

[Research - teacher training in different countries \(see session 20240420-36ach\)](#)

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20240501

UK, China, Sweden

I am presenting a report on the topic “System of Teachers’ Training in the UK, China, and Sweden”. It is divided into logically connected parts as education, career options and standards. After looking through some important features of each system I am going to analyse them by summing up found information.

Firstly, I would like to consider important aspects of the system of teachers’ training in the UK. In the UK, prospective teachers must have a bachelor's degree, typically in a subject they wish to teach. Following this, they must complete a year of "Initial Teacher Training" (ITT), which combines practical classroom experience with theoretical study. This allows them to gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), a required condition for teaching in any state-maintained school in the UK (England and Wales). Scottish teachers need a degree and an Initial Teacher Education (ITE) qualification. Upon completion of their ITE a teacher will need to undergo a probationary (or training) teaching year. To become a teacher in Northern Ireland a person will need to complete an undergraduate Bachelor of Education (BEd) or a one-year Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). If they want to teach in the country, but trained outside Northern Ireland, a person will need to get qualifications approved by the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI). Once a teacher has passed ITT in England and Wales a teacher will be awarded QTS. A teacher will then be required to complete a two-year induction period (previously one year) to become a fully qualified teacher. During this time a teacher must demonstrate that they meet the Teachers' Standards (England) or Practising Teacher Standards (Wales). A teacher will be provided with an induction tutor/mentor, a reduced teaching load and a tailored induction programme. The probationary year in Scotland is known as the Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS), a guaranteed one-year probationary teaching post with a Scottish local authority school.

Talking about career options, teachers can work in either public or private schools, each with their own benefits and drawbacks. As it was written before a teacher needs to have QTS. It means that a teacher is qualified to teach any age range at a maintained school in England and Wales. However, if a person wants to move between age groups, they would need supporting evidence to demonstrate that they have the experience to do so effectively. For example, secondary teachers need to show they can teach the broader primary curriculum. The UK also offers opportunities in adult education, which can be a rewarding career path for those interested in lifelong learning.

As for teacher’s standards, the UK has strict standards regulated by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). *Ofsted* conducts regular inspections of schools and teachers, rating them on a four-point scale. The Teachers' Standards document outlines the expectations for

teachers' professional practice in the UK. It serves as a framework for initial teacher training, ongoing professional development, and performance management. The standards cover eight key areas: set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils; promote good progress and outcomes by pupils; demonstrate good knowledge of the curriculum; plan and teach well-structured lessons; adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils; make accurate and productive use of assessment; manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment; fulfill wider professional responsibilities. Overall, the Teachers' Standards provide a comprehensive framework for effective teaching practice, emphasizing high expectations, pupil progress, subject knowledge, and ongoing professional development. They serve as a valuable tool for ensuring quality education and supporting teachers.

Secondly, I would like to consider important aspects of the system of teachers' training in China. If a graduate of higher education institutions has gained a teaching profession qualification certificate and also passed teacher recruitment exams organized by local educational authorities, they can be a school teacher then. However it should be noted that **majoring in teacher education is not a necessary condition for becoming a school teacher in China.** *Normal universities* offer teacher education programs. But students who study in other multidisciplinary universities and who don't major in education may also become school teachers. There are different models in Normal universities. At undergraduate level there are: "2+2" model: 1st-2nd academic Year: subject knowledge studying; 3rd-4th academic Year: teaching skill training; "2.5+1.5" model: first 2.5 years: emphasizing on subject theory learning (including some teaching practice); last 1.5 years: focusing on teaching training, practical training is the key point; "3+1" model: 1st-3rd academic Year: subject knowledge and education theory studying; 4th academic Year: teaching practice. At postgraduate level there are: "4+2" model: 1st-4th academic Year: subject knowledge studying (Bachelor of the subject); 5th-6th academic Year: teaching skill training (Master of education). Beijing Normal University uses the last model to educate research-based teachers for secondary schools, especially key middle schools.

