



UNIVERSIDAD
DE GRANADA



TeachersMOD

Future Elementary School Teachers
Modernization in Kurdistan

D5.1 Pedagogical Centres' Syllabus Review

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to review the Pedagogical Centres' syllabus as well as enumerate achievements, outline improvable areas and make suggestions for professional development measures.

The Pedagogical training programme consists of 60 credits divided into 6 modules, represented in the Study Guide as shown in Figure 1.

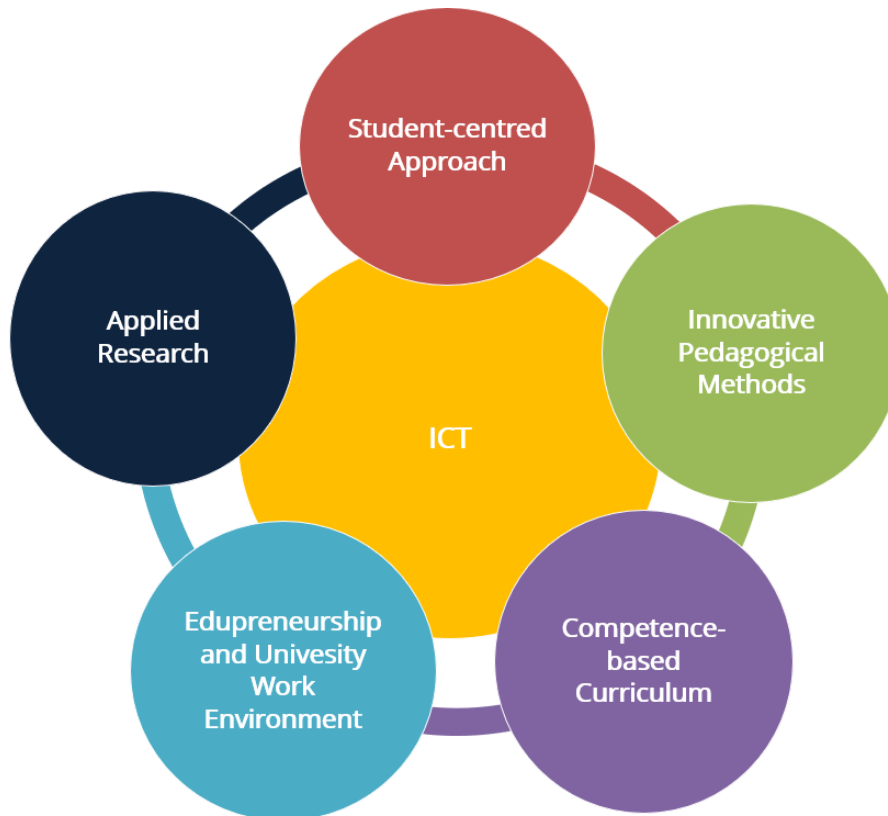


Figure 1 Modules in the Pedagogical Training Programme

The modules are divided into “into themes and sub-themes” in order to develop the main content.

2. Checklist

In order to assess the different modules in the Pedagogical Training for Teacher Professional Development carried out by the Pedagogy Centres at each Kurdish university, we were provided with the Study Guide developed under the supervision and approval of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

After reading the guide, the main sections in the modules were identified to check if the information provided along the document regarding the description and contents of the different modules was in line with the structure selected.

Modules are organized following a specific structure:



- Module Description,
- Competence objectives,
- Teaching Themes,
- Assessment Methods, and
- Literature.

After the revision of the different modules, a checklist was elaborated to help the module coordinators to improve the final result in order to provide the same information for each module, following a standard template (Appendix I). The UGR teachersMOD team has experience in this matter, after updating and standardising course guides at the University of Granada for the academic year 2021/2022 (Appendix I). It includes not only formal aspects but also structural aspects so that all modules are described in the same terms and in the same level of specification. The criteria selected have a two-fold intention, one the one hand they have been used to assess the different modules contained in the Study Guide for a thorough analysis and on the other hand they may result useful for revising, standardising and improving the Study Guide itself.

