

Chapter 4

How Do Schools of Education Position Themselves Within the German Higher Education Sector: The Case of the Tübingen School of Education

Elisabeth Hofmann and Thorsten Bohl

This chapter introduces the institutional structures of teacher education at the University of Tübingen, Germany. Teacher education at the University of Tübingen is introduced along with the local and regional history of teacher education in Baden-Württemberg. The characteristics and institutional history of the Tübingen School of Education are discussed, as well as the School's aims, identity, and self-portrait: connecting teacher education across all university subjects and implementing research-based teacher education. The TüSE's fields of work are presented: academic affairs and advising, the development of research structures, support structures for young researchers, teacher professionalization, inclusion, and internationalization. The management and work structures, the different committees, statutes, and the mission statement are discussed as central elements that develop and advance teacher education in Tübingen. Finally, this chapter looks at the commonalities and differences of the two Schools of Education in Wits (Johannesburg) and Tübingen. One common characteristic is that both are young institutions and are tasked with their own further development: in addition to their responsibilities for organizational issues and student affairs, both institutions have developed into highly ambitious research centers with a specific interest in supporting young researchers in the fields of PCK and PK.

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1 New structures of academic teacher education

The University of Tübingen established the Tübingen School of Education in 2015 as an academic institution that advances and coordinates teacher education based on 'research, relevance and responsibility'. The new School of Education was to be responsible for promoting and integrating innovation and new, challenging topics in teacher education, with close collaboration between all academic subjects involved with teacher education. The development of the Tübingen School of Education took place against the backdrop of national and federal educational jurisdictions, and was brought on because of demands for extensive changes in teacher education, which needed to be addressed systematically at the university, across all faculties and subjects involved with teacher education.

2 Jurisdictions for teacher education in Germany and Baden-Württemberg

Germany's educational structures locate teacher education between state departments of education, universities for the academic phase, and seminars in collaboration with schools for the school-based phase.

According to state policy, Baden-Württemberg's Ministry of Science is responsible for universities, while its federal Ministry for Culture, Youth and Sports is responsible for schools. This requires institutions of teacher education to collaborate and coordinate their work with the two ministries.

The University of Tübingen is located in the federal state of Baden-Württemberg and is thus shaped by Baden-Württemberg's unique structures of teacher education. Teacher education in Baden-Württemberg is split between two types of higher education institutions: teachers for primary, lower secondary, and special needs schools study at Universities of Education, while teachers for academic high schools (Gymnasium) and vocational schools study at general universities. This two-fold approach to teacher education creates additional challenges and requires ongoing mutual information and communication. Students who intend to switch their school type during their academic study phase need to plan this carefully and are usually required to catch up with some classes.

The federal states have varied study courses and structures. Until recently, teacher education in Germany led to a state examination degree. This degree reflects governmental influence on and control of certain standards in teacher education. The Bologna Process led to changes in Baden-Württemberg. In 2015, teacher education de-

degrees switched from state examinations to bachelor's and master's structures. The new structures and standards are created and controlled by institutions of higher education, rather than by government departments for education, and even within Baden-Württemberg, there are differences between the study programs, for example regarding their polyvalence.

The changes since Bologna are expected to bring about several improvements: increased student mobility, degrees that are comparable on an international or continental level, and more flexible study programs due to workload descriptions and ECTS points (Blömeke, 2009). The shared characteristics of teacher education can be summarized by two tendencies: teaching degrees (on the secondary school level) focus on two school subjects in addition to educational sciences; and teaching degree programs consist of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, educational sciences and school internships. In Baden-Württemberg, these characteristics are detailed in the Educational Framework for Teaching Degree Programs 2015.

2.1 Developments in teacher education that led to Schools of Education being created

Institutionalized teacher education evolved in three phases, which are described here using the example of the University of Tübingen.

During the first phase, which lasted until 2005, all large universities offered teaching degree programs, but there were no central regulations. Only in 2005 were Centers for Teacher Education introduced at universities in Baden-Württemberg, allowing the central coordination of teaching degrees. These Centers of Teacher Education consisted of one staff member and served across the whole university as part of the central administration, with strongly restricted resources. However, the competitive developments in teacher education combined with the higher expectations of future teachers led to extensive changes after 2015. The national funding program “Quality Initiative Teacher Education” (BMBF, 2016) provided massive financial support and led to a re-organization and reevaluation of teacher education as a whole in Tübingen and in the majority of universities across Germany. The Tübingen School of Education was officially launched in 2015, supported by Baden-Württemberg's minister of science, research, and arts.

