

# **CONTINUOUS TEACHER EDUCATION IN RUSSIA**

**HISTORY, CURRENT  
PRACTICES AND  
FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

**EDITED BY**

**ROZA A. VALEEVA  
AYDAR M. KALIMULLIN**



# **Continuous Teacher Education in Russia**

This book is an outstanding contribution to the global literature on teacher education. It is the most comprehensive and thorough account of the origins, development and direction of travel of teacher education in Russia. With its emphasis on the continuous nature of teacher learning and support it offers a model for scholars, policymakers and practitioners around the world to consider and to learn from. Aydar Kalimullin and Roza Valeeva are to be congratulated for drawing together such a range of work with their colleagues at Kazan Federal University. The book provides evidence of why and how KFU has become such a leading provider of teacher education not only in Russia, but with influence in many other countries.

*—Ian Menter,*  
**Emeritus Professor of Teacher Education,**  
**University of Oxford, UK**

This book thoroughly looks at continuing teacher education in Russia and draws on historical developments, theoretical foundations and practical complexities that shape the landscape of teacher preparation and advancement within the broader context of the educational sector. In nine carefully crafted chapters, the reader embarks on a journey through time from the beginnings of teacher education in the 18th century to the contemporary challenges and future possibilities shaping today's teaching landscape. Each chapter is a beacon of knowledge, focusing on a specific aspect of teacher education through rigorous scholarship and depth of experience.

Collectively, these chapters offer a symphony of knowledge, each contributing a unique melody to the overarching narrative of continuous teacher education in Russia. As such, the book stands as a testament to the enduring commitment of educators and policymakers to foster excellence in teaching, nurture a culture of lifelong learning and embrace the rich diversity that defines the Russian educational landscape. It provides a valuable resource for understanding the historical evolution, current state and future prospects of teacher education in Russia while also offering insights and recommendations for enhancing the quality and relevance of teacher training programs. With its scholarly depth, empirical richness and visionary outlook, this book is not merely a scholarly endeavour but a guiding light for educators, policymakers and researchers alike, paving the way for a brighter future in teacher education.

Thus, it is with great enthusiasm and conviction that I endorse this remarkable book for publication, confident in its potential to inspire, educate and empower generations of educators in Russia and beyond.

—*Dr Manpreet Kaur*  
**Principal**  
**Partap College of Education**  
**Ludhiana**  
**Punjab**

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# **Continuous Teacher Education in Russia: History, Current Practices and Future Directions**

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## Foreword

The title chosen by the authors – *Continuous Teacher Education in Russia* – well illustrates the scope of this important book. As the contributors point out, in recent years, developments in the country have been substantial. The overall guiding framework, which has been in existence since the 1970s, has been associated with the OECD's notion of 'lifelong learning'. Thus, teacher education in Russia is conceptualised to be not only about pre-service professional preparation but also about ensuring that there is continued updating of teachers' academic and professional knowledge and skills. In opening up new perspectives for the English-speaking reader, the book is also timely as it opens up new perspectives notwithstanding the reality that the world is getting ever smaller with globalisation and transnational knowledge circulation taking place like never before thanks to much travelling and the use of ICT.

Four aspects of the book are particularly valuable. First, the topics covered range widely. Thus, while the work is not part of series *Emerald Studies in Teacher Preparation in National and Global Contexts*, it is certainly an excellent companion to the associated volumes. Secondly, the authors are able to draw on their close knowledge of Russian history, culture and contemporary developments in providing an outstanding context to their exposition. On that, they look at the past not for its own sake but so that it can help them raise key issues central to current debates about teacher education. Thirdly, the authors make use of a wealth of sources, many of them hitherto little used by scholars located in Western Europe and North America. Finally, the authors, due to their extensive work with fellow academics located in China, the United States, Great Britain, Germany and many other countries, have produced a work that allows one to engage in cross-cultural and cross-national comparison and contrast on teacher education in Russia.