Any course/module description would rather include information about:

- Module title
- Teacher(s) and contact details (email, phone number, office number, etc.)
- Brief module description
- General and specific competences
 - General
 - Specific
- Objectives (expressed as learning outcomes)
- Detailed syllabus (themes)
 - Theory
 - Practice
- Bibliography
 - Basic reading list
 - Complementary reading
- Recommended links
- Teaching methods
- Assessment methods
 - Instruments
 - Criteria (including percentage on the final mark)
- Additional information

In this last section, 'additional information' it can be included any aspect not taken into account before which is relevant for the course, for example, information to assess students with any impairment or other specific educational support needs. As an example, the information included at the UGR would be the following: "for students with a disability or other specific educational support needs, the assessment examinations must be adapted to their needs, in accordance with the assessment guidelines provided by the University of Granada".



3. Module Analysis

As it was mentioned before, the programme follows a certain structure: Module Description, Competence objectives, Teaching Themes, Assessment Methods, and Literature. The first aspect to point out is that some modules use similar (but not exact) terms for the aforementioned headings: Instead of Literature in module 1 it is used 'references', assessment methods in module 2 is substituted by 'assessment criteria' and in module 3 by 'assessment tools'. Besides, in module 1 there are two series of Assessment criteria before and after assessment methods. It is stated that "study performance assessment in this module has to be done based on themes' objectives and outcomes", but they have not been stated in the description of the module. There are learning outcomes and assessment criteria in theme 1 but not in the following two themes of the module. It might be advisable to provide the same information for all of them. Module 4 has no Competence Objectives, Assessment Methods or Literature. Module 5 has no Competence Objectives or Assessment Methods.

Table 1 below summarizes the differences among modules regarding the basic structure, it can be seen that there are differences in terminology but also in content, some are more detailed than others. As teachers we should provide students with good practices to model, and in this case, it is even more relevant and teacher trainees need to know beforehand what they are expected to learn, how and how the learning is going to be assessed. Planning beforehand helps to prioritize what is important and how things are going to be done in class and how assessment will be performed. In the same way, after having a good model, teacher trainees will do the same when preparing and planning their courses/modules. And again, those teachers who have been trained and will be teaching future elementary teachers will help them pay attention to the importance of planning before teaching and providing students with relevant information about their learning process.

Table 1: Structural and Terminological Differences among modules in the Study Guide

	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Module 6
Module Description	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Competence Objectives	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Teaching Themes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Assessment Methods	✓	✗	Assessment Tools	✗	✗	✗
Literature	references	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Learning Outcomes	Theme 1 only					
Assessment Criteria	Theme 1 only	✓				



3.1 Outstanding aspects

The most important aspect is that there is a common Study Guide for all the Pedagogical Centres in every university in the Kurdistan region. It is extremely important to provide the same training and require the same outcomes for all participants and this is being already done. This is an excellent way to improve quality teaching in higher education. Unfortunately, only five KRG universities participate as partners in teachersMOD, but we are sure that by collaborating with the rest of the universities the improvements performed in the training will reach every university in and out of the project.

3.2 Improvable aspects/areas

The most important suggestion in order to improve, on the one hand, the Study Guide itself, and on the other, the quality of the training, it is to produce a template for the modules. This way, they will include the same sections, use the font type and headings, and the final result would be a standardized document with a sound structure. First, it has to be decided which information is relevant for the template so that each module is described in the same terms including the information which has been decided among all the teachers or people in charge of the task. The aforementioned criteria —also included in the checklist (Appendix I)— might prove useful in this task.

In order to improve the Pedagogical training programme regarding the topics which have been developed —following the needs stated by Kurdish partners— along the different trainings inside teachersMOD and specifically during WP5 training delivered last September in Vila Real (Portugal) for Pedagogical Centres, there are certain measures which can be adopted, depending on the willingness to alter the structure of the programme.

There are two different ways of approaching the changes or additions suggested below. One would be to maintain the original structure of six modules and add new themes into the corresponding modules (Section 4 below). The other would be to include new modules, which would mean to vary the original structure of six modules into nine modules and adapting contents and timing to this new organisation (section 5 below).

4. New themes in modules

By adding important themes into the different modules, it is possible to maintain the current Pedagogical Training Programme organisation in six different modules. Nevertheless, it would be advisable to change the design of Figure 1 (Modules in the Pedagogical Training Programme) to represent more faithfully the actual structure of the modules. The aforementioned figure suggests that ICT is worked in all the modules, but although nowadays ICT is involved in almost any task we perform in any sphere of our everyday life, ICT is the first module of the programme, therefore, it should be included in the same level as the rest of the modules.





