EDUCATION KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Output 11. Training Contents for Prospective Teachers, University and School Tutors

Project Information

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1. Introduction

As part of the EKT project, University College of Teacher Education Vienna has taken on the role of leading in the development of a small private online course (SPOC) on introducing the key school placement (SP) actors - student teachers (prospective teachers), university tutors (lectures) and school tutors (school teachers, cooperating teachers, mentors) – to the EKT system, and engaging with the methodology that would support SP in the three key areas:

1. The cooperation and collaboration between university tutors and school teachers;
2. The individualized follow-up of students in school practicum;
3. The reflective practice of prospective teachers.

Thus, we aim to create a SPOC framework covering ideas and activities that will be useful to student teachers, university tutors and school tutors during the SP as well engaging the key actors with the EKT system. These cover activities around the key phases of SP as described in WP3 for university tutors, school tutors and student teachers. The focus throughout is on capacity building for meaningful professional dialogue and reflective practice.

The underpinning purpose of the work is not simply the making of the SPOC to support the EKT system, but it is to develop a flexible methodology to enhance professional dialogue, student teachers' agency and promote an action-oriented reflection among student teachers. The literature and data gathered during WP2 offered a basis on which to identify sets of the key ideas and concepts that we use to define and develop the framework for the EKT SPOC content and tasks.

In summary: the purpose of this Report is to show work-in-progress in relation to O10 Contents for University Tutors, School tutors and Student Teachers.

2. Design Process

The University College of Teacher Education Vienna EKT team presented the SPOC design approach to the partners during the December workshop 2020 drawing from WP2 O5 and literature review around SP.

The presented approach was based on the following principles and ideas: well-integrated pedagogical approaches; content and activities that allow for flexibility and provide opportunity for reflection and professional dialogue; an approach that fosters communication and collaboration opportunities within EKT partner universities and SP schools.

Further feedback and ideas were gathered from the EKT partners during the first months of 2021. These had to be aligned with the evolving functionalities of the EKT Platform. The feedback from the academic partners on the first proposal and the conversations with the technical board informed the Outline of the SPOC contents and activities and its design presented further.

It should be mentioned that this is not the final outline of the SPOC contents since some changes can be made dependent on the data from the questionnaire (O5), further developments of the methodological framework (O3) and the EKT Platform (O4), and the final feedback from the academic partners planned for the end of May.

3. The EKT SPOC Architecture: the underpinning design and content outline

As noted briefly above, the underpinning purpose of the work on the EKT SPOC is not simply the making of the SPOC to support the EKT system, but to develop a flexible methodology to enhance professional dialogue, student teachers' agency and support an action-oriented reflection among student teachers; importantly to create a meaningful learning experience for all the SPOC participants.

The complexity of the task is (1) diverse SP contexts in each EKT partner institution; (2) the aim to engage three target groups in the SPOC: student teachers, university tutors and school tutors, and considering how these different roles are represented in the EKT system and with which affordances they are provided; (3) the aim to reflect both primary and secondary SP ITE programme needs and all ISP cycles needs. Much of the work has been to identify and examine sources in the literature and in the practice-world of SP teacher education that could contribute to building the SPOC framework that would respond to that complexity. Furthermore, the SPOC design relies hugely on project study (WP2), methodological framework (WP3), and the evolvement of the EKT platform (WP4) which meant taking on board all the developments in those WPs as they evolve. Finally, considering that SPOC is part of the pilot one of its goals – as we see it – to facilitate the evaluation of the experience of the EKT system of the key target groups.

Thus, the decisions around content and activities that come to constitute the initial EKT SPOC framework are informed by the underpinning purpose and the complexity described above, the EKT system, the methodological framework presented in WP3 and plans for the Pilots. Discussions in the University College of Teacher Education Vienna EKT Team and staff have been around finding the most flexible and manageable approach (specifically in terms of workload for the university tutors and school tutors) that is activity-driven and collaborative and that would ensure the set goals are achieved. The chosen strategy was formulated as (1) to support communication channels, and interaction between and within the three target groups through 'collaborative activities'; (2) to provide opportunities to try out the tools in the platform ('learning by doing' approach).

We draw on a number of sources that direct the emerging SPOC framework. The first, and most defining source, for our work on the SPOC architecture has been the Methodological Framework (WP3); in particular, the description of the activities that university tutors, school tutors and teacher students undertake at different stages of the SP. Stage 2 described in WP3 as "Preparation before the stay in the schools" was identified as key since the SPOC needs to train the three target groups in the EKT System as well as enhance the communication channels between the three target groups from the very beginning.

