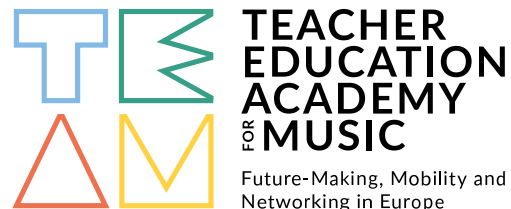


TEAM LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR MUSIC TEACHER EDUCATION IN EUROPE



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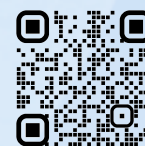
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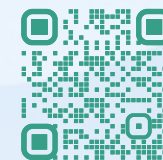
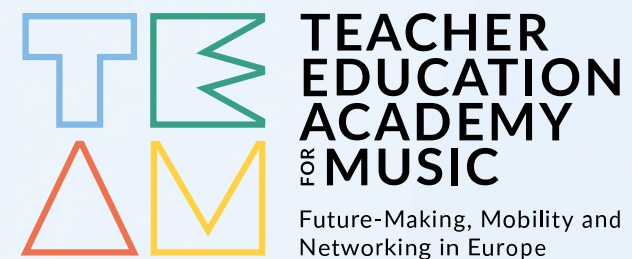
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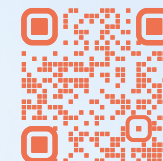
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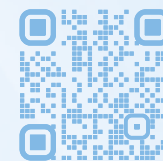
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TEAM
Learning Outcomes



EAS
Learning Outcomes
Accessible on the EAS Web



The European Association for Music in Schools (EAS) is a music education network, and an associated member of the TEAM project. It interconnects all those involved in music education to share knowledge and experience in practice and research, and to advocate for high quality music education that is accessible to all young people.

TEAM was able to build on the strong EAS network, and many of its members including National Coordinators, and Special Focus Group Coordinators contributed to the development of the learning outcomes by providing feedback at the EAS annual conferences.

www.eas-music.org

How Learning Outcomes will be useful to you

... in Music Teacher Education

The TEAM Learning Outcomes can serve as an international reference document when formulating and benchmarking institutional programme goals. Similarly, they can guide and support curriculum reforms. Discussing programme goals and curriculum design is, however, a fundamental exercise. We, therefore, propose the following four specific applications.

The TEAM Learning Outcomes for Music Teacher Education in Europe can

- support your work on curricula by providing a European reference framework;
- support the alignment of institutional with international mobility programmes;
- serve as a source of inspiration for selecting themes for student seminars;
- inspire learning activities involving both specialist and generalist student teachers.

Moreover, the way the descriptors are formatted (short and in the second person imperative), makes them well-suited for use in direct dialogue with students, helping to stimulate reflection and facilitate discussion about their learning process as future teachers.

... for In-Service Professional Development

Learning outcomes can be an important reference document for teachers and a means of reflecting on personal competences throughout their entire professional career. This document can be an important tool to raise awareness of skills essential for effective music learning and, consequently, also as a guide toward professional development activities that might be undertaken. Moreover, it can be used as leverage for both specialist and generalist music teachers to persuade school leaders of the importance of continuing professional development for their music teaching staff. In particular, the five transversal descriptors are worth considering in the context of in-service professional development, as they have the potential to transform current practices.

Further Reading

De Baets, T., De Praitere, A.-S., Gall, M., & Malmberg, I. (2025). Future-proof learning outcomes for classroom music teacher education: a Europeanwide exploration. *Culture, Education, and Future*, 3 (1), 82-99. <https://doi.org/10.70116/2980274182>

De Baets, T., De Praitere, A.-S., Gall, M., & Malmberg, I. (2026). The TEAM Learning Outcomes for Music Teacher Education in Europe. In I. Malmberg, T. Buchborn, & L. Steinmetz (Eds.), *Future-making, Mobility and Networking in Europe: Impulses for Music Education in School, Teacher Education and Professional Development* (European Perspectives on Music Education, Vol. 16). Helbling.

... as a Means of Advocacy

In essence, learning outcomes can be used by all stakeholders as a tool for informed discussions about current or potential curriculum priorities. Moreover, they can serve as an advocacy tool: by offering this reference framework for the demands of music teacher education in Europe, we give European institutions the opportunity to refer to a document that proposes a certain quality standard for music teacher education.