Figure 2: Current Modules in the Pedagogical Training Programme

4.1 Special Educational Needs (SEN)

This topic was up in the Kurdish partners' list of interests or needs and a good way of introducing it in the Pedagogical Training Programme would be by adding content about SEN at least in one of the modules.

By introducing specific information on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in module 3 (Innovative Pedagogical Methods) trainees would be more than ready to cater for SEN in their lessons. It could also be included in Module 2 (Student-centred approach) as UDL fosters motivation and is centred in students. It would be important to bear in mind that it should be addressed in the 'assessment tools' section as those might be adapted differently depending on the different needs.



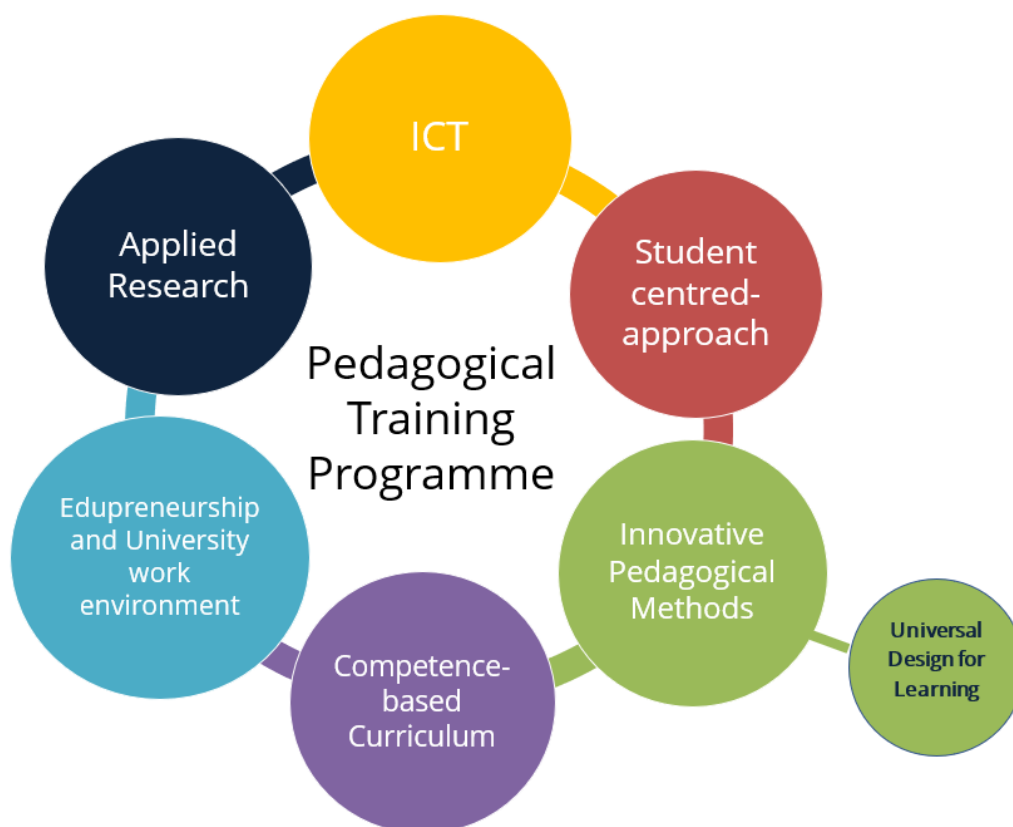


Figure 3: Modules in the Pedagogical Training Programme including UDL to cater for SEN

5. New modules

If there is a possibility of modifying the Pedagogical Training Programme structure, it would be advisable to include some new modules, for example, a SEN module, an assessment one and a teaching placement period.

4.1 Teaching Placement/Internships

It would be interesting to pay attention to the important aspect of transferring theory —what has been learnt— into practice by including a teaching placement period, which does not have to be long, but it would provide trainees with the opportunity of testing themselves by getting some hands-on experience. It would reassure teacher trainees and would provide instructors with material to provide high quality feedback as the final part of the training. If only one module can be added, it would be advisable to include this one to the detriment of the following ones (SEN and assessment). It would be quite easy to deduct one or a few hours to each module and include a teaching placement module.



