

National Guidelines for Early Childhood Teacher Education

Contents

| | | |
|-------|---|----|
| 1 | Preface | 3 |
| 2 | Introduction | 4 |
| 3 | Institutional responsibility | 4 |
| 3.1 | Transitional arrangements/adaptation | 4 |
| 3.2 | From national guidelines to programme plan | 4 |
| 3.3 | Further education | 5 |
| 4 | Structure and content | 5 |
| 4.1 | Structure | 5 |
| 4.2 | Content | 5 |
| 4.2.1 | Pedagogy as a central and connective subject | 6 |
| 4.2.2 | Pedagogic leadership | 6 |
| 4.2.3 | Interdisciplinary studies | 6 |
| 4.2.4 | Themes to focus on | 6 |
| 4.2.5 | Research-based anchoring | 7 |
| 4.3 | Working methods and assessment | 7 |
| 4.4 | Internationalisation | 7 |
| 4.5 | Practice placements | 7 |
| 4.5.1 | Structure of the practice placement | 8 |
| 4.5.2 | Progression for pedagogic leadership and practice | 8 |
| 4.5.3 | Agreements for practice placements | 10 |
| 5 | Areas of knowledge | 11 |
| 5.1 | Children's development, play and learning | 12 |
| 5.2 | Society, religion, beliefs and ethics | 13 |
| 5.3 | Language, text and mathematics | 15 |
| 5.4 | Art, culture and creativity | 17 |
| 5.5 | Nature, health and movement | 18 |
| 5.6 | Leadership, cooperation and development | 20 |
| 5.7 | Specialisation | 21 |
| 5.8 | Bachelor thesis | 21 |

1 Preface

Since 2014, UHR Teacher Education (formerly the National Council for Teacher Education (NRLU)) has had responsibility for revising and developing national guidelines for teacher education in Norway. National guidelines provide binding quality standards for teacher education and are revised in line with developments in the field of knowledge. In 2014, UHR Teacher Education appointed a programme group to revise the National Guidelines for Kindergarten Teacher Education adopted in January 2012.

The programme group currently consists of the following members: Jorunn Melberg UiS (head), Svein Sando (Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education), Ragnhild Granskogen (Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities), May Liss Tobiassen (Nord University), Grete Skjeggstad Meyer (NLA), Mariann Axelsen (Union of Education Norway), Elise Håkull (Norwegian Industrial Safety Organisation) and Guro Gjerstadberget (Norwegian Industrial Safety Organisation). Secretary: Anne Kristine Runestad Solberg (University of Stavanger). The following have been active for some of the period: Mari Engeseter (Western Norway University of Applied Sciences), Karin Moen (Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences), Erlend Norheim, secretary (University of Stavanger). Deputy representatives: Steffen Tangen (Østfold University College), Anita Berg-Olsen (Nord University) and Anita Holm Cirotzki (Union of Education Norway). Universities Norway's secretariat is responsible for the secretariat function.

The National Curriculum for Kindergarten Teacher Education, adopted on 6 June 2012, entailed a major reworking of the education programme, including of the structure, the composition of subjects in the areas of knowledge, and the introduction of a bachelor thesis. Educational institutions have faced a number of challenges in incorporating the extensive changes in the national curriculum into their study programmes, and it has been important to take time to garner experiences from the study model and applicable guidelines before undertaking a revision. The programme group has monitored the institutions' experiences, and we have benefited considerably from the efforts and reports of the follow-up group for early childhood (EC) teacher education.

In 2017, the programme group created groups for each area of knowledge. Together with the programme group, these groups have conducted a review of each area of knowledge. Key areas in the programme group's revision work have included profession-orientation, leadership training in EC teacher education and progression in leadership and practice.

17 October 2018

Svenning Bjørke

Head of UHR Teacher Education

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2 Introduction

The National Curriculum Regulations for Kindergarten Teacher Education, henceforth referred to as the Regulations, adopted by the Ministry of Education and Research on 4 June 2012, serve as an overarching guide for EC teacher education and as the basis for national guidelines. These guidelines are a supplement to the Regulations and are intended to ensure a nationally coordinated EC teacher education that meets the requirements for educational quality. These are professional guidelines that aim to guide the educational institutions' programme plans and course plans. Each institution shall draw up a programme plan with provisions on academic content, practice placements, organisation, working methods and assessment procedures. The institutions' plans should not be an exact replica of the guidelines; they should exploit the scope for interpretation that the guidelines afford for innovation and institutional adaptation. The programme plan shall be adopted by the institution's board.

3 Institutional responsibility

The organisation of the education shall ensure a comprehensive study programme covering leadership and organisation that involve all relevant environments. The study programme shall integrate theory and practice, professional progression, general alignment with the teaching profession and research-based anchoring. The institutions shall ensure varied working methods and forms of assessment. The academic communities associated with the study programme must have up-to-date and relevant knowledge from the field of practice. The educational institutions shall facilitate binding partnerships between early childhood education (ECE) teachers at the place of study and in the field of practice. Within the framework of an agreement between a university college/university and a practice kindergarten, the programme plan will provide for the coordination of the training at the two learning arenas.