Further, in the University College of Teacher Education Vienna Team it was discussed how and if the SPOC could play a role in engaging the 'learners' in meaningful professional dialogues and collaborative reflections - supported by technology, and importantly in adding a value to the SP experience. It was decided to include into the contents and activities elements of Action Research (AR) for teachers with a focus on collaborative reflections and analytical stance on one's own practice with the goal to understand one's own practice and improve certain aspects in focus (Elliot 1991). The choice to try out elements of Action Research as a questioning approach draws on the core premises that: (1) developing the ability to reflect about practice requires that preservice teachers learn to question existing practice, and consider alternatives (Ross 1987); (2) AR is a process that may be used to focus teaching questions, observations and reflections, and organize and interpret the multiple classroom data sources that reflect student learning (Moore 2007); (3) AR can be a method of daily inquiry and problem-solving in classrooms; and a method of bridging the theory and practice divide (Kitchen & Stevens 2008).

For the SPOC, we seek to use the elements of AR that would engage the student teachers in focusing their observations and reflections on an aspect of their teaching experience that is of interest to them in order for them to take responsibility and become more proactive through observations, reflection and inquiry into their practice; that would ask the student teachers to turn to theory and practice; and that would engage the student teachers in professional dialogue with the school teacher and university tutor.

In summary, the design and development process leading to the current SPOC architecture has been outlined and discussed above. It should be noted that while the discussion in this section of the Report addresses the early stages of the project work, the refining of the EKT SPOC framework is a work in progress. The current version of the Contents and Activities for the EKT SPOC is presented next.

4. Outline of the EKT SPOC

Duration: 3 weeks (one/two weeks prior to the SP, one/two weeks during the SP);
Time: For student teachers each week around 3 hours; for the university tutors and school tutors – from 1 hour to 3 hours.
Language: English, German, Spanish, Portuguese
Year Group and in-school placement Cycle: any

General Description

The key outputs of the SPOC Course will be:

1. Collaborative Discussion of the SP Expectations and Plans;
2. Students' self-introduction and reflection on values: why I decided to become a teacher;
3. Students' mindmap around the focus for observation: as an expression of one's interest and reflection on theory and one's own teaching experience; as a starting point for pre-observation meeting;
4. Formulated Research Question and Action-Oriented Reflection developed by the prospective teachers with the support from university tutors and school tutors around the following points (posted in Portfolio):
    1. My Research Question/ Concern: framing the question and reasons to choose this one;
    2. What I Know About This Issue:
    1) three valuable points I learned from the Literature Review;
    2) three valuable things I learned from Conversations with the University Tutor, School tutor and peers,
    3) A possible solution to my chosen issue / question / problem / concern.

The role of **an university tutor**: to take part in discussions, to work with the school tutor to support the students with *theoretical knowledge*, monitor the students' reflective posts and give constructive feedback using *the EKT platform tools.* University tutors can choose to use Output 4 for assessment of in-school placement.

The role of **a school tutor**: to take part in discussions, to work with the university tutor to support the students with *practical advice*, and give constructive feedback using *the EKT platform tools.*

Assessment in this online course is participatory mainly. This means that participation in discussions; feedback and responses to each other (students are asked to leave a meaningful comment on at least two other posts every time) construct 50% of success in the course.
In addition, the key product to complete the course successfully is Portfolio with entries made during the course based on the Tasks (50%) .

WEEK 1. Welcome to the EKT Course

Objectives: Start using the platform and working together on tasks
Method: a collaborative task for prospective teachers, university tutors and school tutors; mini-tasks to get started; a webinar.
Workload: apx. 3,5 hours

nr/name	Activity	involved	Tools	workload
Task 1 VIDEOS	Watch the video on the course overview and the course aims. Then get to know the platform. Watch the video on the key functionalities of the platform. It includes • tutorial video on getting started • user management • training and learning path • creating and sharing a doc in a public and private folder • leaving a comment • working collaboratively on a doc • chatting (conversation) • making a video call, using the calendar Followed by a short quiz	ALL	Video embedded in the course	15 min
Task 2 PROFILE	Edit/create your personal profile (add some text and a picture) and Watch the video for support.	ALL	EKT App Management Tool	15 min
Task 3 Placement Planning	Getting to know the Document Cloud Create / upload a document University tutors and school tutors upload a document about their practicum planning/expectations The students study the shared documents and add their	Extra task for students, school tutors and university tutors	EKT App document Cloud	60 min