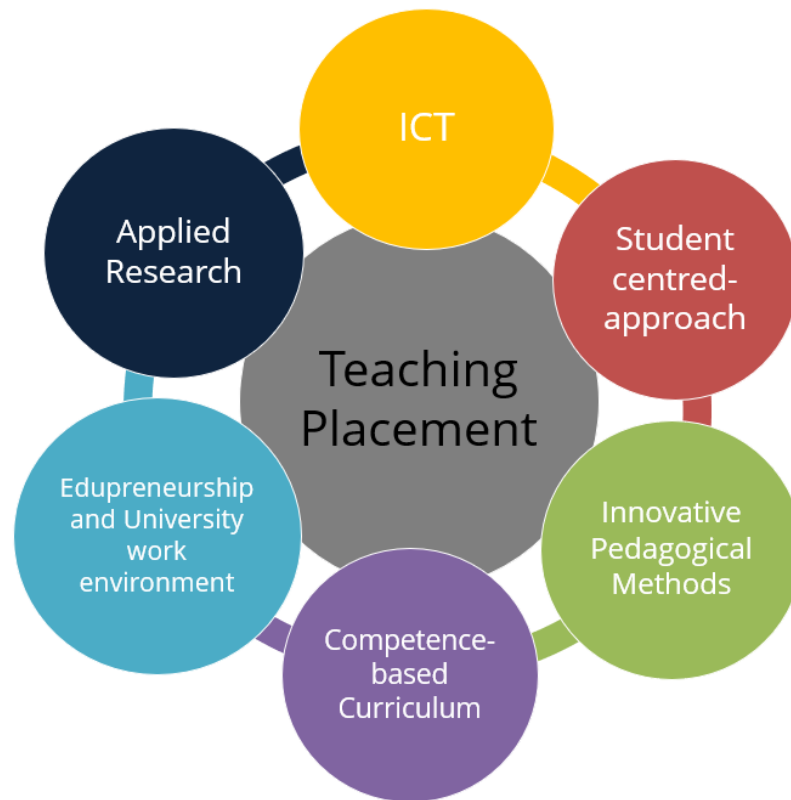


Figure 4: 7-Module Pedagogical Training Programme (including a teaching placement)

4.2 Special Educational Needs Management

As it has been mentioned, SEN was the most mentioned need by partners. Therefore, by including a module focusing on this important topic, trainees would get a more thorough training on how to deal with differences among students in the same class.

4.3 Assessment

The importance of assessment in teaching is undeniable and it would be interesting and enriching for participants to include a specific module on evaluation where all the knowledge acquired in the other modules can be revisited and applied to assessment, especially competence-based evaluation and the use of technology in evaluation.



Figure 5: 9-Module Pedagogical Training Programme

6. Conclusion

The structure of the Pedagogical Training for Teacher Professional Development is correct and the areas of improvement or aspects suggested along these pages will only serve as an opportunity for discussion and reflection among the Pedagogical Centres' staff. They are the ones who should work on updating the pedagogical curriculum in accordance with the rest of the Pedagogical Centres not involved in the teachersMOD project and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. The changes performed, either in structure, and/or in the modules' content will help to qualify future educators with updated knowledge and tools to develop their work more efficiently and aligned with international inclusive policies and social requirements.



Appendix I

N#	CRITERIA	
1.	Standardised template for the module (course)	
2.	Module title	
3.	Module description	
4.	Module contents	
5.	ECTS credits for module	
6.	ECTS credits for individual contents inside module	
7.	Includes information about teaching staff	
8.	Includes information about how to contact teaching staff (tutorials, etc.)	
9.	Includes recommendations to study the module	
10.	Includes current (updated) competences to be acquired by trainees	
11.	Includes objectives expressed as learning outcomes	
12.	Includes module content: theoretical aspects structured in topics/units	
13.	Includes recommended basic bibliography and follows guidelines stated (APA, Harvard, MLA, etc.)	
14.	Includes description of teaching methodology	
15.	Includes information about attendance requirements	
16.	Includes practical aspects: projects, participation in class and how it will be assessed in the module	
17.	Includes the assessment system, criteria and % of each activity for the final mark	
18.	Includes a detailed description of the assessment for those who cannot attend to all the sessions	
19.	Includes information about tuition language (when necessary)	
20.	The evaluation system allows students to get the maximum mark in the course	
21.	When there are several teachers in the course, the evaluation has to be common to all of them and coherent with the global structure	
22.	Includes information about students with SEN or other needs	