European institutions are encouraged to use them for this purpose.

Important: While the TEAM Learning Outcomes aim to encourage reflection and empower (trainee) music teachers and classroom music education, they are not intended to be used to evaluate music teachers or their classroom practice.

BACKGROUND

Harmonisation of the European Higher Education Area in Music

Europe – and especially the European Union (EU) – is an educational area interconnected in many ways. The idea of creating a **‘European Education Area’** dates back to a communication from the European Commission in September 2020. In February 2021, the EU education ministers not only took up this concept but reaffirmed their intention to continue working on the European Education Area beyond 2025. The interconnectedness is intended, not least, to strengthen the common European identity. The idea has played an important role in the field of higher education since 1999, when 29 European education ministers launched the so-called Bologna Process. This coordination process, which now encompasses 49 countries, aims to **create a European Higher Education Area in which degree programmes and qualifications are harmonised.**

The programmes are **harmonised, yet not standardised** because, in the EU member states, the principle of subsidiarity applies in the field of education: the Treaty of Maastricht stipulates that the EU contributes to quality education by encouraging cooperation between member states and, where necessary, supporting and supplementing their activities, while acknowledging the member state’s discretion. While convergence can be observed, especially with regard to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

(ECTS), it is hardly possible to speak of an alignment of higher education policies. With the focus on the Lisbon Strategy, the ‘Europe 2020’ Strategy from 2010 onward, and the ‘European Green Deal’ which came into effect in 2021, European education policy initiatives are moving toward a cross-cutting policy.

In the field of **music**, the three main European associations in the field of formal music education took up the aim of harmonisation: the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC), the European Association for Music in Schools (EAS) and the European Music School Union (EMU). In 2014 they founded the so-called **SCHEME group, the Steering Committee for the Harmonisation of European Music Education**. Particularly within the AEC (representing Higher Music Education Institutions) and within the EAS (representing the field of classroom music and music teacher education), there is a tradition of developing Europe-wide learning outcomes for higher music education and music teacher education, respectively. Within the SCHEME group, **learning outcomes are understood as a means of stimulating international discourse, of increasing the visibility of musical studies, as sensors and indicators for larger educational policy developments, and as a means of harmonising study programmes.**

BACKGROUND

Learning Outcomes: Meaning and Benefits

In the 2000s, EU higher education policy shifted from content-based curricula to competency-based curricula, in which the objectives were mostly defined as learning outcomes, understood as descriptions of what learners know, understand, and are capable of doing upon completing a learning process. Learning outcomes are the core element of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and can be applied to all learning experiences within higher education. The key characteristic of learning outcomes is their focus on student learning and less on learning input. There is an important distinction between standards and learning outcomes: While standards must always be formulated in such a way that the knowledge and skills outcomes are clearly measurable, learning outcomes are formulated somewhat more openly.

All those involved in the educational process – students, university lecturers, curriculum managers, managers and employers – can benefit from the use of learning outcomes. Institutional learning outcomes (i.e. those of a university that educates music teachers) provide transparency regarding the profile of the programme, its focus, and the necessary resources. Thus, they form an important basis for aligning study fields and single modules or courses in terms of content, as well as in relation to resources (e.g. time, learning formats, equipment allocated, and the level of education of the teacher educator) so that they follow a convergent overall plan.

The set is composed of **Core and Transversal Descriptors** that are mutually interlinked.

Naturally, all descriptors are combined with one another in the music teacher's everyday professional activities. The new set of learning outcomes comprises 25 descriptors divided into two categories: 20 core descriptors (numbered 1 to 20) and 5 transversal (or 'cross-cutting') descriptors (labelled A to E). Each transversal descriptor should be considered in relation to all core descriptors. These transversal descriptors refer to competences that are deemed essential for shaping a future-proof music education (namely inclusion, global responsibility, technology, collaboration, and professional development). Combining core and transversal descriptors generate powerful, dynamic and challenging learning outcomes, and can bring possible music education practices to light. For example, descriptors 7 and B can be combined in activities where students arrange short folk songs with recycled instruments and explain their ecological choices. Descriptors 15 and C will both be

required when guiding an activity in which the teacher transcribes a melody in traditional notation that students have recorded in graphic notation using an online app. Combining two descriptors makes (trainee) music teachers reflect on existing professional activities (inside or outside the classroom) and also opens up the possibility of imagining new practices. In that sense, combining core and transversal descriptors is an inspiring exercise for (trainee) teachers.