	questions in the chat of the document Watch the video for support.			
Task 4 **COMMUNICATION** **Ice-Breaking** **exercise**	Getting to know the Communication Tool Write down a funny episode in 5-7 sentences of your teaching career. Then read the anecdotes of the others and comment on at least three. Watch the video for support.	ALL	EKT APP Communication Tool	30 min
Task 5 **VIDEO CALL**	Getting to know the video call At the end of WEEK 1, take part in the video call (30 min for an official welcome, for technical support, general questions, etc.). Followed by video calls between tutors and students to discuss their questions of TASK 3 in small groups. Watch the video for support.	ALL	EKT APP Communication Tool	60 min
Task 6 **QUIZ**	Do the short quiz on online netiquette: consent of conduct	Students	quiz tool	15 min
TOTAL WORKLOAD				**3,5 hours**

WEEK 2. Finding a Focus

Objectives: start reflective process, introducing the participants to Action Research philosophy; narrow down the focus for observation, reflection

Method: A number of challenge questions to stimulate dialogue.

Workload for students: 3.5 hours; for university tutors and school tutors: 1 hour

nr/name	Activities	involved	Chamilo tool	workload
Task 1 Action Research	Read and watch one video on Action Research and do the True/False quiz.	students	Video quiz	15 min
Task 2 Action Research Cycle	Watch the video on the Action Research Cycle and do quiz (match the steps)	students	Video quiz	15 min
Task 3 Values	Introduction to Portfolio Tool: Watch videos; Answer the question: 'Why I decided to become a teacher?' And comment on two posts made by peers.	students	Portfolio	60 mins
Task 4 Observation Mindmap	Look at the Presentation with various aspects one can observe in the classroom. Then think about - what will be interesting for you to observe. Choose one area and create a mindmap with various elements of it (team work: arrangement, timing, giving instructions etc.) This is a connection to pre-observation meeting; and to the next step of formulating a research question. A note on observation to stimulate positive thinking of it.	students	Portfolio	60 min.
Task 5 Observation Communication	A challenge question to be discussed and supported by cooperating teachers: "What are common worries and important aspects of having an observer in your classroom?"	ALL	Communication Tool	30 mins
Task 6 Comment	Look at other people's portfolios and leave at least 3 comments	ALL	Portfolio	30 mins
			TOTAL WORKLOAD	**3,5 hours/ For tutors 1 hour**

WEEK 3 Focus on Professional Dialogue

Objectives: to engage the participants in collaborative dialogue around students' inquiry

Method: students start their action-oriented reflection - they turn to university tutors and school tutors for inquiry support

Workload for students 3,5 hours; for university tutors and school tutors 2 hours

Extra time can be given to work on the final output/entry to the e-portfolio.

nr/name	Activities	involved	Chamilo tool	workload
Task 1 Video	Watch the video on action-oriented reflection and do the quiz.	ALL	video quiz	15 min
Task 2 Reflection	A challenge question around action-oriented reflection	ALL	Portfolio	15 min
Task 3 Research Question	A task to brainstorm a research question based on the mindmap (Unit 2/Task 4), thinking 'What am I interested to find out more, what area I would like to improve?' Look at other posts in the Communication Tool; find who has similar concern.	Student	EKT App Communication Tool	60 mins
Task 4 Communication Tool	Discuss your research question with your tutor and mentor either in a video call or through a different channel	All	EKT App Communication tool	60 min
5 Portfolio	Make an entry in your Portfolio. Your entry should include: • My research question • Reasons why you chose this question in the first place • What do I already know? (identify an area(s) in theory to support solutions) What I learned from my school tutor What I learned from my university tutor • What action can I take to improve my teaching in the chosen area?	Students	Portfolio	60 min

6	Share your Portfolio with the tutors via Document Cloud	Students	Portfolio and Document Cloud	5 mins
7 evaluation	A short survey			10 mins
			TOTAL WORKLOAD	**3,5/ 2 hours for tutors**

5. Reference lists

Moore, R. A. 2007. Taking action: Assessing the impact of preservice teaching on learning. *Action in Teacher Education*, 28(3): 53–60.

Kitchen, J., & Stevens, D. (2008). Action research in teacher education: Two teacher-educators practice action research as they introduce action research to preservice teachers. Action Research (London, England), 6(1), 7-28. https://doi.org/10.1177/1476750307083716

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Project Partners