The educational institution is responsible for assessing whether the individual student is fit to be an EC teacher. This is done by conducting an overall assessment of the student, which includes academic, pedagogical and personal aptitudes throughout the period of study, see Regulation no. 859 relating to suitability assessment in higher education.

In order to achieve the goal of general research-based anchoring, all areas of knowledge shall be rooted in a research environment that is relevant to the education.

3.1 Transitional arrangements/adaptation

Section 5 of the Regulations stipulates the rules for exemptions from and adaptation of subjects and subject areas.

3.2 From national guidelines to programme plan

The educational institutions' programme plans shall be drawn up on the basis of the stipulations in Section 1–4 of the Regulations, the notes to the Regulations and chapters 1–5 of the national guidelines. The guidelines state how the institutions' programme plans shall describe provisions on academic content, interdisciplinary topics, general themes, organisation, working methods and assessment procedures. The learning outcomes in the guidelines are based on a scope of 20 credits (LCD 15 credits). In order to operationalise these, the institutions need to adapt the

learning outcomes to their own study programme and selected focus areas, see chapter 2 on the potential for innovation and institutional adaptation. The programme plan must describe clear progression and coherence in the course of study in relation to teaching, practice and assessment, see section 4.5.2.

3.3 Further education

At an early stage in the course of study, the institution shall familiarise students with the admission requirements for study at master's and doctoral level.

4 Structure and content

4.1 Structure

The academic content of the EC teacher education is organised into six areas of knowledge, five of which are covered in the first two years of study in a three-year full-time study programme. This enables students to take the third year of study at another educational institution. The area of knowledge entitled leadership, cooperation and development (LCD 15 credits), specialisation (30 credits) and bachelor thesis (15 credits) is covered in the third year. The first five areas of knowledge are, in principle, worth 20 credits each. One or two of these areas shall be augmented with a total of 20 credits. It is also possible to split an area of knowledge into two, but each part must be worth a minimum of 15 credits. This means that the area of knowledge must be augmented with at least 10 credits in order for it to be split.

For part-time study programmes, students have the option of changing their place of study after completing the first five areas of knowledge.

4.2 Content

The EC teaching profession requires ethical awareness of both the social mission and the practising of the profession in the interaction with children, colleagues, parents and external partners. The ethical aspects of the profession must therefore be highlighted and discussed in all parts of the study programme.

All areas of knowledge must place an equal emphasis on the youngest and the oldest children in the kindergarten. The areas of knowledge in the study programme must be profession-oriented and consist of research-based teacher education. Solid academic, subject-didactic and pedagogical knowledge shall be an integral part of all areas of knowledge. This also applies to the use of varied working methods and forms of assessment. The study programme shall safeguard the internationalisation perspective in the education and facilitate international student exchanges. Practice placements shall be an integral part of the areas of knowledge.

All the areas of knowledge in the study programme shall be encompassed in the student's formative process and ensure the student's ability to view an issue from different sides and explore the professional practice from different perspectives. Students will develop the ability to analyse their own attitudes and their own and others' actions through critical reflection, both individually and as part of a professional community. By doing so they will develop independent occupational competence and an ability to make their own choices.

The students are responsible for their own learning and for acting as responsible and independent EC teachers after completing their studies.

The content of the study programme shall be detailed in the educational institution's programme plans, based on the national guidelines and in accordance with Sections 1 and 2 of the Regulations. It is the institution's responsibility to carry out quality assurance to ensure that the learning outcomes for the areas of knowledge, practice placements, specialisation and bachelor thesis as a whole correspond to the overarching learning outcomes of the study programme.

4.2.1 Pedagogy as a central and connective subject

Section 3 of the Regulations states that 'Pedagogy should be a central and connective subject incorporated into each area of knowledge, and it should have particular responsibility for ensuring progression and for making the course of study profession-oriented'.

Pedagogy is a formative and reflective discipline that is partly based on psychology, sociology, philosophy, didactics and the history of ideas. In order for pedagogy to function as a connective subject in the education as a whole, the institution must ensure that the academic discipline of pedagogy is clearly portrayed and is given enough weight in each year of study.

The pedagogy discipline has an overarching responsibility for the student's professional development and must be viewed in the context of progression in the practical element of the study programme.

4.2.2 Pedagogic leadership

Leadership is a core part of EC teacher education. Pedagogic leadership must therefore be in evidence throughout the course of study in the form of both theory and practice. Leadership must be profession-oriented and integrated as a subject and theme within and across all areas of knowledge and during practice placement periods. There must be a clear progression from the first to the last year of study, see the progression model in section 4.5.2.

4.2.3 Interdisciplinary studies

The interdisciplinary structure of the EC teacher education shall give the student multi-disciplinary insight. The knowledge base for the study programme stems from established academic subjects. Programme plans and course plans must seek to combine the strengths of the individual subjects with a profession-oriented approach in which input from several professional communities is conflated. Cooperation should be established in the teaching of topics that are common to several areas of knowledge.

4.2.4 Themes to focus on

The study programme focuses on several themes. It is up to the individual institutions to interpret and implement these themes in their programme plans.

