

Pedagogical development project

Project – developing pedagogical qualities in education

A **pedagogical development project (30 hours)** is one of the three mandatory elements in the introductory part in the Uniped-programme. The development project should be based on a specific pedagogical challenge or idea that you identify in the teaching practices that you are involved in. Through the project you will analyse and discuss ideas and challenges on the basis of data and material that give different perspectives. You draw on the analyses and discussions to make a basis for deciding what measures and actions that may contribute to a quality development and that you will carry out in your project. You document the work in your development project in a project report.

Work process, coaching and support

You work on the project during the introductory part semester. You may work individually or in cooperation with other participants in the program or colleagues. You may also integrate this project in ongoing development projects at your department.

Your collegial coaching group is a good arena for also receiving support and guidance in the project process and writing process. Discuss and decide on a fruitful work process for the project in the group.

Step 1: Idea and problem

The development project should be based on a specific pedagogical challenge or idea that arises from your own practice. A few examples:

- You perceive the students in your course as passive and a lack of arenas to establish fruitful communication with the students. Based on this challenge, you would like to introduce forms of student activity in your teaching.
- Over the years you have experienced poor results on the exams and fewer students attending lectures, and you decide to do a complete revision of the course.
- You have been engaged in bachelor student supervision over some years and developed some methods that you think works well. You want to explore and develop these more systematicly and share your experiences and methods with your colleagues.

The first step in your project is to clarify and articulate your own understanding of the specific situation and context, what the central idea or challenge is, and to define the problem(s)/issue(s) that is to be addressed in your project.

Step 2: Analysis based on the data material providing different perspectives

Focussing on the problem(s)/issue(s) that is to be addressed, the next step in the project is to conduct a **systematic analysis and discussion** of the situation with the purpose to build a broader and more nuanced understanding of the situation and the problem. The systematic analysis must include relevant contributions from four perspectives: own experience, students, colleagues and literature. There is a variety of ways to construct or select data and material for bringing in different perspectives. A few examples:

- Conversations and interviews with students on the situation or the relevant issues
- Student projects and assignments

- Student evaluations
- Conversations and interviews with colleagues
- Shared experiences of colleagues (nationally, internationally) from symposia or written accounts
- Research literature exploring similar issues or methods

It is important that you include all four perspectives in your analysis and that you point to both possibilities and necessary conditions for assessing and deciding on what measures and actions to include in your project.

Step 3: Specific measures and plan of action

A condition for a development project is that the systematic analysis and discussion of the specific issue should involve a real contribution to the educational practices you are involved in. Depending on the specific issue and context, the project's **action plan** can be designed in various ways. Some examples:

- A project that raises issues relevant to a subject, program or field of study may aim to work with these issues in a collegium or across subjects in a program, and have an action plan for collegial work.
- A project where the goal is to try out different ways to use a tool in own or shared teaching practice may include a plan for trial piloting/research and evaluation.
- A project where your analysis concludes with a need or to an opportunity to change structural conditions, such as teaching format, working methods, forms of assessment, etc., can include an action plan which might aim at implementing such structural changes, or at investigating the conditions for selecting and implementing various possible changes.

A plan for evaluating the implemented measures should be included in the action plan. Due to the scope and allocated time to work on the project, you are not required to carry through the entire action plan nor the evaluation. You should, however, include a discussion on the purpose of evaluation and what could be an appropriate evaluation strategy. (You may choose to continue and expand the project in the module Continuation Project. For that module there is a more extensive set of requirements, and to carry out evaluation is one of them.)

Report – documenting the development project

The final report serves two main purposes. Through the written report *you document* your development project, and *we assess* your project on the basis of what you document in the report. The report should therefore give a thorough insight in the project in its entirety, both the parts that are completed and future plans and measures. That means that you can write and submit the report for assessment and feedback, even though your project involves actions and measures that may not be completed during the semester.

Requirements for the report

- Formal requirements:
 - Length: 1500-3000 words (minimum 3000 for co-authored reports)
 - References: at least 2 references of university pedagogical research literature (at least 4 references for co-authored reports)

- Content:
 - Short abstract (max 200 words) + 3-5 keywords
 - Description of idea, problem to be addressed, purpose/objective.
 - Background and description of situation and context.
 - Systematic account of the four perspectives
 - Analysis and discussion of measures
 - An action plan
 - (For co—authored reports: a description of the cooperation in the project and each participants contribution in the report.)

