

Riikka Vanhanen (Ed.)



# Export of Education

by Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences

*Reflections on best practices*

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PUBLICATIONS OF JAMK UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES 226

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REFLECTIONS ON BEST PRACTICES



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PUBLICATIONS OF JAMK UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES -SERIES  
Editor • Teemu Makkonen

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EXPORT OF EDUCATION BY FINNISH UNIVERSITIES  
OF APPLIED SCIENCES  
Reflections on best practices

Cover Photo • iStock  
Outlook • JAMK / Pekka Salminen  
Layout and printing • Suomen Yliopistopaino Oy – Juvenes Print • 2016

ISBN 978-951-830-436-7 (Printed)  
ISBN 978-951-830-437-4 (PDF)  
ISSN-L 1456-2332

DISTRIBUTION

JAMK University of Applied Sciences Library  
P.O. Box 207, FI-40101 Jyväskylä  
Rajakatu 35, FI-40200 Jyväskylä  
Tel. +358 040 552 6541  
Email: [julkaisut@jamk.fi](mailto:julkaisut@jamk.fi)  
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# ABSTRACT

Riikka Vanhanen (Ed.)

Export of Education by Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences

Reflections on best practices

(Publications of JAMK University of Applied Sciences, 226)

In recent years, many Finnish universities of applied sciences (UAS) have engaged in systematic development of their educational expertise and services by adapting them for global education markets. The export of education has been acknowledged as its own sphere of operations, which is not only reliant on top-quality education but also requires new skills and competences, as well as novel mindsets, from the actors in higher education institutions. This publication, initiated by the international committee of the Rector's Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences (Arene), gathers UASs' experiences of education export so far, while also providing ideas regarding future aims and expectations for operations in the field.

The articles in this publication have been drawn up by 52 education experts representing 13 Finnish UASs, as well as their important interest groups and cooperation partners. These articles not only provide thorough descriptions of the organisation of education export activities within the UASs' structures, they also describe the implementation and delivery of cooperation activities, solutions and services to customers around the world. Moreover, the texts indicate the various areas within which Finnish UASs have been able to productise and sell their education expertise and highlight the competences needed for such activities.

Keywords: Universities of Applied Sciences, Internationalisation, Education Export, Global Education, Education Expertise, Competence Development, Cooperation



# FOREWORD

## FINNISH UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES – INNOVATION AND INTERACTION IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY

In today's world higher education institutions and professionals around the globe are encountering a variety of similar challenges. Some of those challenges are what have been termed 'wicked problems', and learning and competences are also facing changes as the digital world develops. The relevance of higher education institutions is being reformulated based on the needs of future learners and international cooperation in higher education is a crucial element in dealing with this challenge. We need to learn from each other's experience and share ideas gleaned from various different education models, learning practices and the impact of higher education and research.

It is obvious that universities have an important role to play in solving these globally recognised 'wicked problems'. The need for professional higher education and multidisciplinary applied research expertise is particularly relevant when the content of learning and research work and traditions are in a state of change. A new society, new business areas and new kinds of work require new knowledge and competences that can be easily adapted to suit different situations.

The focus within the Finnish university of applied sciences (UAS) sector is, in particular, on professional competences and innovations. There are 26 UASs in Finland, working closely with industry, society and business. They are closely involved with the world of work, domestically and globally, and the link between professional learning, applied research and innovation is strong, with many UASs having developed new focus areas and pedagogical solutions to reach this goal in practice. These focus areas are presented and discussed further in a recent report entitled "Towards the World's Best Higher Education System" compiled by the structural development working group of the Rector's Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences (Arene).

This book is useful evidence of the potential of Finnish UASs in global higher education markets. The cases presented within give a rich overview of the possibilities that Finnish UAS professionals can offer to international agendas. The educational models used in UASs have already piqued interest, which in turn has led to practical cooperation, especially in Asia, Latin America

and countries in the Arabian Peninsula. In order to meet this new demand educational export is also being promoted at government level; from 1 August 2017 tuition fees for higher education will be launched for students coming from outside the European Union or EEA.