- Diversity and social equality
- Perspective of indigenous populations and Sami culture
- Children with a need for special care and follow-up
- Children's life skills and health
- Professional digital competence, including digital judgement

- Sustainability

4.2.5 Research-based anchoring

According to the Norwegian Act on Universities and University Colleges, study programmes must be research and development-based (R&D). The research-based anchoring of the education must be both implicit and explicit. This means that the study programme must inform and engage students in research-based knowledge, critical thinking and scientific working methods to enable them, in their capacity as EC teachers, to apply new knowledge and further develop themselves, their profession and their workplace after completing their studies.

Students should be introduced to research methods and ethical issues related to research at an early stage in the education. The programme plan should have a progression plan in academic reading and writing that prepares the student for working on the bachelor thesis.

The educational institution must prioritise resources and stimulate research and development work through active collaboration with the field of practice and R&D environments nationally and internationally, and encourage students to get involved in R&D work.

4.3 Working methods and assessment

The educational institution is responsible for ensuring that students encounter varied forms of work, learning and assessment that safeguard independent working and cooperation with others. Throughout the study programme, students shall gain experience with oral, written (Bokmål and Nynorsk) and combined forms of communication, where digital tools are also included and help to enhance students' professional digital competence. Assignments and forms of assessment and documentation shall integrate practical, didactic and theoretical perspectives in order to achieve a holistic, coherent and relevant education. Compulsory teaching and coursework requirements shall be clearly stated in the individual programme plans. Students shall gain experience in academic reading and writing and professionally relevant working methods and forms of assessment. The forms of assessment will help students to understand the correlation between practical experience and theoretical knowledge, and will contribute to learning and personal development.

4.4 Internationalisation

Programme plans and teaching shall facilitate internationalisation throughout the study programme. This includes facilitating an international semester, student exchanges, practice placements abroad and the integration of global and multicultural perspectives in the studies.

4.5 Practice placements

Practice placements shall help ensure continuity, coherence and progression. The student shall transition from a student to a professional practitioner with EC occupational competence. The expectations and requirements for students in the practical element of the study programme must therefore be high during the course of study.

It shall be clear to the student at the start of the study programme that being an EC teacher carries with it a responsibility for pedagogic leadership. The process of becoming an EC teacher, with all the roles and different aspects this entails, requires professional knowledge, analytical

reflection and practical experience. The student shall therefore be taught how to reflect on the interplay between theory and practice and on the ethical challenges that can arise in kindergartens. Students shall be encouraged to drive the development of their own professional competence. There shall be clear requirements for carrying out leadership tasks during the practice placement periods. The leadership tasks shall have a natural progression throughout the course of study, as explained in the model in section 4.5.2.

4.5.1 Structure of the practice placement

The Regulations stipulate that the practical element of the study programme must cover a minimum of 100 days. Five days will focus on the transition between kindergarten and school. For full-time study programmes, the 100 days will be divided into 75 days in the first two years of study and 25 days in the third year. Time spent on preparing for and following up practice placements is not included in the 100 days.

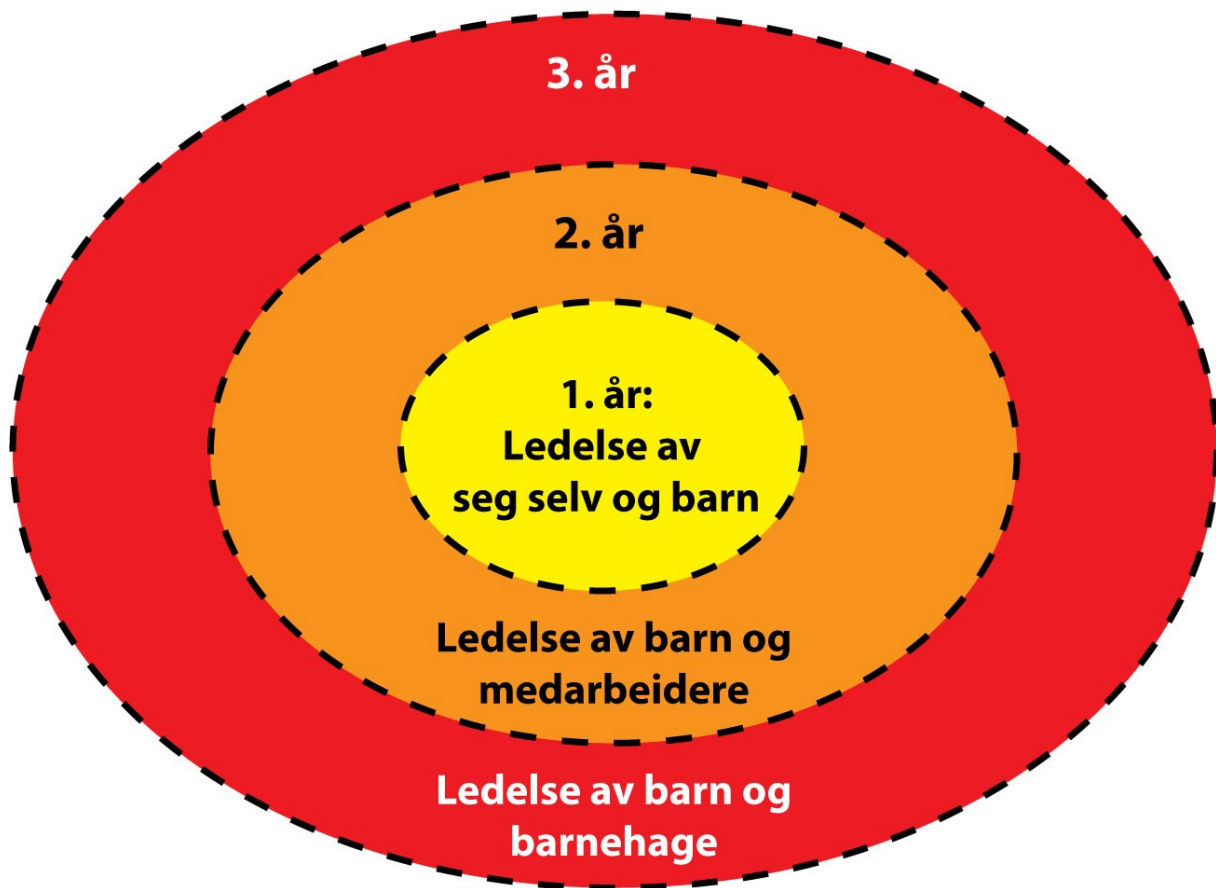
Full attendance is required in practice placements in order to pass that part of the study programme. Any periods of absence, for whatever reason, must be retaken. This can be done outside the practice period if necessary.

