently intercultural encounters and challenges, are part of the curriculum in a range of different subjects. The guidelines for the new teacher education programmes at Oslo University College emphasise a multicultural perspective as central to the development of the students´ theoretical knowledge and practical skills as future teachers. Usually this is organized like interdisciplinary projects e.g. where subjects like Mathematics, Norwegian language and literature, and Pedagogy, sometimes also Religion, Philosophies of life and ethics, and other subjects, cooperate in tasks directed towards pupils in the multicultural classroom.

***Example 1:*** *Subjects and teaching in the multicultural classroom – interdisciplinary project for students in their second year of teacher education.*

Background/why this example shows innovative practice:

Firstly the interdisciplinary design of the project is in itself innovative in Norwegian teacher education. Secondly the project gives the teacher student insight in how to combine theoretical knowledge and practical skills to encounter multicultural challenges as future teachers.

Setting/situation of the example:

The project involves the following four subjects: 1) Mathematics, 2) Norwegian language and literature, 3) Pedagogy, 4) Religion, Philosophies of life and ethics. The participation is obligatory for all second year teacher students.

Partners involved**:**

Teacher Students, University College staff, teacher trainers in the classroom

Description of activity:

The students work in groups of four and are supposed to formulate one or more questions linked to linguistic and/or cultural diversity in the classroom. The question(s) are then investigated and analysed with reference to the literature from the students´ curriculum, during their period of practical teacher training that semester (three weeks). Thereafter the project is presented to teachers and fellow students at Oslo University College, a presentation that is followed by a panel discussion.

Four examples from this year´s project, serve to illustrate some of themes the teacher students aim at illuminating during this work:

* What advantages and disadvantages can be said to accompany bilingual instruction combined with mixed age groups in a primary school? A case study from a school where the proportion of children with immigrant background is very high (94%) and where the school´s approach to bilingualism is research-based.
* What conditions must be met if instruction of Norwegian as Second Language is going to be successful in a primary school? A case study from a school where unskilled teachers are used as Second Language instructors.
* How to facilitate primary schooling for children with Roma background? A case study from a school especially organised for the reception of pupils with Roma background where the goal is to provide Roma children with standardised education.
* How to deal with a situation in the lower secondary classroom where one of the pupils with a strong religious background resists working with a literary text thematizing love between young people?

Competences that are being developed:

The project contributes to developing the students´ abilities to discover the resources diversity might represent in the classroom. It will also enhance the future teachers´ abilities to cooperate in interdisciplinary projects. In addition, the students are encouraged to develop these case studies further and to elaborate on the themes, for instance when they write their final essay for their bachelor degree in their third year of study. In this way their general academic competence is also enhanced through this project.

Impact/benefits for student teachers/learners/others:

Confronted with the task of formulating questions of diversity in the classroom and to present a case study based on these questions, the teacher students are trained to combine theory and practice and thereby given tools to encounter the challenges and the resources of diversity in their future classrooms. The pupils/learners will benefit from this approach, as their resources are recognized instead of being overlooked.

Identification of what can be learned from the study about teacher education for inclusion:

One of the overarching goals in this multicultural education is to train future teachers to discover diversity in the classroom, in order to transform the different competences of the pupils into a pool of resources that can influence learning in a positive way, both for children with an immigrant background, and for children with a majority background. At the bottom of this reasoning lies the knowledge that recognising children’s cultural capital will positively influence the learning environment. This is of course, especially important for children with non-majority background, as mainstream Norwegian culture is normally highly valued and recognised in schools.

Plans for further development/extension of this practice:

This practice will be carried on, although transformed, in the new teacher education programs at Oslo University College for the years 1–7 and 5–10.

***Example 2:*** *Enhancing the development of basic skills for students in the upper primary multicultural classroom*

Background/why this example shows innovative practice:

This project combines attention to pupils´ development of basic skills with knowledge of multilingual and multicultural diversity in the classroom. In addition it addresses the fact that development of basic skills concerns all subjects in teacher education as well as in the classroom.