The following table (Table 1) illustrates the multiple institutional levels, important formal documents, and the actors that shape teacher education.

		Level	Example	Actors (exemplary)
1	Macro-level	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> –Standards for teacher education: educational sciences (Resolution of the KMK on 16.12.2004, as amended on 12.06.2014) –Requirements common to the federal states for the content of the sciences, humanities and subject didactics in teacher education (resolution of the KMK on 16.10.2008 in the version of 11.10.2018) 	Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK)
2		Federal state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> –Framework regulation for teacher education programs in Baden-Württemberg (framework VO-KM, 2015) –Basic format of teacher education programs (e.g., state examination or BA/MA) 	Federal Ministers of Education and the Arts
3		University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> –Location-specific decisions, e.g., on B. Ed. / M. Ed. structure or on general parts of the examination regulations for teacher education programs –Characteristics and structure of teacher education (e.g., Schools of Education, management structures) 	Rectorate, Central Administration, Faculties, School of Education / Centers for Teacher Education
4	Meso-level	Faculties and central schools for teacher education / Centers for Teacher Education	–Study and / or examination regulations (e.g., specified in a special section)	Deans of Studies, Central Administration, Staff of the School
		Subjects and disciplines	–Module handbook	Specialist representatives
5	Micro-level	Academic personnel	–Planning and design of individual courses	Lecturers of sciences, subject didactics and educational sciences
6		Interaction	–Concrete, planned or unplanned interaction between participants of a class	Lecturers and students

Table 1 Institutional levels influencing the academic phase of teacher education (adapted and translated from Bohl & Beck, 2019)

3 Reforming teacher education by creating change from within

Aspirations to advance the situation of teacher education in Germany have been discussed since 2000, when a commission of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) recommended developing Centers of Teacher Education, these being strategic players with insight and influence into all questions of academic teacher education. They recommended setting up institutions that work across faculties and departments in order to represent teacher education as a whole, including research, academic affairs, advising, coordination and support services. Only a year later, the German Research Council suggested something similar: developing institutions responsible for covering all aspects of teacher education including coordination, the creation of ideas, and cultivating new ways. (Böttcher, 2015).

The recommendations expressed the urgent need for reform and the institutionalization of teacher education from within universities. Many of the suggestions were realized in 2015, when the Quality Initiative Teacher Education (Qualitätsoffensive Lehrerbildung) was launched. This allowed universities to bid for funding and to devise an individual solution according to the guidelines of the funding ministry—the national, state ministry of education and research.

By creating an academic institution, the School of Education, ensured that teacher education would be advanced and developed in a research-based way, guided by researchers and experts, based on theoretical and empirical knowledge, and supported by ongoing research, assessment and reflection on the evolving structures and upcoming decisions. The approach aimed at encouraging innovation from within a century-old institution, requiring careful decisions and long discussions on how best to approach the task. In the following section, the developments and strategic decisions are described:

The starting shot of the Tübingen School of Education was fired in 2012, when the rector of Tübingen University, while attending a public convention, first spoke of the new “Tübingen way” and of “teacher education from a single mold”. Behind this was a reason specific to Baden-Württemberg: the other significant sites of university teacher education, namely Heidelberg, Freiburg, and Stuttgart, had founded a joint School of Education with their respective local Pedagogical Universities. However, since there is no Pedagogical University in the regional vicinity of Tübingen, its School of Education had to be established on its own. The main issue was how to finance professorships for subject didactics, which were available at the Pedagogical Universities, but not at universities in Baden-Württemberg. At universities in Baden-Württemberg, subject studies had until then been largely shaped by subject-specific re-

search. Subject didactical courses were not offered by professors and lecturers at the university, but were imported from the second phase of teacher education, the so-called Seminars for Didactics and Teacher Education. This meant that the universities lacked the original subject didactical research and research-based teaching.

