

Comparison of the Curricula of the Bachelor's Degree in Teaching at Austrian University Colleges of Teacher Education

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Abstract

The Bachelor's Degree in Teaching Qualification is a study to obtain a teaching qualification in secondary vocational education. It is a Bachelor of Education (abbrev. BEd) has a length of four semesters. At all four university colleges, where this degree can be acquired, it is organized as part-time study on Fridays and Saturdays. It also includes asynchronous distance learning. The students of these study teach already in parallel at a given vocational high school or college as lecturers, they have a completed university degree of 240 to 300 ECTS credits. The BEd can be acquired at the University Colleges of Teacher Education Upper Austria, of Styria, of Vienna and of Tyrol. These University Colleges are part of alliances, "Verbünde", according to Austrian law, where two or more University Colleges are combined (geographically) to teach the same curriculum. Here the curricula of these BEd studies will be compared. The goals of the studies, the qualifications achieved by completing the studies, and the Study Entry and Orientation phase will be looked at. The differences are in the courses for the STEOP, the Pedagogical-Practical Studies PPS and the length and content of the Bachelor thesis.

Keywords: Curricula, Vocational high school teacher education, Bachelor's degree of Education

1 Introduction

Austria has 14 Universities or University Colleges of Teacher Education; they are organized in four alliances (in German Verbund (sgl.), Verbünde (pl.)) with geographical orientations, north, east, south, middle, and west or combination of those.

- Verbund Nord-Ost includes (original names of the institutions in German) Pädagogische Hochschule Wien, Pädagogische Hochschule Niederösterreich located in

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Baden, Kirchliche Pädagogische Hochschule Wien/ Krems (College of Teacher Education of Christian Churches), and Hochschule für Agrar- und Umweltpädagogik (University College for Agricultural and Environmental Education), located in Vienna.

- Verbund Süd-Ost includes Pädagogische Hochschule Steiermark located in Graz, Pädagogische Hochschule Kärnten located in Klagenfurt, Private Pädagogische Hochschule Burgenland located in Eisenstadt, and Private Pädagogische Hochschule Augustinum located in Graz.
- Verbund Mitte includes Pädagogische Hochschule Oberösterreich (Linz), Pädagogische Hochschule Salzburg (Salzburg) and Private Pädagogische Hochschule der Diözese Linz.
- Verbund West includes Pädagogische Hochschule Tirol (Innsbruck), Pädagogische Hochschule Vorarlberg and Kirchliche Pädagogische Hochschule – Edith Stein, Innsbruck.

The universities of teacher education offer teacher training courses for the primary level (elementary school), for the secondary level (general education) and for the secondary level (vocational training) and enable career changers to obtain a teaching qualification. In the general education secondary level, they do this in association (or cluster) with the public universities. In other educational areas (e.g. secondary education in Vocational High Schools and Colleges), the universities of teacher education offer bachelor's degrees (and specialized master's degrees).

Four of the University Colleges have special Bachelor studies for lecturers at Vocational High Schools and Colleges. The students of the teaching bachelor's degree acquire additional studies, building on a completed relevant university degree (240 to 300 ECTS credits), the skills and knowledge that enable them to teach specialist theoretical subjects at vocational middle and high schools and colleges (in German, Berufsbildende Mittlere und Höhere Schulen, abbreviated BMHS) or comparable educational institutes. They must have at least three years of working experience in their field.

The nine professional fields are divided into: – Technology, Commerce, and Industry – Construction and Construction-related Industries - Information and Communication Technology – Art, Design and Creation – Applied Chemistry and Biotechnology – Economy and Society as well as Applied Economics and Social Affairs – Health, Exercise, Nutrition and Beauty – Tourism, Gastronomy and Food – Service.

