

Teaching practice placement abroad

Autumn semester 2016

Linnæus University

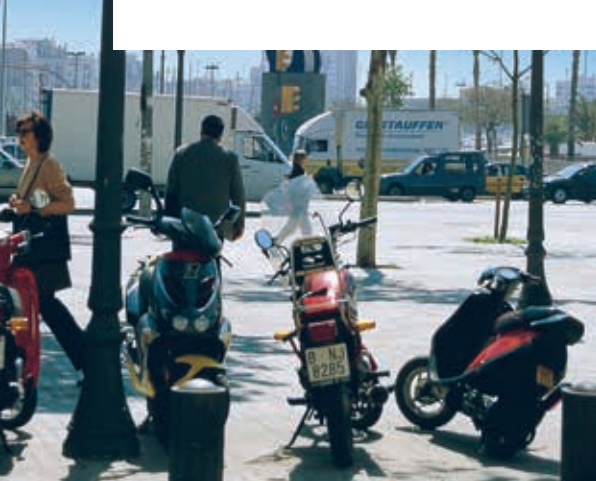
Sweden





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The purpose of this material

This workbook is a concrete tool for you to use in the academic and professional part of your teaching practice placement abroad. By starting preparing your teaching practice placement abroad well in advance and specifying your goals with it, you will be able to identify and communicate the knowledge you have gained afterwards, as well as how you want to use this knowledge in your future studies and your future career. If you follow the objectives and reflections of this workbook on your newly acquired knowledge and present this knowledge in accordance with the instructions below, you will have developed an excellent material that you could attach to your CV or present at a future job interview as confirmation that you have specific, multidimensional knowledge and experience as well as reflections on this.

The benefits of teaching practice placement abroad and identifying and communicating your knowledge

Linnaeus University sees teaching practice placement abroad as an opportunity for trainee teachers to complete their teaching practice placement abroad in a similar way as in Sweden, with equivalent quality and objectives. However, teaching practice placement abroad includes more nuances and objectives than teaching practice placement in Sweden. This is what makes teaching practice placement abroad profitable. In order for you as a student to make the most of these outcomes, which are often more implicit when it comes to studies and placements abroad, we have compiled this material with relevant questions to help you develop new, global knowledge.

If you specify what experience and knowledge you wish to develop (in addition to the objectives in the syllabus) before you arrive at your host school abroad, you have the opportunity to reflect on this while you are abroad and after coming home, and by that you can also confirm what experience and knowledge you have acquired. We have chosen to divide the experience and knowledge teaching practice placement abroad can lead to in a number of categories to make it easier for you to specify possible outcomes:

Outcomes in the syllabus

Above all, your teaching practice placement abroad will be about you achieving the objectives specified in the course syllabus. The syllabus is part of a major academic context and has a clear focus on progression. Therefore, it is essential that you read the syllabus and reflect early on how you are going to achieve the objectives during your teaching practice placement abroad. Well in advance, you and your examiner or the person responsible for the course should discuss how you are going to achieve the objectives in the syllabus at the school abroad and how these objectives will be examined. We recommend that you print the syllabus and other study material and keep it in this workbook so that you can always access

it before, during and after your teaching practice placement abroad.

Academic outcomes

A major part of teaching practice placement includes connecting theories and methods to practical work. Teaching practice placement abroad enables you to see several dimensions of the theories and methods you have studied and reflected on during your studies. This includes both concretising theories and methods in teaching in general, and seeing this knowledge from several new perspectives. The school abroad might use methods you have not experienced before or work on the basis of a curriculum with other perspectives than those you are used to in Sweden. By relating knowledge you have acquired during your studies in Sweden to new knowledge of theories, methods and curricula abroad you have the opportunity to see new dimensions of what you learn. Before you leave, try to specify the academic knowledge you have acquired at Linnaeus University and reflect on how you want to develop this during your stay abroad. If you work systematically with testing theories and methods in a new light, we hope that you will be able to acquire knowledge in your further studies at Linnaeus University in a better and more efficient manner.

Professional outcomes

What experiences and knowledge from previous teaching practice placements do you want to bring to the school abroad and test from new perspectives? Try to specify one or a couple of questions that you would like to explore during your teaching practice placement. What teaching methods work in a Swedish context, and will these also be suitable in the new context? By specifying what is included in a teacher's competence and testing your ideas from new perspectives, you will be able to communicate your competence and why this is relevant in a certain teaching context, for example to future colleagues or employers. You will also be able to express ideas and knowledge of international perspectives in your classroom, since you have experience of this and you have reflected on your knowledge.

Personal outcomes

You probably also have personal wishes concerning your teaching practice placement abroad. Be it making new friends, experiencing new cultures or getting to know yourself and boost your self-esteem, you will achieve your goals more easily if you try to specify and work with achieving them before, during and after your stay abroad.

Many thanks to Dr David Wick, Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, California, USA, for all his inspiration in our work with this material.

Before and during your stay abroad

Outcomes in the syllabus

When you do your teaching practice placement abroad you will be registered and examined in accordance with the same syllabus as students who do their teaching practice placement in Sweden. In most cases, this means that you can work with your syllabus and/or other assessment documents for each teaching practice placement course in the same way you would if you had chosen to do your teaching practice placement in Sweden.