As for its qualification examination, only in 2013, China also made public the Provisional Tests for Primary and Secondary School Teacher Qualification. The teacher qualification examination was changed to a model that combines the national unified examination and the examination of each department. In 2015, the reform of the teacher qualification examination was officially implemented, and the national unified examination of teacher qualification was fully implemented. So the **Teacher Education Practical Training Centre (TEPTC) was established in order to enhance students' teaching skills.** Each year, 2500 undergraduate students take an assessment (including teaching strategy design, courseware making, **handwriting**, pronunciation of mandarin and etc) in the centre. If a student cannot pass the assessment, they will not be able to attend teaching practice and cannot get the Bachelor Degree and Graduation Diploma.

Talking about career options, teaching in China offers a range of career paths and opportunities for educators, with options available in both public and private sectors, across

different levels of education, and with varying degrees of specialisation. Some of the common career paths for teachers in China include: teaching in primary or secondary schools or being a subject teacher; international school teacher; tutor; educational consultant; school administrator; curriculum developer; education researcher. As for tutoring, **in China there is a rapidly growing market for private tutoring. This is driven by the highly competitive nature of Chinese education, where success in national exams can determine a student's future prospects.**

As for teacher's standards, in China, the Ministry of Education sets national standards. As for standards for primary and secondary teachers, the ultimate goal of it is to cultivate educators. Selecting and cultivating a high-quality teacher team is the fundamental guarantee for a country to run education well. In 2014, Xi Jinping clearly put forward that "Four Haves" good teachers, which means a good teacher should have ideals and beliefs, moral sentiments, solid knowledge and a heart of goodwill. **Especially since 2008, the core elements of teacher standards have increased dramatically, reflecting that China has begun to attach importance to the professional development of teachers.** Whether teacher qualification, teacher evaluation or teacher education, the aim of teacher policy in China is ultimately cultivating a group of educators.

Thirdly, I would like to consider important aspects of the system of teachers' training in Sweden. In Sweden, future teachers need to complete a specialised three-year teaching degree. This degree combines academic studies in education theory with practical training. **Sweden emphasises the importance of early childhood education**, which is reflected in their rigorous teacher training programs. It should be noted that all teacher training programs consist of three education areas: general education, study of disciplines of a certain field of knowledge, specialisation subjects. Moreover special attention is paid to observation practice and practical training. It is aimed at consolidating and deepening the theoretical knowledge of the future teacher and improving their professional competences through independent solutions of real practical problems in the school classroom. There are significant differences in the practice of supervised training: some universities and university colleges organise its passing during the entire period of study, others do so in one block at the final stage of study at the higher education institution. By the end of the course of study at a university or university college, students are required to prepare project work, where they must demonstrate their ability to operate with scientific theories and research methods. In general, **the system of teacher training in Sweden is built on the principles of student-centeredness, and offers equal opportunities to all students in accordance with their potential and aspirations.** It is characterised by the variability of educational content, flexibility of structure and teaching technologies, and the availability of the students' ability to design individual educational programs adequate to their interests and needs.

One of the main features of this system is that the degree of Bachelor/Master of Education is replaced by four professional degrees: a degree in pre-school education, a degree in primary school education, a degree in subject education and a degree in vocational

education. The current model, established in 2011 with four different degrees and alternative orientations, constituted a profound change compared to prior reforms, which sought to strengthen the teacher's identity and ultimately the teaching profession through the establishment of a single degree. The 2011 reform emphasised different degrees for different types of schools, primarily related to the age of the students.

Talking about career options, teachers can work in either public or private schools, each with their own advantages and disadvantages. Sweden also offers opportunities in adult education, which can be a rewarding career path for those interested in lifelong learning. As in China there are some of the common career paths for teachers include: teaching in schools at various levels, such as preschool, primary school, lower secondary school, upper secondary school or being a special education teacher (work with students who have special needs or disabilities); international school teacher; school administrator; educational consultant; curriculum developer; teacher trainer; education researcher; international school teacher. Moreover, there are career pathways. The government develops clear career pathways and opportunities for advancement within the education sector to motivate and retain talented teachers.

