

Hello there

My name is Bart Verswijvel. I am very happy to welcome you to this course, which has been designed for student teachers.

I have been a teacher myself for 30 years and I can tell you it is a wonderful job, and you too can make your teaching career wonderful: it's in your own hands.

It all depends on the attitude you have. When I started teaching, I soon understood that teaching is in fact learning as well. As a teacher, aim to have the attitude of a lifelong learner. Learning will not stop when you graduate as a teacher, but it will take place in a different way, in a more informal way, and in ways which you choose.

Being a teacher is much more than the interaction you will have with pupils in the classroom. You will also be part of a community of colleagues both in your own school and outside it. They will inspire and support you, and you will inspire and support them. Teaching is no longer a solitary profession, thanks in part to the internet. Online, you can find so many resources and ideas from other teachers and organisations to use in your teaching and professional development.

This is what will happen in this course. We will try to build a learning community here of teachers who are willing to share and to learn. We will lead you to resources and tools you may not have heard of. And hopefully you will pick some ideas as well you can use in your teaching.

The course itself will last for about 5 weeks. You can come in whenever you like, this is how online courses work.

For the first 4 weeks, we will open - each Monday morning - a new UNIT with new content. The fifth and final week is an extra week to finish your tasks. All the units will remain open till the end of the course.

Here are the topics we will cover:

Unit 1 is called **Entering the job**. It will make you reflect on the transition from being a student to being a teacher. What are your expectations? What will be the challenges as well as the opportunities? In this unit you will also be encouraged to start a Learning Diary. It will be an online portfolio you create, to curate the ideas you took from the course and from the interaction with other participants.

You will also get a crash course on the use of Twitter. Twitter is a powerful tool for professional development. We will also use Twitter as a backchannel to communicate outside the platform as well and to connect to the global community of teachers. Here is our hashtag, by the way.

Units 2 and 3 bring you to Classroom practice. We'll focus on active learning. Active learning is when you find the perfect blend between pedagogy, technology and the learning space, to make your students indeed... active learners. In Unit 2 we will explore how technology can support student-centred pedagogy and unit 3 will be about the impact of the space on learning.

The last unit focuses on you as a teacher and a lifelong learner. You will see that your professional development, as a teacher, will often take place in online communities. There is a wealth of interesting



communities and teaching materials to be found on the internet. We will try to help you in finding the best and also how to organise and curate learning resources.

Each unit includes some tasks – the course too has an active learning pedagogy! Tasks can be taking part in discussions or creating materials. You will read in the course that not all the tasks are compulsory. You will be able to make your own choice. It will be clear how to meet the minimum requirements to receive your digital badge of completion. This means that also the workload can vary, but we think you will need 2 and a half hours a week as a minimum. If you want to engage more, you might spend up to 5 hours a week.

During the course we will also organize some events, taking place at a specific time:

During the first week we will have an Ignite webinar where I will explain more in detail what will happen and how it works.

Later on, we will have a Twitter Chat, a Quiz night, and an Online Teachmeet.

The course content is in English, but we have designed it so that you will still be able to get much out of the course, even if your knowledge of English is somewhat limited. When the course opens, please also have a close look on how we offer help in case you have language or other problems.

The ITELab project aims to help young teachers, but at the same time, we want to give student teachers and newly qualified teachers a voice as well. What are your concerns, what are your dreams about teaching?

We created a Facebook page as a forum for future teachers like you, ready to hit the road of teaching. The Facebook page will be an engaging platform which will remain open to you after the course.

So once again, thank you for joining us. We will meet soon.

And good luck in becoming a wonderful teacher!

