



# School placement guide

For teacher education students and school  
placement supervisors



Stockholm  
University

# To teacher education students and school placement supervisors

This guide to school placement (Swedish: verksamhetsförlagd utbildning – VFU) is for teacher education students and their school placement supervisors. It provides information about the administration of school placements, and clarifies roles and responsibilities.

The school placement guide was compiled by the coordinating team for teacher education at Stockholm University.

Note that this is a translation of VFU-handbok – För lärarstudenter och VFU-handledare from Stockholm University.

Special rules and arrangements may apply to incoming international students and to students doing their placement abroad regarding, for example, the school placement portfolio and course examination. Please read the course description for your school placement course for further information.



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# How it works

School placement is a compulsory part of all teacher education programmes. A total of 30 credits are spread across three to five school placement courses.

School placement is organised in collaboration between Stockholm University and schools and preschools in Stockholm County. This means that courses during the school placement periods are held in a school or preschool. Students are allocated a placement before their first school placement course and will normally retain that placement throughout their teacher education programme. Single placement periods can be carried out abroad by arrangement with the coordinating department. The international coordinator at the coordinating department can give information about the possibilities for each teacher education programme.

- Stockholm University is responsible for the teacher education programme and the examination of the placement courses.
- During the placement period, the school placement is regarded as a workplace and the rules of the workplace will apply to students.
- The head teacher or an equivalent person determines whether a student can be received at the preschool or school.



## Roles and responsibilities

At Stockholm University:

### ***School placement course coordinator***

- prepares the course based on the syllabus
- examines the school placement course on the basis of several sources

### ***School placement course lecturer***

- prepares and supports the student before and during the placement course, including in seminars held during the placement course
- makes an overall assessment of the student's performance during placement seminars and the placement course, and proposes a grade for the School placement course coordinator

### ***Visiting teacher at the 3-way meeting***

- holds the meeting with the student and the placement supervisor

These three roles can be held by the same individual within a school placement course, however they may also be held by different teachers from Stockholm University.

### ***School placement supervisor***

- plans the placement period together with the student, based on the intended learning outcomes of the placement course and the student's documentation in the school placement portfolio
- serves as the student's support and reflection partner during the placement period
- at the end of the placement period, provides their assessment in the school placement report in the school placement portfolio of how well the student has achieved the intended learning outcomes for the course.

### ***Student***

- invites their supervisor to the school placement portfolio and gives them access to the school placement report
- contacts their supervisor as soon as the school placement is set up, in order to visit the preschool/school and get information about the rules of the workplace
- plans the placement period with the supervisor, with the intended learning outcomes and the assignments of the placement course in the portfolio as starting points
- follows what is happening in the placement course in the portfolio
- documents their action plan in the portfolio.

# Before the school placement

## The school placement course

Each school placement course has a number of intended learning outcomes that the student must achieve in order to receive a passing grade (refer to the syllabus for more information about examination).

## Entry requirements

All school placement courses have entry requirements that must be fulfilled no later than four weeks prior to the commencement date of the course. The entry requirements for admission to the course are in the course syllabus. If the entry requirements for admission to the course are not met, the student may not begin their school placement.

## Registration

Note that the student must register for each school placement course no later than three weeks into the current term, otherwise a school placement cannot be guaranteed. Exceptions may be made.

## Planning meeting

The student and their supervisor will meet together prior to the school placement course, as early as possible, to plan the placement period together, and so the student can visit the preschool/school. If the school placement is to take place abroad, the planning can be conducted via a digital meeting.

## School placement

In order to ensure the quality of the school placement, school placements are regulated in a specific agreement between Stockholm University and the municipalities in Stockholm County. Therefore the following applies:

- A student may not arrange for a school placement on their own.
- A student's school placement may not be at a preschool/school where the student is employed.
- Exceptions may be made in certain programmes.



## Police record extract

The Swedish Parliament has decreed that teacher education students doing school placement must undergo a police record check (belastningsregistret) and obtain a police record extract. This verification is conducted for the purpose of increasing protection for children and young people, and to minimise the risk of them being subjected to any of various types of violations or abuse by individuals working in preschool activities, primary and secondary schools, or care for school-aged children.

The student must apply for a police record extract in sufficient time before the start of the school placement course.