Overall, this is a stimulating, very scholarly and thought-provoking book and should be widely read and quoted. For my own part, it is a work that reinforces my own long-standing view of the importance of considering the historical antecedents of contemporary developments in education if we are to understand the current situation properly. It also reinforces my growing appreciation of the view that people from across nations need to listen to one another so that they can move from what are sometimes parochial positions to a space where exchanges of these positions are valued.

*Professor Emeritus Tom O'Donoghue*  
The University of Western Australia

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# Introduction and Overview

*Roza A. Valeeva and Aydar M. Kalimullin*

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The Russian education system solves the problems of pedagogical training and assistance to the timely professional development of teachers in accordance with the conditions of social development. Teacher education in Russia has become the subject of considerable reform over recent years. The requirement for the continuity of such pedagogical training, continued updating of the knowledge and skills of teachers within the framework of the 'lifelong education' paradigm, was put forward in the 1970s of the last century. Today, it is gaining popularity and relevance in teacher education. The central idea of continuous education is the development of a person as a subject of activity and communication throughout his life. This idea, realised by society, is a system-forming factor of continuous education and comes down to the concept of a 'learning society'. Continuous education increases the possibility of extending the propaedeutic training and professional activity of the teacher. The system of continuous teacher education as a whole includes a variety of forms and types of activity aimed at satisfying various requests for expanding, deepening and improving the professional competencies of a teacher throughout the course of their careers. Considering continuous teacher education as a developing, multi-level system, several stages can be distinguished: (1) pre-professional (school); (2) basic professional (college and university); (3) advanced training (institute/centre for advanced training, scientific and methodological work and self-education); (4) postgraduate (postgraduate study and doctoral studies). All these stages are focused on the formation of general cultural and general scientific training in the teachers. The main advantage of continuing education is the possibility of endless development of teachers' personal potentials.

The book is an edited collection of chapters which examines the history, recent developments and directions of modernisation of the Russian continuous teacher education. It aims to be the definitive English language text on this topic and will draw on scholarly expertise in Russia and will locate the policies and practices that are discussed within the context of global reform of teacher education. The book is a result of one of the rare English-language studies on teacher education in Russia, which is entirely prepared by Russian scholars. The significance of their

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work resides in several aspects. Firstly, the editors and authors of the book are practising educators training future teachers in one of the leading Russian institutions of higher education. Secondly, the members of the research team have been participants in practically all the modernisation processes that have taken place in teacher education in recent times. Thirdly, the editors of this book have previous experience of participating in comparative projects, allowing them to generate insight into the specifics of the national model of teacher education from an international perspective.

The interest in the case of Russia in the global educational space can be explained primarily by the originality of its system due to the richness of national culture, its spirituality, social orientation and focus on continuous development. It is a noteworthy historical and cultural paradox how the largest country in the world developed one of the most centralised and unified systems of teacher training.

The preparation of this work was preceded by close co-operation between the authors and international scholars in the field of education. It was developed in line with the general course of interaction between Russian universities and the world pedagogical community. To a greater extent, it touched upon the participants of the large-scale state programme to improve the international competitiveness of the best Russian universities among the world's leading scientific and educational centres (Project 5–100). The greatest success in the subject area 'education' was demonstrated by Moscow State University, Higher School of Economics and Kazan Federal University (KFU). However, the latter, which is represented by the authors of this book, has shown impressive achievements in the field of teacher training. Moscow State University, Higher School of Economics mainly specialised in philosophy, economics and sociology of higher education in general (Gafurov & Kalimullin, 2022).

KFU, which is one of the three largest centres of teacher education in Russia, has essentially become in the last decade the first Russian university to present the national model of teacher training and research in this field to the international scientific community in a large-scale and comprehensive manner. This was manifested first of all in joint research with scientists from China, the United States, Great Britain, Germany and many other countries, in reports at the world's leading scientific conferences of the world (WERA), European (ECER), British (BERA), American (AERA) Associations of Educational Researchers, Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE) and others.

