

# Pedagogical Internship as a Tool of Teacher Professional Formation

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## Abstract

The paper describes the "Pedagogical internship" project concept, presents the main directions of the project implementation. School-University partnership is considered as one of the conditions for quality education of future teachers.

Various approaches to the pedagogical internship organization are discussed in the study: "sequential" model of teacher training for postgraduate education and "parallel" while studying at University. Teacher training cannot be carried out as part of traditional reproductive education. The study presents the pedagogical internship program, the structural unit of which is a comprehensive module developed in conjunction with employers aimed at creating an up-to-date set of professional competencies that meet the teacher's professional standard and industry-specific education requirements. The purpose of this study is to identify the effectiveness of the developed internship program for the professional competencies formation of future teachers.

Two main research methods are used in the study: comparison expert assessments and self-assessments of study participants and statistical processing of the research results. The expert group included 15 teachers of internship schools-bases (Yekaterinburg), 25 students of Ural State Pedagogical University.

As a result of the study, both the experts and the students recorded the maximum dynamics in the general professional competencies development: the ability to carry out training, education and development taking into account social, age, psychophysical and individual characteristics, including the students' special educational needs and knowledge of the professional ethics and speech culture basics.

*Keywords:* pedagogical internship, professional skills, teacher professional formation, professional competence, teaching skills, School-University partnership.

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## **Introduction**

Practical training of future teachers at University is becoming more and more relevant in connection with the professional standards introduction and the teacher growth national system. Teacher education programs saturation with a variable system of practices and internships based on the School-University partnership principles becomes a priority. Entering the teaching profession is most effective in the current educational organization, which represents, on the one hand, professional actions and technologies samples and, on the other – a field for gaining experience in solving pedagogical problems. The school becomes a key source of the most important components of the professionally-oriented training programs content for future teachers (Margolis, 2014).

The procedure for implementing the School-University partnership is regulated by the Federal law of 02.12.2019 N 403-FL "On amendments to the Federal law "On education in the Russian Federation" and certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation". The normative act establishes that practical training can be organized directly at an institution that carries out educational activities, including in its structural division intended for practical training, as well as at an organization that operates in the profile of the relevant educational program, including in its structural division intended for practical training, on the basis of an agreement between these organizations (Federal law of 02.12.2019 N 403-FL).

Consequently, the problem of saturating teacher education programs with an extensive system of practices and internships based on the principles of School-University partnership, in addition to relevance, also has great social significance.

## **Purpose and objectives of the study**

Purpose of the study is to identify the developed internship program effectiveness for the formation of future teachers' professional competencies.

## **Literature review**

One of the promising forms of School-University partnership is a pedagogical internship. Traditionally, an internship as a form of one-year postgraduate internship for graduates has been used in medical universities.

In many countries, the stage of entering the teaching profession requires compulsory postgraduate practice at school under the guidance of a mentor (Luchkina, 2009; Luchkina & Gracheva, 2010). For example, in the USA, this is an obligatory one-year internship for future teachers. In the UK, the program "Entry into

the Position" is mandatory during the first year of work at the school. In Japan, a program of intensive practical training of a trainee teacher with advisory assistance from a mentor is mandatory during the first year of work at the school. In Canada, internships last one to two years as part of the Entry into the Professionals program. It involves the development of the ability not only to teach a specific subject, but also other aspects of work in the school: classroom management, interaction with teachers, parents and colleagues; orientation in the curriculum of a particular school and district, etc. In Germany, confirmation of the professional skills of a young teacher is carried out within the framework of the referendum for two years. An analysis of foreign experience allows us to state that the general nature for the practical training of future teachers is its mandatory nature, mentoring (tutoring, mentoring, supervision) and a duration of at least one year.

In Russian higher pedagogical education two models of internship implementation have been tested: sequential and parallel. The sequential model is implemented as the primary postgraduate specialization of bachelor's degree graduates in one of the teaching professions, conducted on the basis of educational organizations under the supervision and guidance of the corresponding university chair (Gevorkyan, Savenkov, Egorov, & Vachkov, 2015). The parallel model assumes a student's practical profession immersion in parallel with higher education in the framework of in-depth practice in the main educational program or additional education (Dubinina, 2010; Furyaeva, 2014).

An analysis of various approaches to the organization of support for young teachers' intern training allowed us to develop an authoring program of pedagogical internship.