Admission to the bachelor's degree program is given when an employment at a Vocational High School or College has been established. The vocational high school system starts usually in April or May to offer positions (naming the conditions for an application) at all Austrian vocational colleges, by beginning of July most of the positions are usually filled, so in the second half of August the preparatory courses can start (obligatory since 2022). All Austrian

schools and colleges start either the first or the second week of September, the Bachelor studies start with the academic year 1st of October.

2 Bachelor Curricula in Comparison

The study with these curricula started in the academic year 2016/2017. Here a comparative look is done at the actual version of the curriculum with is used in the Winter semester of 2023/2024. The names of the curricula are given in German, they have the links included, so you can get your own translation. All Curricula are in German.

Verbund Süd-Ost: Curriculum für das Bachelorstudium im Bereich der Sekundarstufe Berufsbildung - Facheinschlägige Studien ergänzende Studien zur Erlangung eines Lehramtes in der Sekundarstufe Berufsbildung im Entwicklungsverbund Süd-Ost, published on 09-05-2022

https://www.phst.at/fileadmin/Mitteilungsblaetter/Studienjahr_2021_2022/MB_26_Curriculum_FachErg_SekBB_Bachelor.pdf

Verbund West: Curriculum Facheinschlägige Studien ergänzendes Bachelorstudium zur Erlangung eines Lehramtes im Bereich der Sekundarstufe Berufsbildung, published on 29-06-2018 <https://www.ph-online.ac.at/pht/wbMitteilungsblaetter.display?pNr=650618>

Verbund Nord-Ost: Curriculum Bachelorstudium – Sekundarstufe Berufsbildung für das Lehramt Facheinschlägige Studien ergänzende Studien, published 05-12-2022 https://phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/BAC_FESE.pdf

Verbund Mitte: Curriculum Bachelorstudium Sekundarstufe Berufsbildung Facheinschlägige Studien ergänzende Studien, published 19-01-2022 https://ph-ooe.at/fileadmin/old_fileadmin/fileadmin/user_upload/ausbildungbs/Curricula_Neu_ab_2022/2022.01.19_BAC-FSES.pdf

The Bachelor curriculum is a modular one and lasts four semesters, part time, on Fridays and Saturdays. It must include Educational Sciences (in German Bildungswissenschaften) and Subject Didactics (Fachdidaktik). In total, 60 ECTS credits have to be studied by any student. In the curriculum Specialist Sciences (Fachwissenschaften) will be credited with 180 ECTS credits (these had been necessary to get a teaching position, anyway. Completed relevant university degree have to include 240 to 300 ECTS credits as stated above.) A Bachelor thesis is compulsory for the completion of the study, the credits given vary between the different universities. The Curriculum has the amount of 240 ECTS credits at all University Colleges (these are Educational Sciences plus Subject Didactics plus creditable Specialist Sciences plus Bachelor thesis, if named separately).

2.1 Goals

The bachelor's degree to obtain a teaching qualification in secondary vocational education aims at professional and science-oriented training in the skills necessary to practice the profession. In 2005 the Hochschulgesetz (HG) and its guiding principles (§ 8 HG 2005, § 9 HG 2005) are basis for the curricula. The aim is to provide graduates with basic general and specific pedagogical skills, technical and didactic skills, inclusive and intercultural skills, social skills and counseling skills. Personal and systemic competencies as well as the competencies for implementing the school partnership must be promoted.

2.2 Qualification Achieved by the BEd Degree

The successful completion of the bachelor's degree is a teaching qualification (HCV, § 2 Zi 2 HCV 2013) at a Secondary Vocational College. The curriculum of Verbund West specifies engineering pedagogy, especially.

