



TEACHER EDUCATION
IN SWEDEN BEFORE
AND AFTER **2 0 0 0**

TEACHER EDUCATION
IN SWEDEN BEFORE
AND AFTER **2 0 0 0**

National Agency for Higher Education • Birger Jarlsgatan 43
Box 7851, 103 99 Stockholm • phone +46 8 563 085 00
fax +46 8 563 085 50 • e-mail: hsv@hsv.se • www.hsv.se

Teacher education in Sweden before and after 2000

Produced by National Agency for Higher Education in February 2001

ISBN: 91-88874-69-9

Content: National Agency for Higher Education,
Department for Evaluation of Foreign Higher Education

Graphic Design:

Information Office at the National Agency for Higher Education

Printed by: National Agency for Higher Education, Stockholm,
February 2001

PRINTED ON ECO LABELLED PAPER

Table of contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Introductory comments | 5 |
| Permanent employment as a teacher | 6 |
| Teacher education of yesterday, today and tomorrow – a brief description | 7 |
| Teachers for compulsory school | 8 |
| Upper secondary school teachers (<i>Gymnasielärare</i>) | 11 |
| Child and Youth Training (<i>Barn- och ungdomspedagogisk utbildning</i>) | 12 |
| Art Education (<i>Bildlärarutbildning</i>) | 13 |
| Music Education (<i>Musiklärarutbildning</i>) | 13 |
| Physical Education (<i>Idrottslärarutbildning</i>) | 14 |
| Child Welfare Education (<i>Barnavårdslärarutbildning</i>) | 14 |
| Craft Education (<i>Slöjdlärarutbildning</i>) | 15 |
| Home Economics Education (<i>Hushållslärarutbildning</i>) | 15 |
| Commercial and Clerical Education (<i>Handels- och kontorslärarutbildning</i>) and Skilled Trades Education (<i>Industri- och hantverkslärarutbildning</i>) | 16 |
| Nursing Education (<i>Vårdlärarutbildning</i>) | 17 |
| Special Education (<i>Specialpedagogisk påbyggnadsutbildning</i>) | 17 |
| The 2000 Teacher Education Reform | 19 |

Introductory comments

This report is an updated version of the NARIC-report 1994:1 "Teacher Education in Sweden", that was published in 1994. At that time, a higher education reform had just been implemented, which meant that higher education in Sweden had become more decentralized.

Now, a reform of teacher education is under way. The Government Bill was accepted by the Swedish Riksdag (Parliament) in October, 2000, and will be implemented as of July 1, 2001. In the following, the outline of the new teacher education programme will be presented together with previous and present teacher training programmes.

The aim of this report is to facilitate evaluation and recognition of Swedish teaching degrees. While it is not possible to cover all variations of teacher education in a report of this kind, the National Agency for Higher Education will be happy to assist in the assessment of specific cases. Ann Besmanoff, who is responsible for the report, can be contacted via e-mail: ann.besmanoff@hsv.se.

Permanent employment as a teacher

Before going into the various degree programmes, a few words should be said about teacher status and the employment of teachers in Sweden.

Decentralization of the school sector as well as of the higher education sector has had the effect that the Government defines goals and guidelines for school education and the local school authorities are responsible for the achievement of those goals. The Government also sets the goals for the teacher education.

The teaching profession is a regulated profession in Sweden. When it comes to permanent employment in the public school system, there are regulations in the School Act according to which priority must be given to persons with academic degrees especially designed for the teaching profession. However, the very detailed regulations pertaining to each permanent teaching appointment have been abolished. Since 1992, the employer (normally the headmaster of the school) determines whether an applicant qualifies for a certain teaching post.

As of February 1, 2000, by ministerial order, the National Agency for Higher Education is the competent authority for the teaching profession in Sweden. In that capacity the Agency is charged with the task of assessing foreign teaching degrees and authorized to grant certification for teaching posts on a permanent basis in Sweden. For certification to be granted, the foreign teacher training in itself or together with work experience must be assessed as corresponding to Swedish teacher training qualifications. The applicant's command of the Swedish language must also be deemed adequate.

Teacher education of yesterday, today and tomorrow – a brief description

Looking back at the second half of the previous century, teacher education in Sweden has undergone many changes. Prior to the higher education reform in 1977, primary school teachers were trained in institutes of education that did not belong to the higher education system. Secondary school teachers had a university degree, usually in two main subjects, after which they completed an additional year of pedagogical training.