With the proclamation of the “Tübingen way”, strategies and measures were connected that led to a new institutional form of Tübingen teacher education. The work of the Tübingen School of Education includes close collaboration with representatives from the above-mentioned Seminar for Teacher Training and Continuing Education, ensuring that the research-based and school-based phases of teacher education are closely intertwined. The German developments in teacher education reflect the need for universities to fuse tradition and high academic standards with innovation, new structures, and a carefully monitored interrelation of theory and profession.

4 Developing the Tübingen School of Education

The Tübingen School of Education was developed in a period during which the University of Tübingen succeeded at attaining and defending the official status of excellence, in 2012 and 2019 respectively, within the federal and state governments' Excellence Initiative. In 2012, the university was successful with its future concept 'Research—Relevance—Responsibility'. The Tübingen School of Education identified itself with the motto of this concept at an early stage, adapted it for its mission statement, and was able to take on an active role in the university's application for the status of excellence in 2019, which was also successful then. This motto has since been implemented in manifold ways to the benefit of teacher education and continues to have a formative effect on the planning and execution of measures and projects. With the support of the university management and boards, the development of the Tübingen School of Education was enshrined in the university's structural and developmental plan. Since 2015, a plethora of measures have been carried out, of which only the most important are mentioned:

- ▶ Refurbishment and financing of an attractive and centrally located landmarked building in the heart of the university city for the administrative office
- ▶ Establishment of an advice center for students in teaching degree programs
- ▶ Establishment of a new committee structure with, *inter alia*, an Executive Board, an Advisory Board, a School Board, and a Teaching Board

- ▶ Financing of eighteen new professorships for teacher education, of which thirteen are subject didactic and five are educational science professorships
- ▶ Financing of eight new subject didactic council offices, especially in the major teaching subjects
- ▶ Establishment of seven conceptually developed areas of work (see graph 3 and 4)
- ▶ Establishment of an internal and external network in furtherance of effective and innovative teacher education

With these measures, the university management demonstrates a commitment to teacher education that is unmatched in the history of German teacher education. Within few years, the head office, formerly equipped with only one office at the previous center for teacher training, was expanded into a broadly oriented, differentiated, and high-performing institution.

The TüSE's mission statement emphasizes its identity and objectives. It consists of seven pillars:

1. Strengthening awareness of the importance of teachers for the future of our society. Teachers are required for multiple important tasks, which include qualifying future generations, promoting diversity and societal participation, working with digitalization challenges, and reducing inequality. The TüSE works towards preparing teachers to deal with these challenges professionally.
2. Conducting research on an international level and promoting knowledge transfer. The TüSE utilizes and supports a wide spectrum of research methods for covering topics like school, teacher education, and learning and teaching processes. Methods include empirical-quantitative, empirical-qualitative, theory-based, historical, and international-comparative approaches.
3. Providing versatile paths and tailored support for junior academics in the various fields of educational research.
The systematic and individual support of junior academics is considered essential for advancing an innovative and sustainable research culture. It includes trainings in research methods, writing and presentation skills, networking inside the university, Germany-wide and worldwide.
4. Connecting academic research and practical experiences of pre-service and in-service teachers.
The TüSE aspires to a nuanced and scholarly debate. It aims to satisfy the special requirements of teacher education programs and the teaching profession itself, and to bring about the systematic convergence of perspectives from different areas of

content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and educational sciences, with special consideration of theory-practice interrelations.

5. Supporting the development of professional competences and nuanced academic judgement.

TüSE puts teachers' professional competences in the spotlight and works intensely with definitions, characteristics, development, and the assessment of professional competences.

6. Guiding and supporting pre-service teachers, both systematically and individually. Counselling programs with a focus on professional biographical work and personal aspects are offered to students in teaching degree programs, combined with guidance and advising on organizational educational matters.

7. Creating a network for the best possible education of future teachers.

TüSE works towards building a continuously growing network of professionals involved with teacher education at the university and global level, including members from various educational, social, cultural, or economic institutions.

5 Institutional integration and committee structures

In the past, teacher education in Germany showed a lack of coordination between the subjects, which could not be improved by mere curricular changes, requiring institutional structures across faculty borders (Horstkemper, 2020). This challenge was solved at Tübingen University by creating the Tübingen School of Education as a central academic institution with a virtual structure, rather than a faculty. The new structure allows six faculties in all matters of teacher education to be connected. The TüSE collaborates closely and in multiple ways with these faculties and subject departments.