- The application form can be found on the Swedish Police's website, [www.polisen.se](http://www.polisen.se).
- It may take as much as a month to obtain the extract.
- The extract must be turned over to the head teacher (or equivalent person in charge) for the school or preschool in which the student will carry out their school placement period.
- It is not Stockholm University but rather the head teacher who determines whether or not the student can be received at the preschool/school.
- The extract is only valid for one year, which means that the student needs to submit several extracts during the course of their teacher education. Therefore, the student must always ensure that they have a valid extract throughout their programme.
- The student may not begin their placement period until a register extract has been presented.

This also applies if the student is going to do their school placement abroad. Students travelling into Sweden who will be doing their school placement in Sweden will need to present a register extract from the police in their country of residence/citizenship.

## The school placement portfolio

The digital school placement portfolio is a pedagogical tool to be used during school placements. The portfolio contains all materials from the school placement course lecturer concerning the placement course in question, the student's documentation, as well as documentation regarding any three-party meetings along with the placement report.

The student invites their supervisor to the school placement portfolio and gives them access to the school placement report. This gives the supervisor access to all the information contained in the school placement portfolio.

# During the school placement

## The duty of confidentiality

The duty of confidentiality means a prohibition on disclosing information and is a limitation on the general Swedish principle of public access to information. The sensitive personal information that school staff receive in their work with students or children is protected by the provisions of the Swedish Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (2009:400). During their school placement, the student is subject to a duty of confidentiality. This duty of confidentiality is life-long and must be particularly observed when travelling to and from the preschool or school, during conversations in one's own home, and on return to the university. When the student has a follow-up meeting after the school placement and shares their experiences, all information must be anonymised with identifying particulars removed so that it is not possible to identify a child or student, or their close relatives.

The municipality where the student conducts their school placement can require the student to sign a confidentiality agreement. The penalty for a breach of the duty of confidentiality is an income-based fine (dagsböter) or imprisonment for a maximum of one year, often combined with compensation for damages.

## Substitute teacher

Working as a substitute teacher means that the student is solely responsible for the children or students and the pedagogical activities or teaching of the group of children or students. Students doing their school placement may not at the same time be working as substitute teachers. Therefore, if a situation occurs where the supervisor is absent, it is important that another supervisor can temporarily replace the student's main supervisor.

## Physical presence

Physical presence during the placement period is obligatory and full-time. A rule of thumb is that the student has the same hours and schedule as the supervisor, provided that the supervisor works full-time. In other situations, the student will need to spend time with a designated replacement for the supervisor. Absences that can be made up according to the course documents must be made up after the school placement course in order for the student to obtain a grade for the school placement course. If the student does not make up for absence, they are deemed to have used up the current course occasion and to have aborted their school placement. The school placement course must then be taken over in its entirety and one of two possible opportunities to do the school placement course will have been used up.

## Supervision meetings

During the placement period, regular supervision meetings between the supervisor and the student should be held, with the intended learning outcomes of the placement course as the point of departure. The student's skills and expertise are developed with an emphasis on concrete situations that are problematised, highlighted and analysed from a variety of different perspectives during the meetings. Supervision is intended to contribute to the student systematically developing their analytical and reflection skills regarding their future teaching profession.



In supervision meetings, the student receives support in the planning of their work and in their teaching, as well as the opportunity to reflect upon their experiences. The professional development matrix can be used to support in this. Furthermore, the student has the opportunity to broaden and deepen their knowledge of what regulates their own activities, and to reflect upon perspectives of learning, the professional task and the role of the preschool/school in society.

### **Early termination of the school placement**

If a student does not complete a school placement period that has started, the supervisor must notify the school placement course coordinator of this as soon as possible. In such cases, the student will not receive a grade for the school placement course. If the student is unable to present a medical certificate regarding the absence, a note is made in Ladok that one of the student's two opportunities to complete the school placement has been utilised.

### **Risk of receiving a failing grade**

All intended learning outcomes need to be achieved for a student to receive a passing grade in the school placement course. As soon as the supervisor has made an assessment that there is a risk that the student will not achieve all intended learning outcomes, the supervisor must promptly contact the school placement course coordinator.

If all intended learning outcomes are not achieved at the end of the school placement course, the entire placement period must be taken over.