With the reform in 1977, all teacher training became integrated into the higher education system, either as part of a university or university college or as a separate School or Institute of Education. However, teacher training in special subjects such as art, music, and physical education took place in special colleges, as was also the case before the reform.

In 1988, there was a reform of teacher education that involved major changes particularly for the compulsory school teachers. Teachers who are now working in Sweden have received their training in different systems, before and after 1988. The different systems of training will be described in some detail below.

Common to all the teacher training programmes described is the requirement of at least 40 credit points (one year) of education courses, "praktisk-pedagogisk utbildning", consisting of pedagogics, teaching methods and teaching practice. The education courses – the actual teacher training – can be sandwiched between subject courses as part of an integrated programme, or it could be a separate programme after the completion of an academic degree of specific length.

In the Swedish educational system, one credit point (*poäng*) corresponds to one week of full-time studies. 40 points correspond to one year, but in many cases the education actually takes longer time.

In the following, the various teacher training programmes will be described and information will be given as to what kind of teaching position each teaching degree qualifies for. An outline of the new teacher education will also be presented.

Teachers for compulsory school

Before 1988 there were three main categories of teachers in the compulsory school: "lågstadielärare" (teachers for the lower level), "mellanstadielärare" (teachers for the intermediate level) and "ämneslärare" (teachers for the upper level/lower secondary school). In addition to these categories there were teachers in practical and artistic subjects such as art, physical education, and music.

The teacher training programmes leading to the three first mentioned teaching qualifications were:

- "Lågstadielärlinjen", which required 100 credit points and after which the degree "Lågstadielärarexamen" (University Certificate in Primary Education, Grades 1–3) was awarded. The programme included subject studies (general curriculum studies) as well as theory and practice of teaching. The theoretical education courses and teaching practice were approximately 20 credit points each;
- "Mellanstadielärlinjen", which required 120 credit points and after which the degree "Mellanstadielärarexamen" (Bachelor of Education in Primary Education, Grades 4–6) was conferred. The programme included subject studies and theory and practice of teaching as in the programme above;
- "Ämneslärlinjen", which required 160–180 credit points and included at least 120 credit points in subject studies and 40 credit points in education courses and teaching practice. The studies in each subject required at least 40 credit points; however, 20 credit points could be sufficient for the third subject. If the degree included Swedish, 60 credit points were always required. (cf Upper Secondary School Teacher, below.)

The degree awarded was "Ämneslärarexamen", translated as Master of Arts/Science. The diploma showed which programme the student had followed, such as "Ämneslärarexamen på historisk-samhällsvetenskaplig ämneslärlinje" (Master of Arts in History and Social Science Education) *or* one of the following:

- Ämneslärarexamen på matematisk-naturvetenskaplig ämneslärlinje (mathematics – natural science).
- Ämneslärarexamen på språkvetenskaplig ämneslärlinje (languages).

There was also another option for students who wanted to become subject teachers. After the completion of a university degree in two or three subjects (at least 120 credit points altogether) they could take an additional year (40 credit points) of teacher training (pedagogics, teaching methods and teaching practice).

The degree conferred after the first part of the studies was "Högskoleexamen" or "Filosofie Kandidatexamen" (Bachelor of Arts/Science). After the second part, the student earned the degree "Ämneslärarexamen" (Master of Arts/Science).

There were strict regulations concerning how many credit points a student had to achieve in each subject in order to qualify for specific teaching posts.

In 1988 the teacher education for the nine-year comprehensive compulsory school was reorganized into two programmes which overlap in order to make it possible to teach a broader age range.

The two programmes are:

- "grundskollärlinjen med inriktning mot årskurserna 1–7" (for teachers of grade 1–7), comprising 140 credit points, and
- "grundskollärlinjen med inriktning mot årskurserna 4–9" (for teachers of grade 4–9), comprising 160–180 credit points.

The programmes are vocationally-oriented and have subject courses alternating with periods of teaching practice. The teacher training programme for grade 1–7 is a general curriculum but includes a specialization which is studied for approximately one year. The programme for grade 4–9 offers more options for specialization and more in-depth studies in the specialization.

The programme for teachers for grade 1–7 has the following main specializations:

- Swedish and social science subjects.
- Mathematics and natural science subjects.