At the university level, all Schools of Education can now represent the needs and requests of teaching degree students in the universities' committees, functioning as engaged, informed, and determined cooperating partners within their universities. As Boettcher and Blasberg (2015) highlight, Schools of Education serve as institutions with which students in teaching degree programs can identify since the Schools serve as a counterpoint to the fragmented study experiences of students in teaching degree programs. The core innovation introduced by the TüSE is best described as providing a space where researchers as well as educational administration from all areas of teacher education at Tübingen University collaborate by discussing and developing shared academic or urgent organizational questions of teacher education.

Figures 1 and 2 show the faculties and institutions involved and their most important platforms within the Tübingen School of Education.

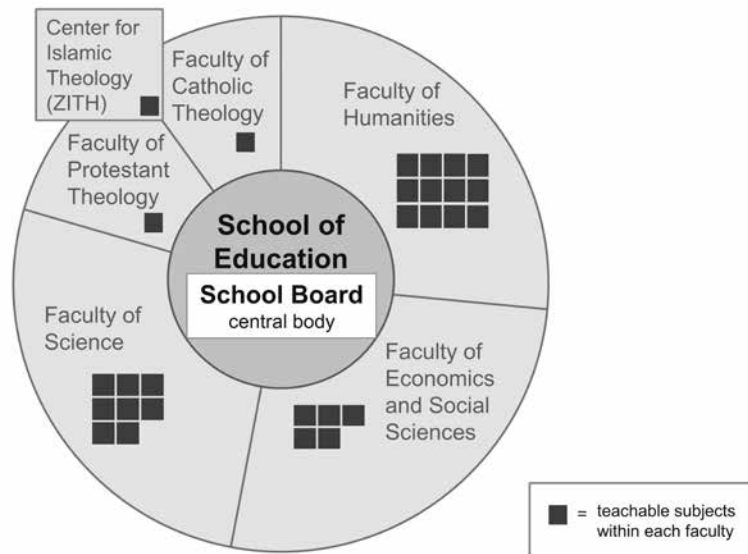


Figure 1 TüSE as a virtual structure connects five faculties offering teacher education subjects.

On the institutional level, TüSE is directly assigned as a central academic institution to the presidents' office and works on the basis of its individual statutes. Researchers and teaching staff who are involved in teacher education can request formal 'membership', thus becoming members of their own faculty and additionally of the TüSE. Figure 2 gives an overview on the TüSE's committee structure, which is briefly introduced in this text.

The committee structure is intended to substantially facilitate the integration and participation of all internal actors in teacher education in various formats and to allow them to have a lasting effect. This refers particularly to the integration of the teacher training faculties and subjects.

The central committee is the School Board, in which all organizations and domains involved in teacher education are represented by academic staff, students, doctoral students or regional schools. A formal link to the faculties is established here through elected representatives. All of the TüSE's major decisions and strategies are discussed, planned, and executed in the School Board. In addition to the elected representatives, interested colleagues can participate in the meetings in an advisory capacity and receive the minutes upon request, an option that is actively used. In this way, the circle of

persons involved can be extended without diminishing the School Board's status, which is binding and defined by the statute.