Ultimately, international scientific interaction has contributed to the reputation of KFU, which was the first Russian university to be ranked among the top 100 best higher education institutions in the world in the Times Higher Education (THE) ranking in the subject area 'education' (2020). Currently, according to such a private indicator of THE rating as 'international outlook', KFU is among the 30 best educational institutions in the world. Scientific interest in the university reflects not only the significance of its educational and research activities but also attention to the state and reforms in the field of teacher training in Russia.

In the context of the uniqueness of national teacher education systems, the question inevitably arises as to which of them were the product of independent evolution and which were the result of borrowing or copying from more economically, politically and culturally developed countries. Although it is most likely that there are practically no unique systems of teacher education. The cyclical nature of the historical process has left its mark on the cultural progress of humankind. In the course of its evolution, there has been a repeated shift of centres of science, education and culture from one continent to another, from one country to another. The first highly developed civilisations of antiquity in Egypt, China and India were replaced by the ancient world, and then came the heyday of Western Europe. Its 'golden age' began with industrial revolutions, which entailed major changes in science and education. Teacher training could not stay aside from these processes, as each new century geometrically increased the need for educated people. The number of educational institutions of various types, especially for general education, grew, urgently requiring specialised training for them. Gradually, specific forms and content of education, including pedagogical education, were formed in a number of leading countries. For example, the educational experience of Great Britain, France, Prussia and a number of other countries had a noticeable influence on the rest of the world.

For this reason, it is impossible to assert the absolute autochthonousness of national teacher education systems. As noted above, they are the product of a synthesis of the specific historical and sociocultural conditions of one's own country and the external experience that came from other international systems. This is another argument for the study of the stated problem, as the nature of these borrowings often involved political, economic and cultural aspects of interaction between countries. For example, one cannot deny the influence of the British education system on numerous colonies of the United Kingdom, including North American territories at various times. It is also worth mentioning the Prussian model, which developed in parallel with it, and which had an obvious impact on the development of the educational system of the United States, pre-revolutionary Russia and a number of other countries in the 19th century. Very often, educational reforms developed within the framework of political and economic unions and organisations, the participants of which inevitably acted within the framework of a common strategy or developed within the framework of the leading country. The most convincing examples of the last century are the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, which united socialist countries after the Second World War under the aegis of the Soviet Union, and the created at the end of the 20th century European Union. In this respect, the history of the Soviet model of teacher training remains underestimated in terms of its prevalence in the world. Nevertheless, its influence in the post-war decades spread not only to the 15 now independent post-Soviet states but also partially to some countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. They are a clear example of how the Soviet Union influenced numerous national teacher training systems in the face of the confrontation between two world systems. On the other hand, the processes of transformation of the Soviet model itself under the

influence of international trends that unfolded in Russia after the 1990s are no less interesting.

Despite the country's accession to the Bologna Declaration, increased academic mobility and research contacts, there have been few English-language studies on Russian teacher education in recent years. They have mostly focused on specific issues that do not allow to understand all the details of the national continuum of teacher education. The editors of this book, Roza Valeeva and Aydar Kalimullin, have been working step by step for several years to bring their idea to life. The main emphasis was on co-operation with scientists from universities in different countries and the implementation of projects together with them. In this interaction, they not only gained knowledge about how teacher education is organised in the world but also presented the Russian experience to the international scientific community.

One of the first steps was World Education Research Association – International Research Network (WERA-IRN) project by scholars from 14 countries, Knowledge, Policy and Practice in Teacher Education: A Cross-National Study, led by Maria Teresa Tatto and Ian Menter ([Tatto & Menter, 2019](#)). In the chapter 'Learning to Teach in Russia: A Review of Policy and Empirical Research', [Valeeva and Kalimullin \(2019\)](#) briefly reviewed the historical evolution of teacher education policy in Russia. Next, the empirical results of a major project to modernise teacher education were analysed. It was carried out between 2014 and 2017 as part of attempts to implement the 'Concept of Supporting the Development of Teacher Education'. Considerable attention was paid to the influence of regional and national policies as well as direct institutional structures and social groups on the process of effective learning to teach. In conclusion, the authors emphasised the relevance of the teacher education reform in Russia, taking place amid the background of the country's increased integration into the international scientific and educational space.