“Vocational education as a science and practice of vocational education focuses on the quality of content of the concept of profession and begins with professional competence. Learning and teaching in the Vocational training establishes the connection between careers – in the sense of comprehensive professionalism open design elements – and learning at the center.” (Verbund West, 2.1., p.7 in German)

2.3 Comparison of Content and Courses

Verbund Süd-Ost: 20 ECTS credits are asked in Basis in Educational Sciences (in German Bildungswissenschaftliche Grundlagen), 30 ECTS credits in Subject Didactics (Fachdidaktik), Pedagogical-Practical Studies (Pädagogisch-Praktische Studien, abbreviated PPS) are included and consists of 16 ECTS credits). The Bachelor thesis is 10 ECTS credits, these ECTS credits are not included, they can be done at any course which had been taught during the semesters, only these lecturers can agree to look after the Bachelor thesis. Therefore, 60 ECTS credits are reached to fulfill the requirements.

Verbund West asks 23 ECTS credits in Educational Science (Bildungswissenschaft), 22 ECTS credits in Subject Didactics (Fachdidaktik), Pedagogical-Practical Studies have 15 ECTS credits. In this curriculum the Bachelor thesis with five ECTS credits is already included.

Verbund Nord-Ost: Here Educational Sciences are 30 ECTS credits, Subject Didactics are 30 ECTS credits, 15 ECTS credits for PPS are included, as well as 10 ECTS credits for the Bachelor thesis.

Verbund Mitte: 24 ECTS credits for Basis in Educational Sciences, Subject Didactics 30 ECTS credits + six ECTS credits from a compulsory chosen module, 12 ECTS credits for PPS and six ECTS credits for the Bachelor thesis are included.

The curricula vary in the number of lectures versus seminars. At Verbund Süd-Ost there are three lectures, at Verbund West are seven lectures, Verbund Nord-Ost has no lectures. Verbund Mitte offers two lectures. All the other courses are seminars or exercises, which results in much more student involvement than lectures. There are also mixt courses: lecture with exercise and exercise with lecture, UV, see later.

Table 1: Example of Course Titles for Basics of Educational Sciences in different Curricula

<i>English title</i>	<i>German title</i>
<i>Basics of the teaching profession</i>	<i>Grundlagen des Lehrberufs</i>
<i>Learning and development in adolescence</i>	<i>Lernen und Entwicklung im Jugendalter</i>
<i>Educational Psychology for Schools and Teaching</i>	<i>Pädagogische Psychologie für Schule und Unterricht</i>
<i>Reflect on the teacher's role</i>	<i>Lehrer*innen-Rolle reflektieren</i>
<i>Basics of Vocational Education</i>	<i>Grundlagen der Berufspädagogik</i>
<i>Framework conditions for vocational training</i>	<i>Rahmenbedingungen beruflicher Bildung</i>
<i>Basics of school law</i>	<i>Schulrechtliche Grundlagen</i>
<i>Specific Aspects of Vocational Education</i>	<i>Spezifische Aspekte von Berufspädagogik</i>
<i>Didactics and methodology of vocational learning</i>	<i>Didaktik und Methodik berufsbildenden Lernens</i>
<i>Lesson planning in the context of the special situation of vocational schools</i>	<i>Unterrichtsplanung im Kontext der speziellen Situation berufsbildender Schulen</i>
<i>Evaluation and Quality management in vocational training and their implementation in the professional field</i>	<i>Evaluation und QMS in der Berufsbildung und deren Umsetzung im Berufsfeld</i>
<i>Dealing with heterogeneity at vocational schools</i>	<i>Umgang mit Heterogenität an berufsbildenden Schulen</i>
<i>Teaching and learning</i>	<i>Lehren und Lernen</i>
<i>Youth culture and social habitat school</i>	<i>Jugendkultur und sozialer Lebensraum Schule</i>
<i>Legal foundations in school law</i>	<i>Gesetzliche Grundlagen im Schulrecht</i>
<i>Assessment of performance in vocational training</i>	<i>Leistungsfeststellung in der Berufsbildung</i>