With this foreword Arene wants to encourage international actors to develop cooperation with Finnish UASs. We have seen how the strengths of Finnish UASs, such as close cooperation with the SME sector and entrepreneurial competences, as well as student-centred learning models, can benefit international higher education professionals, helping them to grow stronger. However, the main goals of such cooperation are to learn from each other, build new learning networks, and find solutions to better society. Arene hopes that this book will provide its readers with new ideas to achieve these goals.

Tapio Varmola

Chairman of Rector's Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences  
– Arene ry

# INTRODUCTION

# THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA

Jussi Halttunen & Teemu Kokko

Finnish universities of applied sciences are on the threshold of a new era; legislative changes and a drastic change in the general mindset in Finland have made it possible to start thinking about the export of education. Finland is generally well-known for its high-class and modern education (thanks PISA!) and now it is time to start reaping the practical benefits of that global goodwill. Finland is finally entering new markets where we certainly will face fierce competition from the established actors; nobody expects these markets to be a bed of roses, but it is certainly better to be inside and active rather than outside and passive.

Due to our history and high levels of regulation, there is understandably relatively little practical experience of the commercial export of university education in Finland. Some small projects have been carried out over the last 10–15 years but many of these have been based either on bilateral agreements or on development cooperation, and in most of those cases commercial and financial motives have been secondary.

The new possibilities put us in a quite new situation; we are expected to be able to take control of a new and complex area more or less immediately. Of course, some preparatory work has been done in our educational institutions, but now it is time to truly explore the opportunities available.

Universities of applied sciences have, generally speaking, reacted fairly positively to these new possibilities. They know that a lot of work is required and in many cases the present staff base must be reinforced by recruiting new professionals with backgrounds in international business. Internal systems and procedures have also had to be re-evaluated – to name just one example: the current long-lasting and rigid procedure of selecting students does not correspond to the needs of an international student market.

Being active in international business requires many things. At an institutional level having something to offer – both in terms of content and the supporting infrastructure – is key. On a personal level all actors have to have the necessary language and cultural skills, and some experience of the tough international education scene is also beneficial. Cultural understanding, tolerance and freedom from prejudice must be values held throughout the entire organisation.

In reality, most individual universities or universities of applied sciences are extremely small actors in the international education market; in practical terms

this most likely means that we are certainly going to see different forms of cooperation among institutions of higher education and other partners. Finland University – a joint effort between three Finnish universities: the University of Turku, the University of Tampere and the University of Eastern Finland – is just one example. Haaga-Helia, Laurea and Metropolia universities of applied sciences are also in the process of creating a jointly-resourced company for international export activities. In Jyväskylä the local university and university of applied sciences have engaged in fruitful cooperation as shareholders in EduCluster Finland Ltd since 2010, with the main products for education export in Jyväskylä being nursing education and operating K12 and vocational schools abroad.

When it comes to profitability it pays to be a realist. Initially, the general entry costs and costs related to the development of distribution channels tend to be high, and it is only over time that the profitability level will rise and actors will be capable of generating some much-needed additional profit. However, the general mental impact, the impact created through the expansion of the international network and – maybe most importantly – the motivation-boosting impact on the staff should not be underestimated. These new activities will explicitly or implicitly force us to re-evaluate most of our procedures and ways of organising ourselves.

This new era includes many fantastic possibilities and Finland can be part of the international education business, but nobody has ever claimed that this will be easy and we must be mentally ready for failures along the way. However, this new era also includes an element of positive motivation; we can offer even wider possibilities for our staff members and through international sales we can extend our international network. Paying customers can be anticipated to be more demanding and that fact alone will most likely have a positive impact on the quality of our service offering. The most remarkable achievements have only come about after people have stepped out of their cosy and secure comfort zone. It is quite possible that a number of years down the road we will be asking ourselves ‘why did it take us so long to get this business started?’

# EXPERIENCES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR EDUCATION EXPORT

Riikka Vanhanen

## TO NEW LEVELS OF INTERNATIONALISATION

In autumn 2015 the international committee of the Rector's Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences (Arene) carried out a survey on the development of internationalisation in universities of applied sciences (UAS). The aim of the survey was to map the current state of internationalisation in UASs by exploring what kinds of activities and development schemes were taking place within them. In addition to reporting on existing internationalisation measures, the survey urged the UAS respondents to put forward and conceptualise ideas that could be considered good practices and that could be shared with other UASs.