In some cases, however, the Swedish syllabus might include aspects that can be difficult to transfer directly to the new context. For example, the school abroad might have another view on basic values than Swedish schools, or its curricula might be different from your own subject studies. It could also be that trainee teachers in the country to which you are going do not have teaching practice placement in the way we are used to in Sweden, and that there is a different approach to teaching practice placement and trainee teachers. Both the content and objectives to be achieved in the teaching practice placement might therefore need to be reinterpreted in a way that enables you to be examined in accordance with the Swedish syllabus, although the content of your teaching practice placement differs from a Swedish context. Your reflections on the Swedish syllabus in relation to your teaching practice placement abroad are therefore an important part of your preparations and your daily work at the school abroad.

You should thus go through the following 'checklist' together with the person responsible for the course and/or the examiner well in advance of your teaching practice placement. The checklist can also form the basis for rewarding reflections and discussions with your supervisor abroad.

Objectives in the teaching practice placement syllabus

- Which of the objectives in the syllabus do you think are relatively culturally neutral? Which are more culturally dependent?
- Do you think any of the objectives could be hard or even impossible to achieve during your teaching practice placement abroad?
- Can you reinterpret the objectives to fit into the new context?
- If it is not possible to reinterpret the objectives, how can you demonstrate that you have achieved the objectives instead?

Content

- In what way will your teaching practice placement be different from one carried out in Sweden? Are you okay with teaching in English? What does your supervision look like? How do you plan your teaching together with your supervisor?

- Does the school abroad want you to teach in a specific subject/subject area/theme during your stay there? Make sure to find out what is expected of you well in advance. For example, it could be good to be prepared to tell pupils and teachers at the school about Swedish schools and what it is like to be young in Sweden.

Examination

- How will your teaching practice placement abroad be examined?
- How can you as a student 'prove' that you have achieved the objectives without a visit from the person responsible for the course?
- Agree with your examiner on the form of examination and what you will be required to do in terms of e.g. written assignments, video calls and/or certificates from the school well in advance of your teaching practice placement abroad.

General reflections on teaching practice placement abroad

- What general thoughts and ideas do you have concerning your teaching practice placement abroad?
- Do you feel anxious or excited about anything?



Outcomes of teaching practice placement abroad

A meeting

Your teaching practice placement abroad gives you a unique possibility to experience another country's school system in general, and the work environment and characteristics of a specific school in particular. This general knowledge of the new country and its school system will give you a good chance to see beyond the general and typical view on the country and its culture. When you reflect on the knowledge and experience you take with you from your teaching practice placement abroad, we recommend you to describe it in the form of a meeting. By describing your new experiences and knowledge in terms of a meeting with a person, a phenomenon or a situation, you also have the opportunity to add an individual perspective and see beyond your first instincts and ideas of a country or its culture.

Before you leave you should read about the country's education acts, curricula and syllabi for the subject(s) you will be teaching. Try to learn as much as possible about the school structure of the country before you leave. This will enable you to develop more in-depth knowledge once you are there, since you will be able to ask the pupils and teachers at the school more complex questions. The answers to some of the questions you may have might be easy to find by searching the internet, while others will be more difficult to find before you leave. You should also relate previous courses in your programme (including previous teaching practice placements and independent

projects) to your teaching practice placement abroad, by reflecting on approaches in the new country to theories or practices you have encountered at home.

Choose **one** or some of the questions below (or think of other appropriate questions) to work with in connection to your teaching practice placement abroad. Try to specify, and write down, your thoughts on the academic outcomes you would like to take with you from your teaching practice placement abroad. During your stay abroad, try to meet people and/or situations that could give you answers to your questions. For example, if you are interested in finding out more about a certain subject and how it could be taught, interview a teacher or a pupil and relate this to what you have read in policy documents and other relevant texts. During your stay abroad and after coming home, write down your reflections on your meetings with people and situations. Present the meeting, for example by describing it on the basis of a photo or by describing the people you have met. Also describe how the meeting has been beneficial for you and your teaching practice placement abroad, by relating it to your previous knowledge and relevant sources. **Try not to generalise or draw too general conclusions about teaching, but present your view of your meeting with a certain person or phenomenon that has developed your knowledge and that you want to take with you in your future studies and your future career.**

Relevant questions for your teaching practice placement abroad

Try to be concrete in your questions and for each question state clearly:

WHAT do you want to develop during your stay abroad and what knowledge do you want to take with you back home?

WHY do you choose to focus on these experiences and this knowledge?

HOW are you going to work and WHO do you want to meet to get this experience and develop this knowledge? Is there anything you need to prepare before you leave?

HOW and when will you assess whether you have achieved the specific objectives of your stay abroad?

Of course, you could change your questions during your stay abroad. What is important is that you find the answers to a couple of relevant questions and that you feel that doing your teaching practice placement abroad has been beneficial. Discuss your objectives with the person responsible for the course and feel free to come up with other questions than those we suggest.