The next stage was manifested in the book 'Teacher Education in Russia: Past, Present and Future' ([Menter, 2019](#)). It was edited by the British educator and humanist scholar Ian Menter. As the initiator and leader of many international comparative studies of teacher education, he was one of the first to urge colleagues to study the Russian experience without political context. This philosophy arguably reveals the face of a true educator who seeks to separate politics from science as much as possible. This approach is critical for pedagogy, the most important task of which is to make education better, more accessible and more humane.

It is no coincidence that the work of a teacher is highly respected in all countries of the world, regardless of political structure, ethnic, religious and cultural differences. However, in real life, social sciences including pedagogy are extremely dependent on politics. This very often leads to a distorted understanding of national educational systems. That is why Ian Menter's scientific activity can serve as an example of an objective and impartial researcher who strives to be as truthful as possible in his research. Today, his words are more relevant than ever:

By ensuring that Russian voices are to the fore of our account, we may avoid the western tendency of what Smith (2019) dubbed *The Russia Anxiety*, this being the title of his book in which he traces the origins and developments of western perspectives on Russia as a country that is not to be trusted. He notes the paradox of our (western) deep admiration for the music, theatre, and literature of Russia, while at the same time thinking of the country as ‘a unique menace’. Certainly, it is my expectation that western readers of the present volume should find the accounts of Russian teacher educational developments not only fascinating but exciting and stimulating – and far from menacing.

(Menter, 2019, p. 5)

Most of the chapters in *Teacher Education in Russia: Past, Present and Future* were authored by Valeeva and Kalimullin. In a socio-historical approach, they examine the evolution of teacher education since the late 18th century in the context of changes in politics, economics and culture. But it covers mainly the issues of the initial teacher education, and it only partially illuminates the components of the system of the continuous teacher education. The Russian case is a deeply significant example of ‘vernacular globalisation’ and reveals many important insights into the major themes in continuous teacher education.

One of the components of continuous teacher education in Russia – induction of novice teachers in the professional pedagogical environment – was described earlier by the authors of this volume in the comparative book ‘Teacher Induction and Mentoring’ (Mena & Clarke, 2021). The chapter covered the development of Russian innovative organisational models of advanced training for novice teachers at the regional and municipal levels (Valeeva et al., 2021).

The editors of this book participated in one more international comparative study on teacher education, presenting their analyses of the transformation trends of teacher education in five post-Soviet states – Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Ukraine – in the period from 1991 to 2020 (Kalimullin & Valeeva, 2022). They revealed the evolution of Soviet identity in teacher education and the reasons for preserving some of its characteristics amid reforms in a number of post-Soviet independent countries over the last three decades. In light of this, teacher education is considered as a major geopolitical resource in the Eurasian space, which enhances co-operation within an international organisation – the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) consisting of several post-Soviet countries. The current trend supporting this point is the increased export of Russian educational services to a number of Central Asian countries and Belarus.

The past, present and future of teacher education in Russia was the subject of a chapter in the recent book *The Palgrave Handbook of Teacher Education in Central and Eastern Europe* (Kowalczyk-Wałędziak et al., 2023). Valeeva and Kalimullin emphasised the reforms of teacher education in Russia. This justifiably required a brief historical excursion and an analysis of the current structure of the national teacher education system, including a review of state educational standards and approaches to teacher professional development. The authors provided

a critical analysis of the existing contradictions and problems associated with the transformation of teacher training in the early 21st century (Valeeva & Kalimullin, 2023).

In conclusion, the authors consider the directions of further development of teacher education in Russia. The text of the chapter ‘Teacher Education in Russia: The Current State and Development Prospects’ allows comparing the training of Russian teachers with colleagues in the profession from 20 Central and Eastern European countries. Of particular interest is the comparison of the trajectories of development of this sphere in the countries that were under the influence of the Soviet model after the 1990s. This enables to see the difficulties in their integration into the unified European educational space. Characterising the prospects for further transformation, Valeeva and Kalimullin are in solidarity with their colleagues participating in the project. They point to the increasing role of global, national and regional challenges, including the globalisation of education and the need to strengthen the link between research, policy and practice.