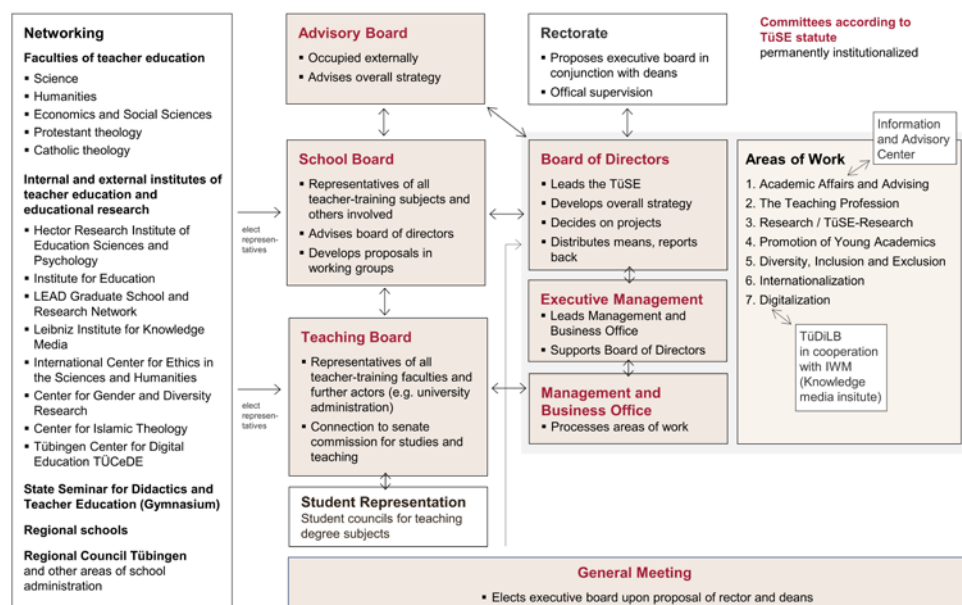


Figure 2 TüSE's organizational structure

The Advisory Board is comprised of external experts in the fields of educational science, didactics, economics, school administration, and charitable foundations. Other external Critical Friends are invited to the meetings for particular points on the agenda. The Advisory Board analyzes and discusses the basic situation and general development while in-depth discussions about individual work areas and projects also take place consistently. For example, the Advisory Board has discussed the structure of TüSE Research and made valuable suggestions.

On the Teaching Board, central issues of study and teaching in teacher education programs are discussed. Here, too, the decisive actors are designated by statute. On the whole, the committee structure has undoubtedly proven itself in the early years. The diverse participation and the integrative approach have led to a high level of intramural acceptance of the TüSE. Nevertheless, as a central academic organization its coordination effort is very high in general and in all fields, as there are always structurally cross-cutting tasks to be addressed and actors from different areas to be networked with and integrated.

6 Work areas

The Quality Initiative for Teacher Education is accompanied by a structural change in teacher education, which can be described precisely (Bohl & Beck, 2020): from a service unit for study and teaching to a central research institution. This change undoubtedly also applies to Tübingen and, as an essential focus, is unreservedly supported by all those involved in teacher education. Based on this fundamental alignment, the Tübingen School of Education has by now differentiated into seven areas of work (Table 2). Each area is equipped with a strategic plan, a conceptual orientation, personnel coverage, and specific research or development projects.

Areas of Work at ...	Core Activities
Academic Affairs, Advising and Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> –development of study programs –innovations in teaching and learning –individualized advice on all study-related matters
The Teaching Profession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> –variety of school internship options –projects and ongoing collaboration with regional schools
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> –initiating and steering multiple third-party funded, interdisciplinary research projects in teacher education
Graduate Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> –supporting doctoral students with several measures –annual award program for excellent master's and doctoral theses
Diversity, Inclusion and Exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> –strategic approach to include, reflect on and implement inclusion in study programs –professional trainings for teachers increase awareness and competence
Internationalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> –establishing an international network in teacher education –developing international exchange programs for students and researchers –measures to support 'Internationalization at home'
Digitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> –systematic approach to improve digital competences of students and teachers –several measures to implement digitalization in teacher education and in schools

Table 2 Areas of work at Tübingen School of Education

The classic *area of work 1*, Academic Affairs and Advising, is dedicated to study and teaching, as well as to informing and advising students. Communication with students and their concerns is carried out especially through this work area. The former

student advisory service has developed into a broadly and flexibly oriented advisory center, in which students receive answers to questions about their studies, but also about uncertainties concerning their choice of profession. The advisory center is well-connected with other advisory offices and, if necessary, arranges further contacts.

In *area of work 2*, Teaching Profession, alternative internship opportunities are developed and offered. At the same time, networking with regional schools takes place here: for example, schools offer opportunities for work experience that go beyond the normal mandatory internships, such as in homework supervision for school students. In *areas of work 3*, Research, the TüSE's research is completely restructured (see below). This area has developed dynamically. Here the networking of researchers in Special Interest Groups as well as in targeted research initiatives takes place, for example to prepare applications in concert.

In *area of work 4*, Promotion of Young Academics, young researchers are systematically supported. The starting point of this support is the so-called initial interview, in which those involved together determine how the doctoral process can be facilitated. An essential feature of this work area is the systematic provision of training in research methodology. This meets a need that is often present when empirical research is carried out in subject didactics. Furthermore, prizes are awarded for excellent theses, and doctoral conventions are held within this work area.