- Which of the theories and methods you have studied and possibly practised in Sweden are possible to use at the school abroad? Why are they (not) applicable?
- What does the school structure in the country look like? When do children start school and how many school years are compulsory? What does a regular school day look like for the pupils in the country?
- What is the relation between pupils and teachers at the school like and how does this affect the teaching and the pupils' knowledge development?
- How do the various policy documents at the school relate to each other? For example, is there an education act and curricula and syllabi with knowledge requirements like in Sweden or are the policy documents structured differently? How do teachers use the policy documents?
- What are the documents' similarities to Swedish policy documents in terms of general policies and views on teaching? What are the main differences?
- How are pupils examined/graded in the country? For example, is grading based on national/regional tests or continuous assessments, or a mixture? Are

there differences within the school or does everyone assess and grade in the same way?

- What subjects are included in the country’s primary and upper secondary school respectively? Are there subjects in the curriculum that we do not have in Sweden? Are there subjects in Sweden that are not included in the school system of the country? How can you develop your specific subject knowledge during your stay abroad? Do you think the views on your subjects are different in the country compared to Sweden?
- What country-specific phenomena (language, geography, culture, politics, etc.) do you want to learn more about and use in your future teaching? What are the views of the local population on these phenomena? Are there any clichés?
- Are there teaching methods that you would like to highlight in a new, foreign context? What methods can teachers at the school exemplify?
- What international experiences can help you create an ‘international’ classroom in Sweden? Do any of your colleagues abroad inspire you?
- What contacts would you like to have with the local population (teachers, pupils, the school principal and other staff), which you could use in your future teaching? Could you make contacts for future networks?
- What personal qualities do you think you will develop during your stay abroad? Is there a specific quality that you would like to focus on?

PERSONAL NOTES

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Taking the step

Getting ready to go

As a trainee teacher at Linnaeus University you have the opportunity to do one of your teaching practice placements at a school abroad. You could contact appropriate schools around the world to find your own host school, or apply to do your teaching practice placement abroad at one of Linnaeus University's partner schools.

Applications for teaching practice placement abroad should be submitted to the teacher training office by 1 February in the academic year before the teaching practice placement period. Each application is tested on the basis of the student's statement of motives and previous study results. The basic requirements for teaching practice placement abroad are the same as for teaching practice placement with our Swedish partners. Prerequisites can be found in each syllabus.

The placement is approved by a teaching practice placement coordinator and the person responsible for the course and/or the examiner, and they also inform the host school of the requirements for the teaching practice placement. When this has been done, it is time for you to start planning and preparing in accordance with the information in this workbook.

Contact information

The host school

CONTACT PERSON, NAME
ADDRESS
E-MAIL

Linnaeus University

PHONE NUMBER +46 (0)772-28 80 00 COORDINATOR AT TEACHER TRAINING OFFICE Katrin Bladh , e-mail katrin.bladh@lnu.se
SUBJECT COORDINATOR/EXAMINER
E-MAIL



Financing

You have the opportunity to receive scholarships from your home municipality or county, teachers' unions and organisations.

Preparations

In order for you to adapt to the environment and work during your teaching practice placement abroad, it is good to be familiar with the country and its society and school system. For example, you can prepare by following the news from the country before the period. Also investigate specific regulations and dress codes at the host school.

You are responsible for travel and living costs during your teaching practice placement abroad. Costs for visa and vaccination may also be applicable.

Insurance

When you do your teaching practice placement abroad, a contract is signed between the host school and Linnaeus University. This means that you are covered by Kammarkollegiet's insurance Student UT. Also make sure to check your own insurance, as Kammarkollegiet's insurance does not cover everything. Insurance terms can be found on Kammarkollegiet's website: **www.kammarkollegiet.se**

Contact person at Linnaeus University for notification of loss or damage: Robert Andersson, Office of Student Affairs, e-mail robert.andersson@lnu.se

Additional own insurance

INSURANCE COMPANY
INSURANCE NUMBER



Checklist

Checklist before teacher training abroad

- Valid passport
- Visa (*if applicable*)

Checklist before you leave

- I have a saved digital copy of my checklist and have shared it with my family in case of emergency

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (UD) has a great smartphone app called Resklar where you can plan your trip and find country information, regarding VISA, vaccination, and much more.

Travel documents

- I have brought a copy of my tickets and left a copy at home
- I have left a copy of my travel route at home

Passport

PASSPORT NUMBER

- I have brought a copy of my passport and left a copy at home

The Swedish Embassy in my host country

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Finance

CREDIT/DEBIT CARD

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CARD NUMBER

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EXPIRATION DATE

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INFORMATION ABOUT BLOCKING CARD

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Vaccination

If vaccinations are necessary, bring a vaccination certificate and leave a copy at home.

Visa

If a visa is necessary, bring all documents concerning your visa and leave copies at home.



Certificate

This is to certify that

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has shared, in the format of an oral presentation,
the learning experiences gained during a teaching practice placement abroad.

The experiences were presented from an academic and professional
perspective, and reflected how new competences had developed by active
actions as well as indirectly by experiencing a different intercultural context.

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Name

.....
Title/position

.....
Date, place and signature

Linnæus University



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