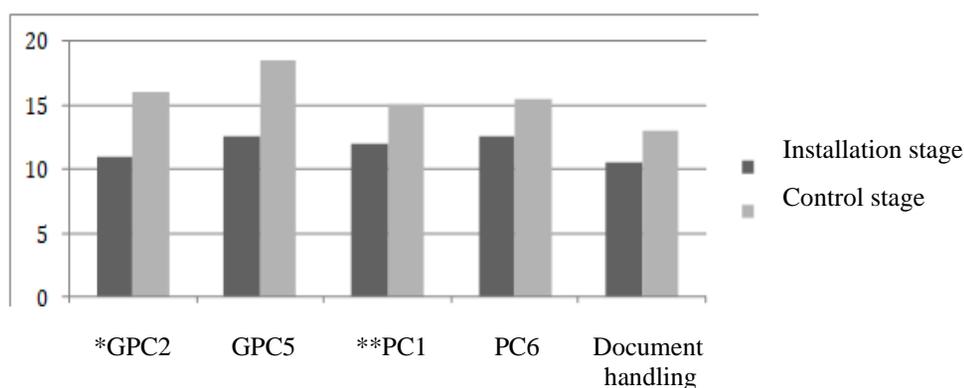
As part of the parallel training model, we have developed a pedagogical internship program, which has been implemented since 2015 at Ural State Pedagogical University on the additional education principles (Miniurova & Leonenko, 2015) The program contains several modules that were developed in conjunction with employers and are aimed at forming labor functions that meet the teacher professional standard requirements and the educational environment industry specifics. It is possible to vary modules depending on the current requests of the educational organizations where interns are sent. The following program modules are basic and invariant: "In-depth profile training", "Psychological and pedagogical technologies for working with various students' contingents", "Practical pedagogical deontology", "Modern forms and methods of educational work", "Information and documentation support for teacher activities" (Miniurova & Leonenko, 2016; Miniurova, Leonenko, Bagicheva, & Byvsheva, 2017).

## Methodology

At the stage of internship program approbation was conducted an empirical study to assess the effectiveness of the students' competencies formation (in accordance with the Federal State Educational Standard for Higher education (FSES HE). Two main research methods are used in the study: comparison expert assessments and self-assessments of study participants and statistical processing of the research results. The expert group included 15 teachers of internship schools-bases (Yekaterinburg), 25 students of Ural State Pedagogical University. The data were subjected to mathematical and statistical analysis using the Mann-Whitney U-test (at  $p \leq 0.01$ ).

## Results

According to expert assessments, statistically significant shifts were obtained for all formed competencies (figure 1):



\*GPC – General professional competencies

\*\*PC – Professional competencies

Figure 1. Dynamics of the interns' formed competencies development level according to expert assessments based on internships (average values)

The maximum dynamics is recorded in the general professional competencies development: the ability to carry out training, education and development taking into account social, age, psychophysical and individual characteristics, including student's special educational needs and knowledge of the professional ethics basics and speech culture. Significant dynamics occurred equally in the professional competencies development: readiness to implement educational programs on the subject in accordance with the educational standards requirements), readiness to interact with participants in the educational process. Also, the experts noted the document handling skills and knowledge development in teacher's activity.

From the point of view of interns themselves, the dynamics is also positive and reliable (U-Mann-Whitney criterion,  $p \leq 0.01$ ) for all formed competencies (figure 2):

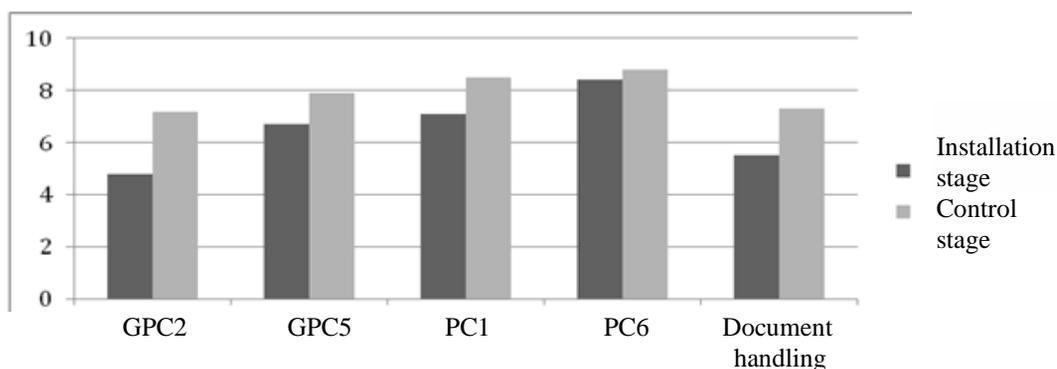


Figure 2. Dynamics of the formed competencies development according to the interns' self-assessment (average values)