The descriptors are formulated at an **Open European Qualifications Framework Level**, leaving room for context specific interpretation.

The descriptors are not defined at a specific European Qualifications Framework (EQF) level. This means they do not directly refer to the first cycle (EQF level 6, usually bachelor's level) or second cycle (EQF level 7, usually master's level) of the European Higher Education Area. Given the wide diversity of circumstances throughout Europe, where music teacher education is organised at bachelor's level, master's level, or both in some countries, this would be nearly impossible to differentiate. Therefore, the descriptors refer to the outcomes of specialist

music and generalist teacher education in a general way, disregarding the relevant EQF level and the type of institution in which the programme is offered. **They express the competencies that a music teacher should have attained by the end of the programme applicable in the respective context.** This means that, to add the specific bachelor's or master's dimension, the TEAM descriptors must be consulted alongside the generic learning outcomes which define EQF levels 6 or 7.

The framework provides a **Joint Set for Generalists and Specialists**, allowing for role-specific depth and differentiation.

No clear distinction has been made between generalist classroom teachers and specialist music teachers, and this results in one overall set of descriptors. While one might associate a generalist teacher with primary education and a specialist teacher with secondary education, this is not always the case throughout Europe. Specialist music teachers are primarily trained to teach music lessons, while generalist teachers are responsible for a wide range of subjects, including music. There are many good practices in which specialists and generalists cooperate. The decision to develop a single set for both profiles aligns with the notion of **the descriptors representing a 'minimum' level.** We believe that the TEAM Learning Outcomes articulate the **essential criteria for high-quality music teaching, whether one is trained as a generalist or a specialist.** We acknowledge that this might not fully reflect the current reality within generalist teacher education. In that regard, the

set establishes an ambitious standard for professional practice. Research has shown that generalist (primary) teachers often experience a lack of confidence when it comes to teaching music. By setting the standard high, our intention is not to increase pressure on them, but rather to invite generalist teacher education to better equip them for their future responsibilities. Although specialists are usually confident in their subject knowledge and, therefore, may be regarded as more competent music teachers, it is important to acknowledge that generalists also bring valuable strengths, since they reflect the belief that music is for everyone and forms an integral part of learning.

The format uses Short Descriptors in the Second Person Imperative to provide clear and actionable guidance.

Descriptors of learning outcomes are typically formulated in a formal style that is common in higher education: they are often quite lengthy and written in the third person (singular or plural), **describing what a student ‘is able to’ at the point of graduation.** Music teacher educators are accustomed to consulting such documents and are also familiar with expressing learning outcomes for their own curriculum or subject in these terms. Against that background, the formatting of the new learning outcomes – short and in the second person imperative – may appear unusual. The choice of short descriptors is in line with recent EU-guidelines that promote **short and accessible descriptions.** Indeed, short descriptors possess stronger communicative power, particularly in an international context. In line with this, the second person imperative is used, directly **addressing a specific reader – namely, the student music teacher**

who is the subject of the learning outcomes. This approach aligns well with the idea of engaging trainee teachers in their own learning process. Moreover, it also facilitates the integration of a gender-neutral style in the formulation of the descriptors. The revised formatting also addresses a concern raised during a feedback session within the TEAM consortium, where it was proposed that the new learning outcomes should be more “enticing, motivating, inspiring, provoking ...”. The descriptors are formulated and presented in English only. Short descriptors can also be translated into other European languages more easily.

The framework emphasises Integrating Musical and Pedagogical Competences to support a holistic and practice-oriented approach.

As the TEAM Learning Outcomes will be used in combination with other international and regional guidelines, including general pedagogical framework documents, the set of descriptors should feel as specific to music education as possible. All **descriptors refer specifically to music teaching,** general (pedagogical) as well as generic competences are not integrated. Nonetheless, the set of descriptors reflects the **most relevant dimensions of the music teaching profession.** In this respect, the set does not align with curriculum structures that often distinguish between different areas of learning, such as general pedagogy, subject-specific pedagogy, musicianship, and internships. As all these curriculum areas are expected to contribute to the education of a coherent professional, it makes sense, at least at the level of learning outcomes, to adopt a holistic and integrative approach.

The Level of Abstraction is intentionally kept broad enough to allow flexible local interpretation.