The programme for teachers for grade 4–9 has specializations in:

- Swedish in combination with other languages.
- Social science subjects.
- Mathematics in combination with natural science subjects *or*
- Natural science only.
- Art *or* Physical Education *or* Music *or* Home Economics in combination with another (theoretical) subject.

In accordance with the higher education reform in 1993 the Government provides the basic structure and goals of each degree programme and the university or university college determines the content. Consequently, over the years, there have been changes and variations within the programmes. New

subject areas and subject combinations have been added. On the other hand, child welfare education and home language education are no longer offered as part of a subject combination.

The basic structure of the programme for grade 4–9 is at least 180 credit points – at least 60 credit points in one major subject and 40 credit points in another subject relevant for school. Certain subjects require more in-depth studies. Art as well as music requires at least 80 credit points. Swedish, home economics, physical education and crafts always require at least 60 credit points, as major or second subject.

The degree awarded upon completion of the programme is "Grundskollärarexamen", translated as Bachelor of Education for the Compulsory School (between 1993 and 1996 the official translation was University Diploma in Education for Primary and Secondary School, Grade 1–7 *or* 4–9).

Upper secondary school teachers (Gymnasielärare)

In 1988 the teacher education programme for the upper secondary school teachers was prolonged to 160–200 credit points, the difference in length depending on the major subjects studied. The programme usually consisted of two subjects in set combinations that required at least 60 credit points in each subject, and education courses of 40 credit points. Aside from the integrated teacher education programme it was possible, under certain conditions, to finish an academic degree first and then take an additional education course.

Beginning July 1993, students are required to complete a programme of 180–220 credit points with 80 credit points in the first (major) subject and 60 credit points in the second subject. 80 credit points is always required in the study of a language (including Swedish), civics, art, music and physical education. There are also education courses consisting of 40 credit points. The new programme allows more freedom in the choice of subject areas. However, students most frequently choose two languages, two natural science subjects or two social science subjects. Actual teacher training is usually sandwiched between the subject courses during the programme.

There is also a teaching training programme ("praktisk – pedagogisk utbildning", 40 credit points), for those who have completed at least 140 credit points of university education with at least 80 credit points in one subject relevant for school teaching. The same programme is, under certain conditions, available for those who have degrees in engineering, architecture or economics/business administration or have vocational training and relevant experience, since teaching of vocational subjects is now part of the programme for upper secondary school teachers.

The degree conferred upon completion of either of the two programmes is Gymnasielärarexamen, translated as Master of Education for the Upper Secondary School *or* University Diploma of Education for the Upper Secondary School (1993–96). Holders of this degree are qualified to teach grade 10–12 (upper secondary school) in the subjects included in their training.

Prior to 1988, the degree was one of the following:

- Ämneslärarexamen på språkvetenskaplig ämneslärarlinje (Master of Arts in Languages Education).
- Ämneslärarexamen på historisk – samhällsvetenskaplig ämneslärarlinje (Master of Arts in History and Social Science Education).
- Ämneslärarexamen på matematisk – naturvetenskaplig ämneslärarlinje (Master of Science in Scientific Subjects Education).

Between 1988 and 1993 the degree conferred was simply called "Ämneslärarexamen" with no specialization mentioned.

"Ämneslärarexamen" gave the right to teach lower and upper secondary school (grade 7–12).

Child and Youth Training (*Barn- och ungdomspedagogisk utbildning*)

This degree programme, comprising 120 credit points, has two specializations: the student is trained to be a pre-school teacher (*förskollärare*) or a recreation instructor (*fritidspedagog*). Parts of the programme is common to both specializations. Through amendments of the School Act, completion of this programme qualifies for a permanent position in the public school system. Pre-school teachers can work with the youngest children in school aside from the traditional place of work: the nursery school or day care centre. Recreation instructors work with school children in their leisure time in schools or in separate "fritidshem" (day centres for school children) but they can also take part in the teaching.

The degree awarded is one of the following:

- Barn- och ungdomspedagogisk examen, inriktning förskollärare.
- Barn-och ungdomspedagogisk examen, inriktning fritidspedagog.
(Bachelor's degree in Child and Youth Training, with specialization as pre-school teacher *or* recreation instructor).

Before 1993, there were shorter programmes of 50, 80, or 100 credit points, depending on the previous training and experience. Former degrees were

- Förskollärarexamen (University Certificate for Nursery and Infant Education) *or*
- Fritidspedagogexamen (University Certificate for Recreation and Leisure Education).