Setting/situation of the example:

This interdisciplinary project is meant to be implemented as part of the new teacher education program (1–7) in the study year 2011/12, for teacher students in their second year of study. Basic skills are understood as oral skills, reading skills, writing skills, skills in numeracy, and digital skills. The participation is obligatory for all students.

Partners involved:

Teacher Students, University College Staff, teacher trainers in the classroom

Description of activity:

The subjects involved are: Mathematics and Pedagogy (obligatory for all students this year) and in addition one of the following chosen subjects for each student: Arts & Crafts, English, Music, Natural Science, Physical Instruction. Support in ICT is also given to all different subject combinations.

The project is based on the fact that schooling at the upper primary level becomes more demanding as far as reading comprehension is concerned, in subjects like English, Mathematics, and Natural Science. This goes for all pupils, regardless of linguistic background, but it is nevertheless a fact that students with a minority language may be more vulnerable at this stage of education. This is why a special focus is set on the minority pupils and their reading comprehension as teaching material get more complicated both in vocabulary and structure, and in presupposing cultural knowledge needed in interpreting the content.

The role of subjects like Art & Crafts, ICT, Music and Physical Education in this project, is for instance to improve students´ abilities to read multimodal texts, in order to make students able to transmit this knowledge to the pupils exposed to multimodality in their teaching material. For instance, Arts & Crafts possess special competences regarding visual communication, but also competences related to geometrical figures students and pupils are getting acquainted with in Mathematics. The interplay between sound and verbal texts is a multimodal field that music caters for.

The project is linked to the students´ practical teacher training during four weeks in the spring term. It starts at the University College, where students are given lectures relevant to the theme in their different subjects. The students are then supposed to develop a lecture plan on a theme involving the further development of basic skills directed both towards pupils with and without Norwegian as their first language. The theme and the lecture plan is developed under supervision from the University College staff.

Finally the students carry out their lecture plan in the multicultural classroom, during their practical teacher training period, with University College staff present. This makes it possible to evaluate the project.

Competences that are being developed:

A broadened understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of the concept ‘basic skills’, and of the importance of cooperating with fellow future teachers, in the effort of enhancing the development of basic skills among the pupils. A research-based understanding of how a lack of reading comprehension in different subjects influences the learning outcome for all students, but especially for students with Norwegian as a second language.

Impact/benefits for student teachers/learners/others:

Linking the diversity perspective or the multilingual/multicultural perspective to a ‘practical’ field like the development of basic skills, gives the teacher student a very ‘hands on’ experience with teaching in a multicultural classroom.

Identification of what can be learned from the study about teacher education for inclusion:

This project idea is still being developed and is, as such, work in progress. Basically this is a way of combining the further development of basic skills for all pupils, with a special focus on pupils with another first language than Norwegian. But the project must not be understood as merely compensatory. Related to the aforementioned overarching goal of the multicultural projects at Oslo University College, an important issue is to enable our teacher students to discover and actively use the different linguistic and cultural competencies that pupils with other linguistic and cultural backgrounds represent.

Plans for further development/extension of this practice:

As development of basic skills is indeed looked upon as a major task in both schools and teacher education, this practice is probably going to be extended and elaborated. As Oslo University College educates teachers also for the multicultural schools in the capital, the development of basic skills combined with research-based knowledge of second language learning will no doubt be of great importance in the years to come.

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1. <http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/2_edc_hre_in_member_states/country_profiles/Profile_NORWAYrev120607_en.asp> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. White Paper on Teacher Education : The Teacher – the Role and the Education (Report No. 11 to the Storting) p. 5 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. National guidelines have been developed under the Ministry but are not codified. They constitute an interpretation and operationalisation of the general framework. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. White Paper on Teacher Education : The Teacher – the Role and the Education (Report No. 11 to the Storting) p. 5 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)