<i>Group processes and conflict management</i>	<i>Gruppenprozesse und Konfliktmanagement</i>
<i>Professionalization of teachers in vocational training</i>	<i>Professionalisierung von Lehrenden in der beruflichen Bildung</i>
<i>Science and vocational training research</i>	<i>Wissenschaft und Berufsbildungsforschung</i>
<i>Education in a social context</i>	<i>Bildung im gesellschaftlichen Kontext</i>
<i>Teaching and motivation</i>	<i>Lehren, Lehren und Motivation</i>
<i>Teaching as a profession</i>	<i>Lehrberuf als Profession</i>
<i>Special aspects in educational sciences</i>	<i>Spezielle Aspekte in den Bildungswissenschaften</i>

2.4 Study Entrance and Orientation Phase STEOP

Since 2005 a law is given, that the first semester of any study has to include a study entrance and orientation phase (STEOP) (BGBl. I Nr. 74/2006, BGBl. I Nr. 81/2009). The content of the courses serves to provide orientation in the studies. Although the bachelor's degree study is only open to personnel of vocational high schools, this STEOP is obligatory. Eight ECTS credits have to be gained in the first semester at every of the universities of teacher education. As the curricula vary, also the courses vary.

2.5 STEOP Courses

The various STEOP courses are listed here (Table 2 to Table 5), the English translation is given on the left, the original German version is on the right side.

Introduction to Teaching and Learning VO 3 ECTS	Einführung in Lehren und Lernen VO 3 ECTS
Orientation in the professional field UE 1 ECTS	Orientierung im Berufsfeld UE 1 ECTS
Introductory didactic aspects SE 2 ECTS	Einführende fachdidaktische Aspekte SE 2 ECTS
Professional Curriculum Interpretation SE 2 ECTS	Professionelle Lehrplaninterpretation SE 2 ECTS

Table 2: Verbund Süd-Ost – STEOP Courses

School as an educational institution and the role of the teacher SE 1 ECTS	Schule als Bildungsinstitution und Rolle der Lehrperson SE 1 ECTS
School as an educational institution and the role of the teacher UE 3 ECTS	Schule als Bildungsinstitution und Rolle der Lehrperson UE 3 ECTS

Conditions of professional learning/teaching processes VO 1 ECTS	Bedingungen beruflicher Lern-/Lehrprozesse VO 1 ECTS
Didactics of professional learning/teaching processes SE 3 ECTS	Didaktik beruflicher Lern-/Lehrprozesse SE 3 ECTS

Table 3: Verbund West – STEOP Courses

Legal foundations in school law SE 2 ECTS	Gesetzliche Grundlagen im Schulrecht SE 2 ECTS
Performance assessment in vocational training SE 2 ECTS	Leistungsfeststellung in der Berufsbildung SE 2 ECTS
Professional curriculum interpretation and implementation SE 2 ECTS FD	Professionelle Lehrplaninterpretation und Umsetzung SE 2 ECTS
Conduct and evaluate lessons SE 2 ECTS	Unterricht durchführen und evaluieren SE 2 ECTS

Table 4: Verbund Nord-Ost – STEOP Courses

Learning and development in adolescence (incl. 1 ECTS-AP STEOP) UV	Lernen und Entwicklung im Jugendalter (inkl. 1 ECTS-AP STEOP) UV
Introduction to teaching SE 1 ECTS	Einführung in die Unterrichtstätigkeit SE 1 ECTS
Educational Psychology for Schools and Teaching SE 2 ECTS	Pädagogische Psychologie für Schule und Unterricht SE 2 ECTS
Conditions of teaching and learning processes in vocational training SE 1 ECTS	Bedingungen von Lehr- und Lernprozessen in der Berufsbildung SE 1 ECTS
Didactics of teaching and learning processes in vocational training SE 3 ECTS	Didaktik von Lehr- und Lernprozessen in der Berufsbildung SE 3 ECTS

Table 5: Verbund Mitte – STEOP Courses

2.6 Pedagogical-practical Studies PPS

Verbund Süd-Ost: “The pedagogical concept is as follows: The central objectives are to develop an investigative attitude, a scientific-reflexive habitus, and a habitus of routinized practical skills. In keeping with the intention of evoking personalized development processes in the best possible way, personalized learning, practical research as well as research and practical coaching interact in a concerted manner. As learning arrangers, practical coaches encourage prospective teachers to engage in reflection processes as well as development and implementation as part of the pedagogical-practical studies through structured orientation discussions tailored to the individual needs of the students, the construction of adequate tasks

or learning environments and individually tailored coaching efforts and evaluation of independent solutions". (Verbund Süd-Ost, p.14, in German).