Art Education (*Bildlärarutbildning*)

The programme for art teachers consists of 80 credit points of art theory and art coursework and 40 credit points of education courses. Completion of this programme qualifies for teaching in the compulsory school, the upper secondary school, and adult education. Art Education can also be included in the compulsory school teaching degree as well as in the teaching degree for upper secondary school.

The programme includes courses in art history, visual communication, two-dimensional art, three-dimensional art, graphic art, photography, film, TV and video, cultural politics, physical environment, pedagogics, teaching methods and practice, and a thesis/special project.

The degree awarded upon completion of the programme is Bildlärarexamen. As of 1996, the official translation is Bachelor of Education in Art and Design, formerly the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in Art Education or University Diploma in Art Education.

Music Education (*Musiklärarutbildning*)

The programme for music teachers comprises 160 credit points including the 40 credit points of education courses and teaching practice. The students are trained to teach in pre-school, compulsory school and upper secondary school or they choose the specialty in instrumental and ensemble instruction, aimed for voluntary music instruction. For teachers in the public school system, required courses include vocal training and methodology, major and secondary chord instrument, sight reading, ear training, music theory and arranging, choral singing and conducting, ensemble performance and directing. A graduation project is also required. In addition to the core courses there are several options for specializations.

The degree awarded is "Musiklärarexamen" (Master of Education in Music). Prior to 1993 the degree was translated as Master of Fine Arts in Music Education and between 1993 and 1996 as University Diploma in Music Education.

Physical Education (*Idrottsläroarutbildning*)

The programme in Physical Education, 120 credit points altogether, includes courses in physiology, anatomy, biomechanics, introduction to sports medicine, sports of many kinds, outdoor activities, rhythm and dance. Many of the courses include elements of teaching methods. The education courses and teaching practice are approximately 20 credit points each.

The degree awarded is "Idrottsläroarexamen", translated as Bachelor of Education in Physical Education (between 1993 and 1996 University Diploma in Physical Education). Completion of the degree qualifies for teaching at all levels in compulsory school as well as in upper secondary school.

Child Welfare Education (*Barnavårdsläroarutbildning*)

This 120 credit point programme, which is no longer offered, included both theoretical studies and education courses. The theoretical courses included child welfare, psychology, health/social medicine, and social science. As of July 1993, child care and recreation studies were incorporated into the programme for upper secondary school teachers and the programme for compulsory school teachers, as a specialization for grade 4–9, in combination with a second subject. It is now offered only within the programme for upper secondary school teachers. The degree awarded before 1993, Barnavårdsläroarexamen (Bachelor of Science in Child Welfare Education) qualifies for teaching child and youth welfare courses in primary and secondary schools.

Craft Education (*Slöjdläroarbildning*)

Craft Education has two alternative specializations, one in the area of wood and metal, the other in textiles. In both cases, the programme consists of 80 credit points of theoretical and practical coursework in the chosen specialization and 40 credit points of education courses. It has also been possible for those who have advanced knowledge in the field of wood and metal craft and vocational experience to be admitted to a programme with education courses only, consisting of 40 credit points.

Completion of the programme qualifies for teaching in the compulsory school, where this subject is mainly taught, but also in upper secondary schools, municipal adult programmes and folk high schools.

The degree awarded is "Slöjdläroarbexamen" (Bachelor of Education in Crafts), between 1993 and 1996 translated as University Diploma in Craft Education or University Diploma in Craft Education – Textiles. Before 1993 the specialization in textile craft was a separate degree, "Textilläroarbexamen", translated as Bachelor of Arts in Textile Craft Education. The previous alternative of 40 credit points in wood and metal craft rendered the degree University Certificate in Craft Education.

Home Economics Education (*Hushållsläroarbildning*)

Home Economics Education has previously been offered as a special programme, consisting of 120 credit points, and also as part of the programmes for compulsory school teachers and upper secondary school teachers. At present, home economics is only offered in combination with another subject in the programme for compulsory school teachers, grade 4–9.

The one-subject-programme consisted of education courses comprising 40 credit points and home economics courses that included the following areas: home economics technology, food and nutrition, home and environment, consumer economics and management, individuals and family life, home economics planning, global resources and a thesis/special project.

Completion of that programme qualified for teaching in compulsory and upper secondary school. The degree is Hushållslärarexamen (Bachelor of Education in Home Economics). Between 1993 and 1996 the degree was translated as University Diploma in Home Economics Education and before July 1993 Bachelor of Science in Home Economics Education.