As far as is possible, students should be given the opportunity to have contact with the field of practice beyond the compulsory elements of the study programme, and have a practice teacher of the same sex during the course of study.

The practice periods can be linked to the area of knowledge individually, or linked collectively for the relevant year of study. Practice placements shall safeguard the profession-oriented leadership perspective, see section 4.5.2 of the progression plan. Special adaptation of the practical element of the study programme may be relevant for students who choose to spend a semester abroad.

4.5.2 Progression for pedagogic leadership and practice

The institution shall encompass learning outcomes for the individual areas of knowledge in accordance with the model for progression in pedagogic leadership and practice. This involves three main focus areas on leadership over the three years of study:



3. år – 3rd year

2. år – 2nd year

1. år: Ledelse av seg selv og barn – 1st year: leadership of self and children

Ledelse av barn og medarbeidere – Leadership of children and staff

Ledelse av barn og barnehage – Leadership of children and kindergarten

1st year of study: Leadership of self and children

During the first year of study, the student will gain a basic understanding of pedagogic leadership in the kindergarten and acquire knowledge about the kindergarten as a learning organisation. Through observation and reflection, the student will gain an insight into the work of an EC teacher. The student will also take part in everyday life in the kindergarten and participate actively in play and formal and informal interaction and learning situations. In addition to being a supervisor, practice teachers shall serve as a role model. Students will develop various aspects of the EC teacher role, such as:

- being able to demonstrate self-leadership in the practice kindergarten;
- planning and carrying out activities with groups of children and critically evaluating their own pedagogic leadership and practice;
- using observation as a tool for reflecting on themselves, as well as children's behaviour and their needs for care, play and learning;
- facilitating varied play and developing good interaction patterns with children; and

- reflecting on what is entailed in pedagogic leadership in the interaction with children and groups of children.

2nd year of study: *Leadership of children and colleagues*

During the second year of study, the student will gain experience in working with parents, staff and professional partners, as well as practising staff leadership skills in the kindergarten. This entails developing supervision competence and reflecting on the place of supervision in the kindergarten. The student will also acquire a greater understanding of the kindergarten as a learning environment and formative arena, and of the EC teacher's role and responsibility for giving children varied experiences.

Students will develop various aspects of the EC teacher role, such as:

- being a reflective pedagogic leader and professional;
- leading and supervising kindergarten staff in connection with formal and informal activities with groups of children, and critically evaluating their own pedagogic leadership and practice;
- demonstrating relational skills and being able to reflect critically on their own role in communication and cooperation with parents and colleagues; and
- reflecting on the kindergarten as an arena for play, learning and formative development.

3rd year of study: *Leadership of children and the kindergarten*

In the third year of study, the student will develop skills in pedagogic leadership and managing change and development processes in the kindergarten, and in demonstrating that pedagogic leadership involves professional ethical awareness. The student will focus both on his/her own professional identity and the kindergarten's social mandate, and be able to reflect on this.

The student will develop various aspects of the EC teacher role, such as:

- carrying out the work of an EC teacher, and being able to reflect on various aspects of the professional practice in general and the specialisation in particular;
- being able to guide the kindergarten as a learning organisation;
- enhancing their general pedagogic leadership skills;
- being able to facilitate an environment that promotes and safeguards play; and
- being able to reflect on the balance between goal-oriented pedagogic leadership and dialogue with colleagues, and the balance between the students' own needs and being aware of the needs of others.

4.5.3 Agreements for practice placements

Educational institutions and kindergartens are equal learning arenas with a shared responsibility for content, quality, progression and assessment in practice. Practice placement agreements are entered into between the educational institution and the kindergarten owner. The parties shall establish a long-term and binding cooperation for the practical element of the study programme and the content of the education.

The practice teacher must have a minimum of 30 credits of further education in supervision. The educational institution is responsible for devising a plan that ensures that all practice teachers have the opportunity to take such further education.