Thus, by exploring various historical stages and aspects of the teacher training system in Russia, the authors have come closer to achieving their main goal of presenting a complete picture of continuous teacher education in the country. Therefore, this book logically arises out of a collaboration between the editors, Roza Valeeva and Aydar Kalimullin, and colleagues at KFU in Russia, who have been leading a major teacher education reform project for the past decade.

The main themes are the history, current practice and future directions for Russian continuous teacher education. The chapters will consider the relationship between research, policy and practice and examine the respective influences of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), of processes of wider reform in the Russian Federation since 1990s. The overall aims are to provide a critical insight into the structure and development trajectory of continuous teacher education in Russia and to offer an analysis of the processes of change that are under way. This will demonstrate the wider significance and distinctiveness of the Russian ‘case’ in teacher education reform, in the context of the globalisation of education. It is better to learn from the mistakes and achievements of others, or as the Russian proverb goes – don’t step twice on a rake.

The book begins with introduction of the history of Russia’s teacher education since the 18th century till present times. The next part is devoted to the general characteristics of continuous teacher education. The third chapter describes the role of pre-professional development of future teachers in pedagogical classes. The fourth part reveals the specific Russian phenomenon of the secondary vocational teacher education. The fifth chapter covers the ways of assuring variability and flexibility of the higher teacher education in Russia. Special attention in the sixth chapter is paid to the models of novice teacher induction in Russia. The issues of training of highly qualified personnel in postgraduate and doctoral studies are revealed in the seventh chapter. The eighth chapter seeks to reveal many important insights into processes of teachers’ professional development. The multi-ethnic nature of Russia, the multinational composition of pupils with whom the teacher works in a school and the nearest ethno-cultural social environment suggest a certain readiness of teachers to work in an ethno-cultural

environment. The last chapter of the book will be devoted to this aspect of the continuous teacher education in Russia. The book is providing new perspectives that are likely to be of interest to education scholars, policymakers and practitioners on an international scale.

Analysing the current state of teacher education in Russia, we can forecast what kind of teacher will come to school. What will be the results of their work in teaching and educating the next generations of citizens of the country? The world has repeatedly experienced shocks, demonstrating numerous examples of how yesterday's friends became enemies and vice versa. Today, we all live in hope for a peaceful and prosperous life, for the achievement of which scientists must do their best. Our contribution to this goal is to promote a better understanding of each other through our research.

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## Chapter 1

# Historical Development of the Continuous Teacher Education in Russia

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### Abstract

This chapter will explore the main historical trends of the continuous teacher education development in Russia since the 18th century till present. Continuous teacher education in Russia has been a historically changing problem. Its roots lie in the end of the 18th century but its further formation relates to the emergence and development of open comprehensive schools and the spread of general education and opening the universities throughout the country in the 19th century. At the same time neither in the 18th nor the 19th centuries, teacher education in Russia could not be considered as a system, since its structure did not yet have orderliness, stability, constancy and integrity, even at a minimal level (various educational institutions were abolished and closed, teacher education was just beginning to appear in the regions). Thus, the formation of teacher education as a system fell on the border of the 19th–20th centuries. The topic of continuous teacher education in the USSR received impetus since 1986, when the requirements of scientific and technological revolution determined the task of creating a unified system of continuous education in the Soviet Union. At the same time, the continuous education was not recognised as a guiding principle of the teachers' professional development, although de facto it already existed in the 1920s. The phenomenon of continuity in teacher education, understood as the totality of means and forms of obtaining and deepening teacher education throughout life, existed as early as the beginning of the 20th century.

*Keywords:* History; continuous teacher education; pedagogical classes; secondary vocational education; initial teacher education; post-graduate education

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