Within *areas of work 5*, Inclusion, Diversity and Heterogeneity, this topic area is integrated into research, teaching, and advanced training. The basic approach is to reflect on inclusive and exclusive processes in society, school, and university. In doing this, a broad conceptual understanding is pre-supposed, meaning that it is not solely about students with special educational needs.

The development and realization of the TüSE's internationalization strategy is carried out in *area of work 6*, Internationalization. An international network of selected partner universities offering comparable structures of teacher education is established. In addition to international offers for students, research collaborations are developed. 'Internationalization at Home' is supported through intensive contact with foreign Schools of Education, regular summer schools and international work meetings.

Through *area of work 7*, Digitalization, the topic of digitalization is systematically developed and integrated into teacher education. For this purpose, several research and development projects are being executed, particularly the development of a digitalization center affiliated with the TüSE.

In the following section, the area of Research is described more closely. It clearly illustrates the quantum leap between the former Center for Teacher Education and the Tübingen School of Education today.

7 TüSE Research

From the outset, developing an interdisciplinary research structure was one of the TüSE's main objectives. The starting point for this was as follows: in the TüSE, eighteen teaching subjects received additional expertise to represent their didactic aspects through a professorship and/or an Academic Council. Add to this about seven professorships of educational science, as well as further specialist researchers or researchers from other organizations. The disciplinary, scientific-theoretical, and methodological background of the individual researchers is highly varied: roughly speaking, the research is theory-based, empirically quantitative, empirically qualitative, and internationally comparative. The TüSE has consciously supported this heterogeneous orientation from the beginning for several reasons. First of all, the objects of research – education, school, and teacher education – can only be appropriately grasped by varied approaches. Secondly, students of the teaching profession inevitably experience this diversity in their studies, which is why it must be addressed and reflected upon intensely. Thirdly, a clear premise from the outset was to “take along” as many researchers as possible and to integrate their respective expertise and research interests into the TüSE's work. Against this backdrop, the strategic decision of the TüSE in favor of only *one* research methodological direction, which might have been perceived from the outside as a sharper contouring, would at the same time have meant negating the expertise of numerous actors, who would certainly have been less motivated to participate in the TüSE's research.

The Tübingen School of Education is situated in an exceptionally strong research environment, not solely because of the university's success in the excellence strategy, but also because, in addition to the numerous subjects, there are several educational science institutions that are rich in tradition, internationally visible, and innovative: the Leibniz Institute for Knowledge Media, the Hector Research Institute of Education Sciences and Psychology, the Institute of Education, the International Center for Ethics in the Sciences and Humanities, and the newly founded Methods Center. The TüSE cooperates intensively with these institutions. In addition to joint research activities, representatives of these institutions can be found in the School Board.

The development of the TüSE's research structure is taking place in a period in which the national research discourse is characterized by some essential features: (1) Based on the PISA studies, a strong empirical quantitative line of research has developed, which also led to the founding of a new specialist society, the Society for Empirical Education Research. Slightly later than this development, empirical qualitative research has also expanded considerably and dominated the program of the German Educational Research Association. Based on this it was and remains a concern of the

TüSE to integrate these different research paradigms and bring them into a fruitful collaboration.

In the meantime, subject didactics have been able to develop into distinctly research-oriented disciplines, even if there are still large differences between the subjects: for example, the fields of mathematics and natural science profited significantly from the upswing in empirical quantitative research. Against this background, the TüSE aims to further strengthen subject didactic research and to merge it with educational science research in service of a win-win situation.

Over the last twenty years or so, research incentives through calls for proposals have been increased significantly. This is not only due to the greater engagement of the European Union, of the federal government or of the state government, which are increasingly advancing competitive proposal programs in the field of education, but also to the substantial increase in foundations in general, as well as the increase in foundations operating in the field of education (Dedering, 2013; Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen, 2019). The increasing number of calls for proposals forces academic institutions to adopt an application strategy. Particularly for an institution like the TüSE, which is wide-ranging thematically, one must continually ask whether one should respond to a call for proposals, and if so, in what way.