The programme plan must either contain current agreements between the educational institution and the practice kindergartens, or references to agreements that are easily accessible. The agreements must contain the following as a minimum:

- Scope
- Objectives
- Frameworks based on relevant governing documents at local and national level
- Practice kindergarten's responsibilities
 - Responsibilities and tasks of the owner, manager and practice teacher at the practice kindergarten
 - Organisation of the practice placement at the individual practice kindergartens
 - Participation in collaborative fora and input to mutual development and evaluation of practice placements
 - Time spent on responsibilities and tasks
- Educational institution's responsibilities
 - Role and division of labour internally at the educational institution
 - Establishing collaborative fora for mutual development and evaluation of practice placements
 - Mutual skills development
 - Guidelines for mutual development and evaluation of practice placements
 - Remuneration for practical training

5 Areas of knowledge

Section 2 of the Regulations describes the learning outcomes that the students will acquire during the course of study. These should be included in the general part of the programme plan. The learning outcomes in the national guidelines must be incorporated into the course plans for the different areas of knowledge.

The learning outcomes describe the end result of what the students should have acquired in terms of knowledge, skills and general competencies after completing their studies. This must not preclude the formulation of learning outcomes that are important for a qualified EC teacher to possess, but which are difficult to measure. The working methods and forms of assessment must be varied and adapted to the individual areas of knowledge.

The learning outcomes and teaching must safeguard the professional orientation in all areas of knowledge. Professional orientation is ensured by considering which tasks an EC teacher undertakes according to the Norwegian *Kindergarten Act* and the *Framework Plan for the Content and Tasks of Kindergartens*, the latest research in the kindergarten field and the societal development that will impact on kindergartens in the foreseeable future. The learning outcomes and the teaching content must also be adapted to the scope and placing of the area of knowledge within the course of study.

The areas of knowledge, specialisation, bachelor thesis and practical element of the study programme are reviewed below.

5.1 Children's development, play and learning

This area of knowledge is based on the kindergarten's core values, and shall contribute to the professional insight that is necessary for pedagogic work in play, learning, care and formative development in a diverse society. The area of knowledge includes pedagogic kindergarten themes that can help create an inclusive community characterised by care, safety, recognition, participation and exploration. A particular focus is placed on different perspectives on care, formative development, play and learning, and how these are linked. Play is a form of learning and living that has an intrinsic value and is of crucial importance for all-round development. Views on children and childhood are viewed in light of historical and contemporary perspectives, and form the basis of professional ethical reflections. The area of knowledge examines the interaction between people, and between people and their surroundings, and contributes to the development of critical and democratic thinking. Knowledge of diversity, ethnicity, indigenous peoples, social equality, inclusion and gender equality are prerequisites for guiding the pedagogic work. The area of knowledge also views children as independent actors with the right to be heard, seen and included in the community, and a right to influence the kindergarten's content and participate in learning and development processes. Cooperation and dialogue with parents are included in this area of knowledge.

The area of knowledge integrates theory and practice into the thematisation of children's care, play, formative development and learning, and children's care needs. Research-based teaching and practical experience will form the basis for critical reflection on the student's own professional practice in terms of the individual, relationships and systems. The area of knowledge includes experience with planning, implementing and evaluating learning and development processes for children of different ages and with different aptitudes.

The knowledge base is mainly founded on pedagogic topics within teacher education. General pedagogics and profession-oriented EC pedagogics use themes, theories and concepts from supporting academic subjects such as philosophy, didactics, psychology, sociology and social anthropology. Curriculum theory and didactics are treated in light of the kindergarten's objectives, content and working methods. The teaching elucidates an EC pedagogical approach and is based on relevant research related to the area of knowledge. Practice placements shall be an integral part of the area of knowledge.

Learning outcomes for the area of knowledge: children's development, play and learning

KNOWLEDGE

The candidate

- has knowledge of relevant theories and research on children's development, play, learning and formative development, and of how these are linked;
- has knowledge of play as a phenomenon in childhood and as an arena for exploration, friendship and contact between children and between children and adults;
- has knowledge of observation and pedagogical documentation as a prerequisite for pedagogical work in the kindergarten;

- has knowledge about children's behaviour, desire for play and learning, and need for care, and about how this is linked to their interests, aptitudes and life experiences;
- has knowledge of children in different phases of life, including the transition to kindergarten, transitions within the kindergarten and the transition from kindergarten to school/out-of-hours school care; and
- has knowledge of Sami perspectives on childhood and children's development, play and learning.

SKILLS

The candidate

- can create, participate in and maintain caring relationships and show the ability and willingness to empathise with and acknowledge each individual child;
- can plan, justify, collaborate on and reflect on pedagogical work in light of practical experiences, theory and research, and incorporate children's experiences, interests and right to participate in this work;
- can analyse and reflect on the kindergarten's core values and issues relating to diversity; and
- can guide pedagogical processes, participate in play with children, support children's curiosity and creative expression, and contribute to children's well-being and joy in a safe yet challenging play and learning environment.

GENERAL COMPETENCIES

The candidate

- can demonstrate a beginner's level of professional judgement, further develop his/her pedagogical knowledge and demonstrate the ability to formulate and communicate this orally and in writing;
- can demonstrate basic tolerance, interest and respect for children regardless of their age, gender identity, ethnicity, appearance, functional ability, sexual orientation, social, cultural, religious or belief-based affiliation;
- can analyse and reflect critically on power relations that impact on pedagogic practice; and
- can analyse and reflect critically on his/her own professional practice in the interaction with children, staff and parents.

