

First School Placement (Orientierungspraktikum, OSP)

(Teacher education B.A. programs 2015)

Field practice is a key element for the continuous development of professional competencies of future teachers. In all teacher education programs, the OSP is the first field practice phase.

1. Preparation

Student teachers are required to find the school in which they will complete their OSP themselves. The OSP lasts **3 weeks (15 school days)**. Student teachers must inform the Placement Office in Heidelberg about the date / school address / contact.

Before the OSP, student teachers attend a seminar day at the University of Education Heidelberg in which they are prepared for the basics of lesson observation and planning. After the placement, student teachers have a follow-up reflection session.

School management informs student teachers about the organization of the school, school rules, and obligations concerning school legislation (e. g. confidentiality, supervision).

2. Competencies to be acquired by student teachers during the OSP

Student teachers ...

- are able to recognize learning conditions of the group and strengths of individual learners.
- create and reflect on teaching situations with instruction from the supervising teacher.
- are able to build relationships with learners based on empathy, appreciation and respect.
- are able to identify and evaluate pedagogical situations based on specific criteria.
- develop awareness of tasks and responsibilities of teachers.
- reflect on and develop their pedagogical self-conception while taking into account the progression of their own career wish.
- prepare for the change in perspective when progressing from being a student to being a teacher.

3. Tasks and responsibilities at the school

Supervising teachers support and accompany student teachers by including them in all their tasks and activities at the school. These include:

- Actively observing one or more learning groups.
- Reflection sessions with supervising teachers.
- Teaching several lessons to individual learners, small groups, or entire classes with guidance from the supervising teacher. **Student teachers must plan, teach, and evaluate at least one lesson themselves** (including a lesson plan for each).
- Participation in school events and conferences in agreement with school management.
- Keeping a portfolio as a means of reflecting on the placement, including the required link to educational theory and practical aspects of the placement (“Professionalisierungsaufgabe”), to be written during the placement.
- Student teachers demonstrate appropriate conduct toward learners, teachers, and all persons involved in school life.

If student teachers are not able to attend the placement due to illness or for other reasons, missed days must be made up for.

4. Advisory session / Completion of the OSP

At the end of the OSP, the supervising teacher and the student teacher meet for an advisory session. The purpose of this advisory session is for student teachers to reflect on their **choice of profession** by comparing their own assessment of the placement with the assessment of the supervising teacher. The supervising teacher gives feedback on the placement and on the student teacher's qualifications as a teacher. The following questions can be used to guide this advisory session:

- *What did you expect from your placement?*
- *Which tasks, job characteristics, and requirements were new and unexpected for you?*
- *Which types of tasks do you believe will come easier to you as a teacher and which will be more difficult?*
- *What will you take away from this experience and use in future placements?*
- *Which topics would you like to focus more on during your studies?*
- *Did the placement reassure you in your choice to become a teacher, or are you now feeling insecure about it?*

5. Successful completion (“pass”) / unsuccessful completion (“fail”) of the OSP

If the placement was successfully completed, the supervising teacher writes a report on the student teacher. The supervising teacher must also sign and stamp the form provided by the Placement Office. The placement is not graded.

If a student teacher did not pass the OSP, the supervising teacher informs the Placement Office via email and states the main reasons the OSP was unsuccessfully completed.

If you have any questions about the OSP, do not hesitate to contact the Placement Office:

- Primary education: ☎ 06221-477-150 ✉ prak-gs@vw.ph-heidelberg.de
- Secondary education: ☎ 06221-477-151 ✉ prak-sek@vw.ph-heidelberg.de
- Special needs education: ☎ 06221-477-196 ✉ petra.schaller@vw.ph-heidelberg.de

The Heidelberg University of Education thanks you for hosting placements and supporting our students.

➔ <https://www.ph-heidelberg.de/studium/ZfS/startseite.html>