### **Three-party meetings**

School placement courses generally include a three-party meeting at the placement preschool or school. The student, the supervisor and a visiting teacher from Stockholm University participate in the meeting. Starting points for the discussion are the student's self-evaluation and the intended learning outcomes for the course. The discussion should take the form of a development review and be formative. The purpose of the discussion is to provide support for the student's development and personal growth by discussing the student's strengths along with areas where further development is needed, and possible ways forward within the profession.

During the discussion, the supervisor and visiting teacher from Stockholm University also assess the student's prospects of achieving the intended learning outcomes by the end of the course. However, this preliminary assessment does not guarantee that a particular grade will be achieved. Grades are determined and awarded when the entire school placement course has been completed.

A prerequisite for a good three-party meeting is that all parties are familiar with the student's self-evaluation and the intended learning outcomes of the school placement course. Visiting teachers from Stockholm University are responsible for documenting the meeting in the placement portfolio. If the school placement is taking place abroad, the three-party meeting can be conducted online.

### **Two-party meeting**

Some school placement courses have a two-party meeting between the supervisor and the student. The meeting should take place in the middle of the course. This meeting should also be based on the student's self-evaluation and the intended learning outcomes of the school placement course. The meeting should be documented in the placement portfolio. If the supervisor is uncertain whether the student will achieve the intended learning outcomes by the end of the course, or wants help with the assessment, the supervisor should immediately contact the course lecturer. If necessary, the course lecturer will come to the school and conduct a three-party meeting.

## Self-evaluation

In school placement courses, self-evaluation may also occur prior to and in preparation for the two-party or three-party meeting. The student then writes a self-assessment in the form of reflections on their development based on their individual goals, the intended learning outcomes of the school placement course and possibly from the professional development matrix.

# After the school placement

## Examination

The appointed examiner determines the grade according to the course grading scale, (see the school placement course syllabus for the rules for examination).

The grade is based on the information in the school placement portfolio (or equivalent documentation for students from abroad).

## Absence

If the student has been absent for one or more days during the placement period, the placement report should be completed once the student has made up those days. The student and the supervisor agree when the days will be made up. How many days can be made up and when, is shown in the current course description. The student will not receive a grade for the school placement course until all days have been completed.

## Failing the school placement

The following procedure applies when a student fails a completed school placement course:

- the student is invited to a meeting with the school placement course coordinator/examiner, the director of studies for the school placements, and sometimes also the study adviser
- the student has the opportunity to contact Stockholm University's student union (SUS), to get support from the student representative
- the meeting is documented in minutes
- an individual action plan is drawn up.



# Contact information

## School placement office

Questions regarding your school placement can be sent to the School placement office: [vfus@su.se](mailto:vfus@su.se)

Telephone inquiries are answered subject to workload. Tel: 08 - 12 07 67 70

## School placement portfolio

Questions regarding the school placement portfolio can be sent to e-mail: [portfoljvfus@su.se](mailto:portfoljvfus@su.se)

## Programme in early childhood education

Department of Child and Youth Studies (BUV)

E-mail: [vfus@buv.su.se](mailto:vfus@buv.su.se)

## Teacher education programme for primary school, specialising in school-age education and care

Department of Child and Youth Studies (BUV)

E-mail: [vfus@buv.su.se](mailto:vfus@buv.su.se)

## Teacher education programme for pre-school class and primary school years 1-3

Department of Language Education (ISD)

E-mail: [vfus@isd.su.se](mailto:vfus@isd.su.se)

## Teacher education programme for primary school years 4-6

Department of Mathematics and Science Education (MND)

E-mail: [internat@mnd.su.se](mailto:internat@mnd.su.se)

## Teacher education 90-120 credits including supplementary teacher education - mathematics, science and technology

Department of Mathematics and Science Education (MND)

E-mail: [internat@mnd.su.se](mailto:internat@mnd.su.se)

## Teacher education programme for secondary school and upper secondary school with a specialisation in languages

Department of Language Education (ISD)

E-mail: [vfus@isd.su.se](mailto:vfus@isd.su.se)

## Teacher education programme for secondary school and upper secondary school with a specialisation in history, religion, geography and social studies and Bridging Teacher Education Programme for Secondary School and Upper Secondary School – Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences Education (HSD)

E-mail: [studievagledning@hsd.su.se](mailto:studievagledning@hsd.su.se)

## Vocational teacher education programme

Department of Education (IPD)

E-mail: [eva.eliasson@edu.su.se](mailto:eva.eliasson@edu.su.se)