5.2 Society, religion, beliefs and ethics

This area of knowledge includes the kindergarten's social mandate and special core values in a society characterised by diversity. The values in the kindergarten's mission statement and framework plan are broadly rooted in society and shall form the basis for all work within the kindergarten. Through working in this area of knowledge, the student will gain an insight into the entire expanse of the society surrounding the kindergarten, from local to global level, the kindergarten's place in society, and the kindergarten as an organisation and a commercial pedagogic activity. Based on the kindergarten's work on active participation in a democratic society, understanding the relationships between the individual and society, political structures,

international conventions, legislation, diversity and gender equality represents a fundamental focal point. The key themes in the area of knowledge include childhood circumstances and children's position in society, family structures, social inequality and children's rights, as well as the staff's duties and responsibilities in the interaction with children in difficult life situations.

The area of knowledge focuses on ethics, various religious and non-religious beliefs and the narratives and traditions of different cultures. Knowledge of and attitudes to different societies, cultures, religions and beliefs constitute an important basis for identity formation and for understanding and interacting with people from different backgrounds. The area of knowledge will contribute to knowledge of the Sami history as an indigenous people, and provide an insight into various Sami cultures and everyday life.

Fundamental ethical and philosophical thinking with insight into different views of humanity and perceptions of reality shall contribute to critical, ethical reflection on practice, with a particular emphasis on the staff's behaviour in the interaction with children, parents and other personnel.

The knowledge base is mainly founded on the teacher education subjects of pedagogy, social studies and religion, beliefs and ethics. The teaching shall draw on research that is relevant to the area of knowledge and adopt a clear pedagogic and didactic approach to EC education. Practice placements shall be an integral part of the area of knowledge.

Learning outcomes for the area of knowledge: society, religion, beliefs and ethics

KNOWLEDGE

The candidate

- has knowledge of the kindergarten's special core values and what this entails in practice in a multicultural society, and knowledge of Sami cultures and indigenous peoples' rights;
- has knowledge of societal development, with an emphasis on the welfare state, sustainable development, diversity, social equality and inequality and gender equality, as well as knowledge of childhood phenomena, kindergartens and families in a historical and contemporary perspective;
- has knowledge of children's reactions in difficult life situations, adults' responsibilities and how to support children and work with other support agencies;
- has knowledge of the Christian faith and cultural heritage, of the other world religions, other beliefs and philosophies, ethical theory, fundamental thinking and ethical guidance; and
- has knowledge of children's rights and laws, regulations and international conventions that regulate the work in the kindergarten.

SKILLS

The candidate

- can practise, justify and communicate the contents of the kindergarten's social mandate and core values orally and in writing;

- can reflect critically on his/her own values, attitudes and behaviour, be aware of asymmetric power relations in the work, and act in accordance with the kindergarten's objectives;
- can convey stories from different cultures and religions and, in cooperation with the children's families, help to celebrate festivals and special occasions in the kindergarten;
- can talk to children about ethical, religious, philosophical and belief-based issues;
- can facilitate children's participation and democratic formative processes; and
- can facilitate experiences for children in relation to traditions and learning opportunities in the local community and promote ethical awareness and occupational competence with regard to digital challenges, the environment and sustainable development.

GENERAL COMPETENCIES

The candidate

- can identify professional ethical challenges in the kindergarten's daily work, reflect critically on these and justify his/her own choices concerning what action to take;
- has acquired an academic and professional basis for interdisciplinary and interagency collaborations in the kindergarten;
- can work collaboratively with children and their parents;
- can provide guidance on ethical issues to children and staff with different backgrounds, with a view to creating an inclusive environment; and
- has the ability to recognise the links between the individual, groups, the local community and society as a whole, and relate these to practice.

5.3 Language, text and mathematics

This area of knowledge includes children's mathematical and linguistic development, development of dialogue skills, children's literature, children's media and text culture, their linguistic expression, meaning-making, creative wonder and problem solving. The transition from kindergarten to school is also highlighted. Elements of language, text and mathematics are evident in children's play and exploration and are manifested in various forms of communication and bodily expressions. Working with language, text and mathematics underpins all children's play, learning and identity creation in the development of relationships and participation in a democracy.

The area of knowledge combines research-based and practical knowledge. This will contribute to the competence in guiding and creating varied language, text and mathematical environments that safeguard the kindergarten's role as a promotor of culture and tradition. The area of knowledge will also safeguard children's right to cultural creation and participation in the development of the kindergarten's content.

The knowledge base is mainly founded on the teacher education subjects of Norwegian, mathematics and pedagogy, and is related to aesthetics and philosophy. Practice placements shall be an integral part of the area of knowledge.

Learning outcomes for the area of knowledge: language, text and mathematics

KNOWLEDGE

The candidate

- has knowledge of children's mathematical development, children's oral and written use of language and linguistic development, also in multilingual and multicultural perspectives;
- has knowledge of how children acquire dialogue skills and how they create meaning and express themselves through different systems of signs;
- has knowledge of children's fiction and factual prose, modern text and media cultures, and genres from oral storytelling traditions with a special emphasis on the Sami tradition;
- has basic knowledge of the significance of language, text and mathematics for all children's play and participation in everyday activities;
- has basic knowledge of the significance of play and conversation for children's textual experiences, linguistic and mathematical development, and how language and mathematics are used as tools for exploration and thinking;
- has knowledge of aesthetic and bodily aspects of children's linguistic and mathematical development.