Despite the increasing calls for proposals from foundations and the government, there is a consensus in the scientific community that the funding models of the German Research Foundation (DFG) offer the highest reputation, in addition to individual funding and particularly to cooperative DFG-formats (e.g., Collaborative Research Centers, Research Units). Such formats are highly competitive and require long-term strategic planning in addition to excellent research, for example, in order to establish the requisite preliminary work and collaborations.

Based on this starting point, the TüSE has gradually worked out its research concept in recent years. In particular, the topic was included in the meetings of the Advisory Board and the School Board, where it was discussed intensively. Furthermore, a conference was held about the subject. After almost two years of preliminary work, a research strategy for the TüSE has been developed, which is concretized in three lines.

Line 1, “Cooperations related to calls for proposals”, offers a structuring of the approach for relevant calls for proposals. If there is a relevant call for proposals, it is examined first by the executive board and management, who inform the actors in question and then bring together possible collaboration partners to write the application. The application is then written by cross-sectional teams according to the respective content. Then the executive board and management of the TüSE usually ensure that the application is submitted in a formally correct way. This is the TüSE's response to

the increasing number of calls for proposals and ensures the involvement of the relevant actors.

Within *Line 2*, ‘Special Interest Groups’, researchers work on a common topic based on individual interests. Currently, colleagues from subject didactics, science and humanities subjects, and educational sciences, are conducting joint research in seven SIGs: (1) professionalism in the teaching profession; (2) relativity, normativity and orientation; (3) reconstructive subject didactic teaching research; (4) competence modelling and development; (5) digitalization in teacher education; (6) critical thinking and beyond: normative questions in teacher education today; (7) support of practice-oriented competence development in university teacher education. The establishment of the SIGs expresses the TüSE’s claim to integrate the diverse thematic, methodological, and methodical accesses to Tübingen teacher education, school, and classroom research and, at the same time, to pool the expertise of the researchers. The establishment of a SIG is permitted by the School Board according to certain guidelines (e.g., the appointment of a spokesperson; the participation of at least two disciplines; regular meetings), and subsequently receives financial and structural support from the TüSE. The SIGs can be understood as a bottom-up strategy, because here it is primarily the interests of the researchers that led to the topics mentioned above. In this way, a strategy is consciously supported that does not necessarily lead to mainstream topics, but explicitly leaves room for new, innovative, and possibly hitherto neglected topics.

Line 3 comprises all need- and resource-related measures and activities. Here, thematical needs are identified by the TüSE’s executive board and management, research collaborations are initiated, and, if resources are available, also supported. This is done, for example, through internal announcements of doctoral positions that strengthen a specific goal of the TüSE in terms of their content (e.g., strengthening collaborations of subject didactics and educational sciences). As a rule, the positions are assigned by means of double-blind peer-review procedures involving external experts. With these three lines, which were developed through a transparent, cooperative, and discursive process, the TüSE is equipped on the one hand to respond to external calls for proposals, and, on the other hand, to advance control measures and to integrate the interests and expertise of those involved. Even before the introduction of this binding strategy, the TüSE was very successful in attracting and conducting research projects since its foundation in 2015. Since then, sixteen third-party funded projects with a total volume of 19.2 million euros have been acquired. Only those projects are listed that were acquired ‘centrally’ under the leading participation or leading management of the TüSE board of directors.

At the moment, the next step of the long-term strategy is being tackled: to focus on difficult long-term DFG research formats, doctoral positions are being allocated to

SIGs. The internal announcement of these doctoral positions contains the requirement to submit a long-term plan for achieving a challenging research format.

8 Institutions in comparison: Wits School of Education and Tübingen School of Education

The institutional situation of the Wits School of Education is similar in many respects, even if the historical development and socio-cultural context differ significantly. For this reason, some parallels between them, outlined below, will be surprising.

8.1 Institutional localization of teacher education / Schools of Education

Like the TüSE, the WSoE is a young institution that has only in recent years identified research as a central theme and developed a research structure. The WSoE is a School within the Faculty of Social Sciences, subdivided into subject areas that correspond to the teaching subjects offered there. The WSoE thus has its subject-specific (subject didactical and educational scientific) expertise 'in house'.

Moving Schools of Education into Faculties of Social Sciences or Faculties of Education is not very common in Germany, but can also be found, for example, at the University of Hamburg. By establishing the TüSE, the University of Tübingen created a central academic institution, spanning across the faculties involved in teacher education.