The set of learning outcomes, **formulated at a general European level, will be interpreted through the lens of local musical and music-educational traditions and practices.** It may also resonate, to some extent, with local music curricula for primary and secondary schools. That is why some formulations tend to remain at a rather abstract level, referring to ideas and concepts without specific examples or illustrations. This is especially evident in reference to, for instance, modes of listening (13), key elements of music (14), traditional and alternative notations (15), forms of assessment (20), music and other technologies (C), and diverse stakeholders (D). To illustrate this, Key elements of music can refer to what one knows as musical parameters, principles of music, musical dimensions or ‘building blocks’. Diverse curricula also refer to different lists, but they typically include aspects such as rhythm, melody, harmony,

and structure. These classifications often depend on dominant local traditions, curricula, and theories. Diverse stakeholders, for instance, may include literally anyone who can be a meaningful partner for collaboration within and around the educational setting; some examples are other teachers, parents, school leaders, curriculum developers, researchers, community members, and teacher educators. Locally, such partnerships are often highlighted within curricular frameworks. In other words, **whilst some of the descriptors may appear overly global, they should be actively connected to local realities.**

TEAM LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR MUSIC TEACHER EDUCATION IN EUROPE

CORE DESCRIPTORS

01

Be a role model

Inspire learners with one's own musicianship and artistic open-mindedness.

02

Assist musical journeys

Support learners in exploring their interests and achieving their musical goals.

03

Co-create plans for progression

With students, create plans for their musical progress, taking into account their needs, competences and interests.

04

Connect with musical cultures

Understand and respond to the role of music in young people's lives in and outside school.

05

Enrich school and community life

Create musical opportunities that connect school life with life outside school.

06

Foster musical creativities

Enable learners, collaboratively and individually, to be inventive and inquisitive, and to express and develop their musical ideas.

07

Compose, improvise, produce, and arrange

Create music with an understanding of stylistic, theoretical and technical requirements, and learners' needs, musical competences and interests.

08

Use engaging materials and approaches

Select, adapt, or create appropriate music materials and methods to create meaningful music learning experiences.

09

Facilitate varied music making

Confidently lead singing and instrumental music making activities.

10

Perform expressively

Communicate music confidently and fluently, vocally and instrumentally, exploring different styles, and adapting to diverse learning environments and audiences.

11

Accompany musically

Play an accompanying instrument (such as piano or guitar) to support learners' musicking.

12

Lead ensembles

Guide and assist vocal and instrumental groups in rehearsals and performances.

13

Promote active music listening

Offer learners different modes of listening and engage them in shared listening experiences.

14

Teach key elements of music

Help learners understand and use musical elements within musical experiences.

15

Read and write music

Read and write music in traditional and alternative notations and use these to communicate musical ideas.

16

Communicate well

Use clear and encouraging musical, verbal and non-verbal communication modes to foster learning.

17

Promote well-being

Plan with awareness of the impact of music and music education on learners' physical and mental health, and social issues relating to music.

18

Manage the music classroom

Design and facilitate learning activities in diverse group settings, ensuring a positive and safe classroom environment.

19

Ensure coverage of curricula

Have a strong awareness of relevant curricula aims and educational policies, particularly those related to music.

20

Assess and feed back

Choose appropriate forms of assessment for music education, to provide feedback in order to guide learning.

TRANSVERSAL DESCRIPTORS

A

Foster inclusivity and celebrate diversity

Acknowledge the different layers of intersectionality in order to counter power relations, and celebrate diverse musical practices and traditions.

B

Cultivate global responsibility

Within music education, promote awareness of societal, cultural, ecological and economic evolution.

C

Use technology where appropriate

Enhance music learning and creativity through the use of music and other technologies.

D

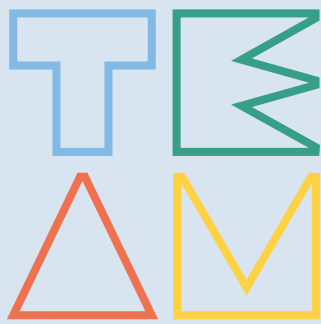
Collaborate and co-teach

Work with fellow staff, diverse stakeholders and across subject disciplines to enrich the musical learning experience.

E

Engage in continuous professional development

Take responsibility for one's own professional growth, adopt a reflective attitude, seek feedback, and contribute to (practitioner) research to advance and innovate music education.



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