SKILLS

The candidate

- can observe, assess, facilitate and support children's linguistic, textual and mathematical development in light of the kindergarten's pedagogic activities;
- is a conscious linguistic role model and engages in conversation that promotes children's active participation, development and formative development;
- can create an inclusive and varied play environment for mathematical and linguistic exploration, storytelling and reading aloud, and ensuring diversity in children's textual experiences and reading communities, also in a multicultural perspective;
- can guide, lead and critically reflect on the work with language, text and mathematics in the kindergarten; and
- can demonstrate professional digital competence.

GENERAL COMPETENCIES

The candidate

- can participate actively and critically in contemporary EC-related discussions concerning language, text and mathematics, as well as discuss ethical and professional pedagogical issues with staff, parents and external partners;
- can demonstrate pedagogic leadership in the efforts aimed at inclusion and recognition of all children's linguistic, textual and mathematical experiences;

- is aware of the significance of the linguistic, literary and mathematical play environment for the work on formative development, democracy and gender equality; and
- has a high standard of written and spoken Norwegian (Bokmål and Nynorsk) and can use the language competently in a professional context.

5.4 Art, culture and creativity

This area of knowledge involves seeing, understanding and valuing children's aesthetic forms of expression, and how the student can become a co-creator in a vibrant kindergarten culture. The kindergarten develops its culture in a close interplay with various actors in the field of art and culture in the local community, and the area of knowledge highlights the EC teacher's responsibility for facilitating children's access to cultural traditions and relevant trends in art and cultural life.

Developing practical skills, an aesthetic focus and creative abilities form a key part of the area of knowledge. The EC teacher is responsible for ensuring that all children develop a rich repertoire of expression through all-round sensory experiences, bodily experiences, time for play and experimentation, reflection and communication. The aim of the area of knowledge is to use artistic working methods in a clear professional role, with a view to fostering exploratory and creative activity and recognising the connection between aesthetic learning processes and children's play, learning and formative development.

The knowledge base builds on pedagogical EC knowledge, mainly in the teacher education subjects of music, drama and art, and on artistic development work and research that is relevant to the area of knowledge. Practice placements shall be an integral part of the area of knowledge.

Learning outcomes for the area of knowledge: art, culture and creativity

KNOWLEDGE

The candidate

- has insight into how the subjects in the area of knowledge build on children's play and contribute to their aesthetic experiences, forms of expression, learning and formative development;
- has knowledge of children's culture, Sami art and culture traditions, cultural diversity and cultural heritage, and an insight into how art and culture influence children's forms of expression;
- has knowledge of communication, drama in play, interaction and dissemination in artistic work; and
- has knowledge of aesthetic tools, working methods, materials, instruments and technology in music, drama and art.

SKILLS

The candidate

- can use materials, tools, instruments and techniques in his/her own creative work, and explore these with the children in planned and spontaneous situations;

- can stimulate children to explore, play, learn and create through digital forms of expression;
- can use his/her professional skills to improvise in play and creative processes;
- can facilitate experiences for children in which they encounter a variety of artistic and cultural expressions from past and present;
- can guide aesthetic learning processes with and for children and colleagues, and ensure ethical reflection in documentation and assessment; and
- can create indoor and outdoor spaces that foster aesthetic experiences, wonder, deeper understandings, exploration, creativity and play.

GENERAL COMPETENCIES

The candidate

- sees children as competent participants in the community's cultural arena and ensures children's expression and democratic rights by promoting their aesthetic language forms;
- understands the importance of the EC teacher as a co-creator, participant and role model in children's aesthetic learning processes;
- can stimulate children's musicality and life skills; and
- can build on development work and research in art and cultural work in the kindergarten.

5.5 Nature, health and movement

This area of knowledge covers nature, sustainability, food, movement and health in a broad sense. Wonder and first-hand experiences with different natural phenomena and the diversity of nature will be central, along with children's life skills and formative development.

Perceptions and experiences in nature are important. Children's behaviour involves their senses and bodies, and this forms the basis for exploration, wonder, conversation, play and learning. Social relations between children, and between children and adults in the kindergarten, are partly linked to play, mealtimes and movement.

An important part of the professional competence is being able to observe, analyse and understand the development and physical play cultures of children, and to use this to inspire and motivate children. The EC teacher must feel comfortable in nature and recognise and exploit the potential for pedagogic work in the outdoors. The work in the area of knowledge includes a strong practical element and will help give the students a basis for becoming conscious role models. The EC teacher must be aware of public health challenges and must be able to help protect children's mental and physical health. Food preparation and mealtimes will give the children a basis for developing an enjoyment of food and aid their understanding of the origin of the food. The area of knowledge also covers how children can take care of themselves, each other and nature, through experimentation, wonder and challenging play in different environments. This gives them a good starting point for contributing to sustainable development. Norwegian traditions within nature perception, food culture and physical activity can often seem strange. The study programme therefore needs to place an emphasis on how to

bring about positive intercultural interaction. Sami culture is part of the national culture and must be visible in the study programme.