The ideas on development and operational models designed for enhancing the internationalisation of UASs were, indeed, many. The survey results, compiled from responses from 20 UASs, revealed that the institutions have put significant emphasis on enhancing internationalisation, both at a strategical level by drawing up definitions of measures and plans of action, and at a practical level by concretely supporting and developing student mobility, curricula and study practices, as well as strengthening staff training and partnership networks.

Amidst all the answers and reported practices gleaned from the survey, a recurring theme and an area of new openings turned out to be the export of education. The export of Finnish education expertise – and more specifically that of universities of applied sciences – was recognised as one of the most topical matters in the field of internationalisation. Concurrently, an array of essential building blocks for education export activities had been acknowledged within many UASs; developing educational concepts and service activities, as well as creating new working methods and staff competences, were considered important steps in enhancing the UASs' abilities to enter the global education market in a more target-oriented manner.

While some of the UASs are at the initial stages of developing organisational structures and practices for education export, others have been involved in several international cooperation schemes and education export projects for several years already. However, irrespective of the level of experience in the

field of education export, the UASs' responses in the survey indicated a shared understanding of the importance of cooperation between them. Whether referring to the capacity building measures in the planning and organisation phase, or to the implementation of projects and services, education export activities were considered an area where UASs could and should work together by sharing information and engaging in cooperation in different kinds of networks and consortiums.

This publication seeks to respond to the identified demand for cooperation. It serves as a concrete tool for Finnish UASs to share their experiences of and views on the export of education, to learn about others' undertakings and to develop new ideas and approaches for promoting activities, both in each UAS individually, and in collaboration with others. The publication provides a glimpse of the current state of education export activities within the UAS sector and by so doing, also sets a frame of reference for further discussions and ongoing development in the field.

## OVERVIEW OF EXPERIENCES GAINED AND EXPECTATIONS SET FOR EDUCATION EXPORT

This publication is divided into four main chapters, each of which explores the export of education from a different perspective. The articles in the different sections provide answers to a range of questions, with the aim of mapping what education export actually is: how is it done and by whom? What kind of expertise is transferred, where and why?

To begin with, the first three articles describe how education export activities have been acknowledged within and integrated into the organisational structures of universities of applied sciences. The chapter entitled 'Building Global Education Services' provides an account of the ways in which education export activities can be organised within UASs and what kind of prerequisites this entails. The articles written by Helli Kitinoja from Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences; Liisa Timonen, Harri Mikkonen and Helena Puhakka-Tarvainen from Karelia University of Applied Sciences; and Timo Juntunen from JAMK University of Applied Sciences serve as examples of the development and organisation processes implemented at the different institutions. Furthermore, the articles expose and analyse UASs' motives and reasons for engaging in education export, and suggest ways to develop current activities and business models further.

In the second chapter, the focus shifts to the content and competences of education export. The five articles in this section explore ideas regarding the

various kinds of competences needed in the global education market, both at organisational and individual level. In addition, the articles provide examples of cooperation models and structures created to facilitate education export.

The first article, by Krista Keränen and Kyösti Väkeväinen, describes a development project run by Laurea University of Applied Sciences, aimed at mapping the competences needed in education export. The next article continues with an example from Häme University of Applied Sciences, as Mona-Anitta Riihimäki, Janne Salminen, Tapani Pöykkö and Heikki Ruohomaa introduce the circular economy service concept and a way of implementing export of education as a long-term collaborative process. The third article of the chapter also looks into ways of engaging in education export as a joint venture as the writers, Helena Kautola, Tomi Hyttinen, Leila Kakko, Karoliina Väisänen and Jarmo Alarinta, describe the establishment of the national Education Export Network for Food Chain (FLEN). After that, the focus switches to more specific skills and competences and the article by Katri Luukka and Bilal Qudisat analyses business communication skills considered useful in Arabic culture. Finally, the last article of the chapter, by Seija Mahlamäki-Kultanen, Maaret Viskari and Tiina Mäenpää from Häme University of Applied Sciences, sets out a frame of reference for teacher educators' competence needs in global education.