Structure – one suggestion

Description of idea, problem to be addressed, objective, situation and context

The description in the report should aim at giving the reader (someone who is familiar with higher education, but not familiar with your situation and context) the necessary information and background to understand the situation. Some examples: the number of students, who are the students, program level, organisation of teaching, etc. The project's objective should be clearly stated.

Systematic analysis and discussion

Using this description as a starting point, you should systematically investigate and discuss possible approaches and solutions that are directly relevant to the situation that you describe, and show the reader how you have worked. It is a requirement that the report include material that can provide data on the four perspectives: ***your own experience, students, colleagues*** and ***literature***. You must both clarify how these different perspectives contribute to the understanding of the situation, and critically discuss these perspectives in context. By doing this, you build a reflexive and nuanced line of argument that takes all four perspectives into account and leads to an action plan.

Action plan

The action plan could serve as the final element of the report. The plan should explain how you want to proceed with the project and what the next steps will be. Here it is important to show a clear connection between the reasoning/discussion and the proposed actions. It should also include a dissemination/publishing plan. How will you permit this work to benefit your professional environment, and how will you make your work known to colleagues - inside and outside your professional environment?

Cooperation and co-authoring

In cases where two or more authors have collaborated on the project, you may choose to write individual reports or co-author a joint final report. In both cases all authors should submit the final report in Blackboard (in order to register the submission). In the case of co-authorship, the authors must discuss in their reports how the collaboration has contributed to the project, and there are extensive requirements for length and number of references (see above).

Assessment and feedback

Reports are evaluated as: approved / not approved. Just as in the case of submitting manuscripts to journals, everyone will receive feedback on their report. If the report is not approved, you will receive specific feedback on how you can continue working on the project and/or project report for resubmission. Our goal is to guide you in your work on writing a good report and to support you in your development work.

We assess your projects on the basis of what you document and show in the project reports. The criterium for approving a report is that it is in accordance with the instructions in this description. We assess the quality of the report based on:

- 1) Clarity and coherence in the report as a whole
- 2) Relevant and nuanced discussion of the four perspectives
- 3) A line of reasoning and argument, feasibility and level of ambition in the action plan

If you plan to work further on the project in the module *Continuation project*, we advise you to make a comment on this when submitting. We can then provide feedback to you relevant also to the requirements and possibilities in this module.

Dissemination and publication

The report should target and be comprehensible to educators teaching in higher education. The goal is that other university educators can read and learn from the report; and that they can translate its arguments and findings into their own contexts. With dissemination and possible publication in mind, we ask you to consider what type of information you can share and especially cater that no third parties can be identified without their permission.

- All participants are required to share their work on the project with the other participants in the introductory part through submitting a project poster and presenting it at a poster session in the final meeting.
- We strongly recommend you to share your report and experiences from your project in your own professional environment.
- We encourage all to publish through NTNUs DLR (Digital LæringsRessurs), and we provide a facilitated publication process through this channel.

Deadlines for submission and assessment

Autumn – semester for participation in introductory part

1. Deadline for report submission: 31 January
2. Assessment and feedback within: 1 March

Spring – semester for participation in introductory part

1. Deadline for report submission: 31 August
2. Assessment and feedback within: 1 October

Development of quality and competence – and further use of the project report

We see a continuously increasing awareness and appreciation of formal and research-based pedagogical competence in higher education, both in terms of policies adopted and in terms of strategies followed. There are stricter requirements for documentation of competence and development work. In the national law *Regulations concerning employment and promotion*

to teaching and research posts, this is clearly expressed in the changes of the regulation that came into force on 1 September 2019.

The regulation sets formal university pedagogical basic competence as a competence required for employment in (and promotion to) Associate Professor and Professor posts, and sets the scope of such a program to at least 200 hours. There is also a requirement that the acquired competence through the program is documented in a systematic and comprehensive way, assessed by the institutions.

When applying for a post or for a promotion, it will be required that pedagogical competence and pedagogical development work that has been carried out over time, is documented in a comprehensive way in the form of a pedagogical portfolio. The project report can be a relevant type of documentation of the development work within the framework of a pedagogical portfolio. It may also be a useful format for documenting and reporting on results from any NTNU-funded strategic project for developing education and teaching, should you at some point apply for that.