As for teacher's standards, Sweden, on the other hand, has more local autonomy. Although there are national guidelines set by the Swedish National Agency for Education, much of the responsibility for maintaining standards falls to the individual municipalities. The system of modern pedagogical education in Sweden is generally harmonised in accordance with European standards, flexible enough for professional and individual development of the individual throughout life.

Finally, I would like to analyse these 3 systems. Talking about similarities and differences, all three countries - the UK, China, and Sweden, understand and acknowledge the importance of teacher training. However, their modus operandi significantly varies. The UK and Sweden lean towards a practical approach, providing their prospective teachers with hands-on experience in classrooms. In contrast, China focuses heavily on the theoretical aspects of teaching, providing their teachers with a strong foundation in pedagogy and educational philosophy. Moreover, there are no strict rules for teachers in China. If a person has got an education in a field, for example, biology, but has not got a pedagogical education, they can work in a school.

As for pros and cons of each system, there are distinct advantages and disadvantages to each system. The UK system, with its emphasis on hands-on teaching experience, prepares teachers for the realities of the classroom environment exceptionally well. However, China's system, with its rigorous theoretical training, equips teachers with a solid understanding of the principles of education and teaching methods. On the other hand, the system faces **challenges such as unequal distribution of resources between urban and rural areas, teacher shortages in certain subjects and regions**, and the need for continued improvement in teacher quality and training effectiveness. **Sweden's approach seems to be the most balanced, amalgamating both theoretical knowledge and practical experience** to create

well-rounded educators. However, **in Sweden, there is a lower percentage of ICT training and innovation in teacher education compared to other OECD TALIS member countries**, which may impact the recruitment of students into teaching careers. Additionally, **Swedish teachers' preparedness to teach in a multicultural setting is lower than the OECD average**.

Analysing legal protection for teachers the UK offers the most to its teachers. There are clear guidelines about teachers' rights and responsibilities, and teachers' unions in the UK are active and influential, providing valuable support. On the other hand, **China's hierarchical system offers less individual protection for teachers, and their rights can sometimes be overshadowed by the larger institutional goals**. Sweden falls somewhere in between, with provisions for teachers' rights but also high expectations of duty and responsibility.

Describing freedom in lesson design Sweden stands out. The country's education system encourages creativity, innovation, and individuality, allowing teachers a great deal of liberty in shaping their lessons. The UK, while having certain standards and guidelines, still offers flexibility, encouraging teachers to adapt the curriculum to their students' needs. Conversely, China has a more rigid curriculum, which can limit the freedom of teachers to a certain extent.

As for implementation of some described features in the Russian system, there are certainly elements that could be beneficial. The practical experience that is emphasised in the UK system and the balanced approach of Sweden could provide Russian teachers with valuable insights and techniques. **Giving more freedom to teachers in Russia when planning lessons will help to further individualise the educational process and make it more “attractive” for students**.

When considering other systems from which to draw inspiration, Finland's education system is worth examining. Firstly, it is a **rigorous selection process. Finland has a competitive selection process for teacher education programs, ensuring that only the most qualified candidates are admitted**. This helps maintain high standards in the teaching profession. Secondly, it is the importance of collaboration and reflection. Finnish teachers are encouraged to collaborate with colleagues, engage in professional development activities, and reflect on their teaching practices to continuously improve and innovate in the classroom. Finally, there is a trust-based system. Finland's education system is built on trust, autonomy, and respect for teachers, giving them the freedom to design their own curriculum, assess students' progress, and make professional decisions based on their expertise.

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Used AI:

- Notion
- ChatGPT & Midjourney | AI bot in Telegram