The maximum dynamics from the interns point of view is recorded in the development level of the ability to carry out training, education and development taking into account social, age, psychophysical and individual characteristics, including the students' special educational needs. It should be noted that at the installation stage, interns assessed the level of this competence as the minimum in the formed competencies profile. The maximum increase in the level of this competence is recorded in expert assessments. The identified trend allows us to consider the module aimed at the formation of this competence, on the one hand, as the most popular, on the other hand, the training content and technology – the most effective, which is also recorded in the interns' questionnaires.

Interns evaluate quite highly the document handling ability in the teacher's activity. At the same time, to a lesser extent, they note the professional competence development, which implies readiness to interact with participants in the educational process. Perhaps this is due to the fact that at the installation stage, students rated the degree of its formation quite high, which reduced the zone of nearest development. According to expert assessments, the dynamics in the development of this competence is more pronounced with the same high level of communicative competence at the installation stage. Perhaps this competence for interns is not yet included in the zone of active awareness and will be updated as the theory and methodology of conducting classes are mastered.

In general, the analysis of the pedagogical internship program testing results allowed us to state the positive dynamics in the level of all the formed competencies development and clarify the objectives of the pedagogical internship program development.

The following areas were chosen as priorities at the next stage of the project development: organization of interns' immersion in the profession through familiarization with the best educational practices, educational and developmental classes to fill the deficit of students' competencies, practice-oriented work of interns with mentors and tutors in educational organizations.

The database formation of best educational practices and the creation of a teachers-tutors and teachers-mentors pool took place in close cooperation with the Education department of Yekaterinburg. Educational organizations have demonstrated high involvement in the School-University partnership process and organically integrated interns into current activities, providing all conditions for practical involvement.

The interns' deficient competencies analysis revealed the following. Students showed the lowest formation degree of such competencies as readiness to accept different children, regardless of their educational capabilities, physical and mental development, behavior characteristics; readiness to interact with participants in the educational process (primarily with the students' parents). To work with the identified deficits, master classes were developed and conducted on the following topics: "Game technologies in the work of a teacher", " Working with parents. Innovative technologies in working with parents»; a foresight session "Secrets of successful work of a teacher with parents" was organized; trainings "Effective communication" and "Speech improvisations" were held.

## **Discussions**

The results of the study showed that both experts and students recorded the maximum dynamics in the development of general professional competencies: the ability to conduct training, education and

development taking into account social, age, psychophysical and individual characteristics, including the special educational needs of students and knowledge of the professional ethics and culture of speech basics.

## **Conclusion**

A new stage in the pedagogical internship development was the students' participation in the First large-scale federal competition of teacher teams "Teacher of the Future" of the presidential platform "Russia-the country of opportunities", which was held this academic year with the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation support.

Interns had the opportunity to learn new educational technologies and ways for building communication with all educational process participants, which were demonstrated during the competition by the organizers and participating teachers. The result of this stage was the signing of an agreement on cooperation and interaction of the competition organizer "Teacher of the Future" – Autonomous non-profit organization "Russia – the country of opportunities" with Ural State Pedagogical University.

The agreement subject is to support projects and initiatives that contribute to the creation of opportunities for citizens personal and professional self-realization, development of practice-oriented education, training of qualified personnel, including within the framework of the professional competition "Teacher of the Future".

This collaboration involves the student track development in the next season of the competition "Teacher of the Future". Participation in a professional competition at the student's life stage will be a good start in the practical activities field for future teachers.

Openness to the new, interest in the experience of the best pedagogical practices, search for relevant solutions for the constantly updated educational reality are the key challenges of the competition student track "Teacher of the Future", that are in tune with the idea of a pedagogical internship.

Thus, pedagogical internship as an innovative form of students practical training on the principles of School-University partnership contributes to the professional development of future teachers, the design of their personal and professional development. Employment of internship graduates in educational organizations-partners of the project is a key indicator of its effectiveness.

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