The structure serves the explicit goal that subject didactics and educational sciences remain integrated in each faculty, but also that they establish and develop a new focus within their subject, including a possibly new or additional research method. Actors in teacher education are members of their faculty and field of work, and at the same time, members of the TüSE. This double membership enables a broader range of options: joint applications, research, and networking are possible beyond disciplinary boundaries. On the other hand, double membership also requires double commitment. Making this commitment visible and remunerating it on an intra-university level is a further goal of the TüSE.

8.2 Extension of the functional range through dedicated research orientation

Both schools are motivated by the desire for first-class, research-based, and efficiently structured teacher education. Furthermore, Schools of Education are internally and externally driven by questions of reputation enhancement. In the coming years,

it will be important to demonstrate that the development of teacher education from one mold, intensive commitment to didactic and educational research, as well as a stringent interrelation of theory and practice can offset those weaknesses of teacher education that have been criticized for decades, and thus raise it to a new level. This should be surveyed and analyzed by empirical research in the coming years.

With their focus on intramural reputation, both Schools of Education are struggling with the familiar situation that teacher education has not traditionally been a high priority. It is the task of the Schools of Education to demonstrate that the new structures clearly go beyond the traditionally narrow focus on questions of study and teaching. Both institutions see profound research as the foundation for a future-oriented teacher education and focus on PK, CK and PCK research. Furthermore, they work with empirical and theoretical research paradigms, and historically and internationally comparative perspectives.

Is it not by coincidence, therefore, that the two Schools share a special similarity in the importance given to research and in the almost identical research structure. Both schools aim at interdisciplinary, thematically focused research alliances (WSoE: Research Thrusts; TüSE: Special Interest Groups), supported by almost all academics involved in teacher education. In both schools, the seven research alliances happen to be defined in the same way. However, the topics vary, and while the WSoE's thrusts are defined more as basic research fields (e.g., literacy, numeracy, teaching, and learning), the TüSE's SIGs cover narrow and more specific topics, in which a narrowly-defined research aspect is addressed (e.g., relativity and normativity; competence modelling and competence development; reconstructive subject-didactic research). With this transverse research structure, both schools are trying to strengthen internal cooperation and increase external visibility through research outputs. This is intended to also strengthen external reputation, which is achieved through highly competitive performance measurements and rankings, with high-ranking publications in peer-reviewed journals being the measure of all things.

In Tübingen, this standard is pursued in a similar way, though measured less strictly by publications; rather, third-party funding and high-ranking research formats such as DFG grants are equally important. While both schools focus their strategies on the 'fulfilment' of these standards, a critical and relativizing view of this competitive orientation is nevertheless evident. In the framework of the TüSE, this can be seen in the SIGs' thematic orientation, which deliberately promotes topics outside the mainstream as a bottom-up strategy. The WSoE criticizes that, while the framework conditions for research are set by such benchmarks, this does not mean that the needs of the School are covered.

8.3 Targeted institutional development work within the framework of seven areas of work

Because of its fragmented structure, teacher education received little attention at the institutional level before 2015. Through the seven work areas of the TüSE, concepts and structures for study and teaching, research, the promotion of young academics, the teaching profession, inclusion and internationalization are developed. Strategic projects and new approaches are tested, adapted and, if successful, established. In this way, modern and innovative formats for students, researchers and lecturers can be systematically developed.

9 Concluding remarks

The aim of this contribution was to give an overview over the structure and institutional situation of the TüSE. To highlight it, the TüSE's institutional situation was compared with that of the WSoE. The various topics related to it could only be touched upon and analyzed roughly in the context of this contribution. With view to research, the central challenge for the TüSE may be to achieve top-class research formats in the medium to long term, based on the structure that has now been laid down in the three lines mentioned and particularly based on the established SIGs. With view to the institutional situation, it is still important to identify the cross-cutting topics and tasks more clearly and to solve them. Interfaces and co-operations with other subjects and faculties are particularly important in this, for example when it comes to introducing systematic improvements of teacher education that require measures beyond individual subjects. Only a few years ago, such challenges would have exceeded any target category. The increased creative possibilities of the TüSE show that it now faces such challenges. For the time being at least the transformation of a small center for teacher education into a central academic institution within a few years has found success.

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