Commercial and Clerical Education (*Handels- och kontorslärarutbildning*) and Skilled Trades Education (*Industri- och hantverkslärarutbildning*)

Before July 1993, these programmes were separated from the general teacher education programmes for upper secondary school. At present, the programmes for theoretical subjects and vocational subjects are all part of "Gymnasielärarutbildning" (the teacher education programme for upper secondary school).

Several years of work experience in the relevant field was one of the requirements for admission to these programmes, which consisted solely of education courses (40 credit points), related to the area of specialization and the teaching position.

The degree conferred prior to July 1993 was one of the following:

- Högskoleexamen på Handels- och Kontorslärarlinjen (University Certificate in Commercial and Clerical Education).
- Högskoleexamen på Industri- och Hantverkslärarlinjen (University Certificate in Skilled Trades Education).

Nursing Education (*Vårdläroarutbildning*)

This programme was also separate prior to July 1993, but is now a general education programme for upper secondary school teachers. The former programme was 40–60 credit points, mainly education courses but also some health-related courses. They were based on knowledge and experience from previous education and training in a health-related field.

Other areas of work for holders of a degree in this field are colleges of health, labour market training and adult education.

The degree prior to 1993 was Vårdläroarexamen (University Diploma in Nursing Education).

Special Education (*Specialpedagogisk påbyggnadsutbildning*)

Training of teachers in Special Education for the compulsory school began in 1968, replacing the short courses that had been available for that purpose. In 1990, a programme of 40–60 credit points was developed for special education. For admission to the programme a teaching degree is required. Thus, the programme provides supplementary education for those already trained as teachers.

There are four different specializations:

- *komplicerad inläringssituation* (complicated learning situations),
- *döv- och hörselhandikapp* (deafness and hearing impairment),
- *synhandikapp* (blindness and visual impairment),
- *utvecklingsstörning* (mental handicap).

The special education programme includes the following courses:

- general course including study of individual development and special education development,
- courses in the area of the specialization,
- teaching practice,
- thesis/special project in the area of specialization which forms part of the final examination.

The degree awarded upon completion of the programme is "Specialpedagogexamen" (Graduate Diploma in Special Education).

The 2000 Teacher Education Reform

The teacher education reform that will come into effect on July 1, 2001, will involve many changes. Instead of eight separate teaching degrees there will be only one. However, the Diploma of Education for the Folk High School and the Diploma of Education in Aviation which are not dealt with in this report, will remain separate degrees.

The diploma awarded upon completion of the new teacher education programme will show the graduate's specialization and status of qualification. One of the principal ideas of the reform is that all teachers, whether they intend to work in pre-school, in upper secondary school or as physical education teachers, need a common basis of knowledge and general teacher training. Therefore, as much as 60 credit points, or approximately 1,5 years, will be common to all students. There will be many options of specialization and new subject areas will be introduced.

Flexibility is another key word, with the implication that students will be able to easily change their area of specialization by complementary studies. Parts of the new programme will also be available to teachers already in the profession, e. g. through distance studies. It will also still be possible to do pedagogical coursework and training after completed academic studies in relevant subjects of required length.

The teacher training will, to an even greater extent than before, take place in public schools in the municipalities. All programmes will include research preparation and the submitting of a thesis or completion of a special project. The length of studies will remain the same as before in most cases, i.e. 140 credit points (3,5 years) for compulsory school teachers of grade 1–7, 180 credit points for teachers of grade 4–9, 160 credit points for music teachers and so on (see above). Pre-school teachers and recreation instructors will follow a programme that will be extended to 140 credit points.

The official title of the degree will be "Lärarexamen" with the specialization indicated on the diploma. The translation of the degree into English had not been determined yet. Depending on the length of the programme the degree could be translated as "bachelor" or "master".

The universities and colleges are at present busy with the forming of the programmes and therefore, a detailed description is not yet available. Naturally, the content will vary a great deal at the different institutes of higher education. There will still be a few years before Swedish teachers with the new kind of degree start looking for jobs in other countries, and by that time the programmes may be more familiar.

The National Agency for Higher Education is a central agency responsible for matters relating to institutions of higher education. Its tasks include quality assessments, supervision, reviews, development of higher education, research and analysis, evaluations of foreign education and provision of study information.