The concept uses an accompanied practice transfer. The 16 ECTS credits are divided in four belonging to Educational Sciences and 12 ECTS credits belonging to Subject Didactics.

Verbund West has in total 15 ECTS credits. Verbund Nord-Ost divides the ECTS credits in five to Educational Science and 10 to Subject Didactics. Verbund Mitte divides in three ECTS credits from Basis in Educational Sciences and 12 to Subject Didactics. This curriculum specifies also action research (in German Aktionsforschung). It also specifies pedagogical-practical studies in detail: it should include:

- Professional self-image as an educator with special consideration of the Vocational pedagogy and the EPIK model (Schratz et al, 2008)
- Lesson planning and implementation
- Performance assessment and assessment
- Heterogeneity in learning requirements: individual vocational training; Talent and Promoting talented people in vocational training
- Reflection and evaluation of teaching activities
- School organization and processes
- Team building and cooperation
- Quality Management instruments for school and teaching development (Verbund West, p. 29, in German)

The curriculum also lists the competencies, that should be gained by the Pedagogical-Practical Studies.

The graduates can.

- plan, implement, reflect on, and evaluate fundamental elements of school teaching and learning in vocational training based on specialist sciences, specialist didactics and educational sciences according to the EPIK model (Schratz et al, 2008),
- develop an educational-professional self-image and continuously work on your own professionalization through personal priorities,
- create, apply, argue, reflect, and evaluate concepts, procedures and feedback for performance assessment and assessment,
- prepare and carry out your lessons in a methodical, goal- and professional-field-oriented manner,
- conduct consultations in a school environment with students, apprentice trainers, cooperation partners and interdisciplinary groups or organizations in an appreciative, context-, addressee- and task-specific manner,
- implement the special features of individual training in the vocational school system in everyday teaching in a target group-appropriate manner,
- apply, analyze, and evaluate the QMS instruments for school and teaching development and develop future action strategies,

- recognize talents and apply options for promoting talent and talent,
- recognize the heterogeneity of the teaching group as a resource and potential and design the lessons in a way that is appropriate for diversity,
- promote the acquisition of social-communicative skills as well as the ability of students to work in teams and deal with conflict through social learning and cooperative forms of work,
- develop an investigative attitude in teaching and use school learning areas as starting points for investigative learning and academic-scientific cooperation benefits,
- understand and justify the relevance of the theory-practice relationship for vocational education research and fields of action,
- derive cultural, ethnic, religious, age, gender, language, talent, and disability-related diversity based on models and theories of inclusive pedagogy and their significance for professional pedagogical action. (Verbund West, p. 30, in German)

3 Conclusion

Although a small country by its size, Austria is divided into nine provinces, furthermore private partners are interested in teaching and pedagogy. Therefore, 14 universities colleges of teacher education exist. They are organized in four alliances, in all four of them teachers for the secondary vocational level for vocational schools and colleges, Berufsbildende Mittlere und Höhere Schulen, BMHS, can acquire the Bachelor of Education degree, BEd, which is necessary to teach the specific fields. To get a position a completed relevant university degree of 240 to 300 ECTS credits must be given.

The four curricula have the same modular framework, 240 ECTS credits, four semesters, part time, but in detail there are differences in the number of Educational Sciences and Subject Didactics, different courses taught, different courses for the study entrance and orientation phase and different ideas about the Pedagogical-Practical Studies. Also, the scope of ECTS credits for the Bachelor thesis vary from five, to six and to 10 ECTS credits.

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