The knowledge base is mainly founded on the teacher education subjects of natural science, physical education, food and health, and pedagogy. Teaching should be research-based and profession-oriented, and practice placements shall be an integral part of the area of knowledge.

Learning outcomes for the area of knowledge: nature, health and movement

KNOWLEDGE

The candidate

- has knowledge of children's use of their body and senses in play and learning, and of how to create scope to foster this;
- has knowledge of the importance of the outdoors and experiences in nature;
- has knowledge of physical phenomena, biological diversity, organisms in children's local environment and the interrelationships in nature;
- has knowledge of sustainable development and how the kindergarten can help to raise environmental awareness;
- has knowledge of the human body, motor skills, health-promoting work and children's health and life skills;
- has knowledge of food, the origin of food, preparing meals and mealtimes as a pedagogic resource; and
- has knowledge of national guidelines for health promotion and preventive measures.

SKILLS

The candidate

- can explore nature, experiment and reflect together with the children;
- can select and use materials, raw materials, techniques and tools in practical work with children and make use of local natural resources;
- can facilitate good hygiene, physical activity, rest and varied mealtimes in accordance with national guidelines;
- can create and use different spaces together with children and assess the risk of play environments, and deal with accidents in an appropriate manner, whilst facilitating children's risk assessment and coping skills; and
- can identify and use the local environment's potential for natural exploration, play and movement together with children.

GENERAL COMPETENCIES

The candidate

- can reflect on different nature perceptions and give consideration to different cultural perspectives, such as those of the Sami, in the work with food, health, nature and movement;
- can participate in and inspire children's movement in play, experiences with nature and mealtimes; and

- can discuss ethical issues related to the area of knowledge.

5.6 Leadership, cooperation and development

This area of knowledge covers leadership and development of the kindergarten as a learning organisation, as well as cooperation with children, colleagues, parents and external bodies with a view to protecting children's interests. The area of knowledge should be research-based and profession-oriented.

The area of knowledge places an emphasis on pedagogic leadership and how actions in leadership can help promote children's play and strengthen the kindergarten as a learning and development arena. The area of knowledge also examines the development of the student's own leadership role. The core part of the area of knowledge is leadership in learning processes, supervision and the use of different methods and tools that are suitable for planning, initiating and leading development work. Legislation, governing documents and political processes that govern and impact on the kindergarten's social mandate are also key elements.

The area of knowledge shall provide competence in reflecting on how professional ethical issues, power relations and the kindergarten's organisational conditions affect leadership processes. The candidate shall be able to assess whether choices, working methods and measures help to achieve the kindergarten's goals within a diverse kindergarten environment.

The knowledge base is mainly founded on the teacher education subjects of pedagogy and social studies. Practice placements shall be an integral part of the area of knowledge.

Learning outcomes for the area of knowledge: leadership, cooperation and development

KNOWLEDGE

The candidate

- has knowledge of various leadership and organisational theories;
- has knowledge of how political processes can impact on the kindergarten's activities and mandate;
- has knowledge of relevant research, methods and tools as a basis for leadership, learning and development;
- has knowledge of human resource management, professional ethics and power relations within a diverse kindergarten environment; and
- has knowledge of how his/her own leadership impacts on collaborative processes between children, parents, colleagues and external bodies.

SKILLS

The candidate

- can analyse, use and critically reflect on legislation and governing documents as a basis for justifications and decisions within a diverse kindergarten environment;

- can lead, plan, carry out and critically assess defined development work in the kindergarten independently and in collaboration with others;
- can motivate, guide and critically reflect on play and learning processes in the kindergarten; and
- can work together with colleagues, parents and external bodies to protect the interests of children.

GENERAL COMPETENCIES

The candidate

- has insight into and can apply research-based knowledge and professional ethics in developing his/her own leadership role;
- can identify ethical dilemmas, exercise professional judgement and make choices that protect children's best interests;
- can lead pedagogic work and make decisions that lead to the development of the kindergarten as a learning organisation; and
- can assess how structural and cultural conditions within and outside the organisation lay the framework for leadership and development work.

5.7 Specialisation

The specialisation of 30 credits in the final year of study shall be based on the areas of knowledge and enable the student to further develop his/her competence. The specialisation must be relevant and professionally aligned to the work in the kindergarten. The educational institutions shall prepare course descriptions with learning outcomes that demonstrate relevant specialisation.

5.8 Bachelor thesis

The bachelor thesis is part of the final year of study. The thesis should concern the daily work of kindergartens and serve as an aid to the student's future professional practice as an EC teacher. Preparatory research should be carried out for the thesis, such that the student acquires knowledge of relevant research ethics issues and research methods. This knowledge will also enhance the EC teacher's skills in conveying professionally sustainable knowledge and insights as required by the profession. The bachelor thesis must be based on one or more areas of knowledge and/or the specialisation.

Institutions shall formulate learning outcomes for the bachelor thesis that correspond to the knowledge, skills and general competencies stipulated, see the first cycle in the qualification framework. The thesis work will be supervised, and the scope will be stipulated in the programme plan. The grade attained for the bachelor thesis will appear on the student's diploma.