The third chapter provides a broad review of Finnish UASs' undertakings in the area of education export. Whereas the first two chapters provided a wider framework for the activities by considering the aims and prerequisites of education export, the cases introduced in this chapter throw light on UASs' expertise through concrete examples. The education export cases from around the world not only shed light on the contexts and conditions of the activities, they also highlight the content knowledge and know-how transferred within these activities.

The first two articles describe education export experiences from China and are written by Milla Laisi, Sari Lappalainen, Leena Liimatainen and Jukka Mustonen from Lahti University of Applied Sciences and Kirsti Virtanen and Taru Kakko from Turku University of Applied Sciences. In the third article of the chapter, Johanna Heikkilä and Hannele Tiittanen share experiences of nursing education development and capacity building in a strategic partnership in Kazakhstan. After that, the focus in the two following articles moves to maritime education and education export initiatives in the Philippines and Namibia. The first case is introduced by Örjan Andersson and Per-Olof Karlsson and the latter by Satakunta University of Applied Sciences' Heikki Koivisto, Meri-Maija Marva and Juha Kämäri. The article by Miika Kajanus,



Antti Iire, Tuomo Eskelinen and Jyri Wuorisalo from Savonia University of Applied Sciences also describes experiences from Africa, this time focusing on the development and testing of an education export concept in Zambia. Lastly, the two articles at the end of the chapter deal with teacher education and cooperation in Latin America. Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences' experiences from Columbia are described by Jari Laukia and Irmeli Pietilä and Tampere University of Applied Sciences' account of Finnish–Brazilian cooperation has been drawn up by Sisko Mällinen.

Chapter four, the final chapter, goes back to the building blocks of education export by analysing some of the aspects that shape and contribute to the excellence of Finnish UAS education. Ideas regarding student participation and accounts of the unique features of UASs' master's degrees serve as examples of the know-how and expertise that can be utilised and further developed in education export activities.

Pauliina Savola and Anni Vesa from University of Applied Sciences Students in Finland (SAMOK) authored the chapter's first article, which deals with the role of students in education export. The second article deals with UASs' master's programmes and was written by Riitta Rissanen, Hannele Seppälä and Juha Viitasaari from the Rector's Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences (Arene). The third article of the chapter is a piece from the Embassy of Finland in Brazil, and includes practical, context-specific information and advice on operating in global education markets. It also provides encouragement by highlighting successful initiatives in Brazil and the potential for enhancing education export activities there. At the same time, the article, written by Marja Suhonen and Jarkko Wickström, serves as an important reminder of the need for long-term commitment to building up cooperation networks and relationships that is essential in education export. Finally, the conclusions sum up the measures taken in Finnish UASs in the development of education export activities so far.

## CALL FOR BENCHMARKING AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION EXPORT

The purpose of this publication is to compile Finnish universities of applied sciences' experiences of education export. Moreover, it seeks to shed light on the motives and goals of the activities, as well as on the premises and prerequisites for successful operations. The idea behind sharing good practices and lessons learnt in the development processes in different UASs is to enable mutual learning and offer objects for benchmarking.

However, parallel to the good practices and results, the texts also pose important questions and offer critical contemplations on the competence needs and possibilities of UASs and their staff for advancing initiatives in the field of education export. Accordingly, this publication seeks to challenge UASs to find solutions to identified problems and to look for novel ways of developing the export of education and internationalisation in general.

These articles, written by experts from various content areas and fields of study form a picture of the great extent and diversity of activities in the field of education export. At the same time, they provide a vantage point for observing the features of Finnish education expertise and know-how. In this sense, the publication can be considered useful not only for facilitating cooperation within the Finnish UAS sector but also for enabling international comparison and benchmarking.

Overall, it is hoped that the accounts of Finnish universities of applied sciences' views and experiences of education export thus far will stimulate discussion and development measures as well as new openings in the global education market in the future, too.

BUILDING GLOBAL EDUCATION SERVICES:  
OPERATIONAL PRECONDITIONS  
AND DRIVING FORCES

# TO NEW LEVELS OF INTERNATIONALISATION THROUGH DEVELOPING GLOBAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Helli Kitinoja

## INTRODUCTION

In the Strategy for the Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions in Finland in 2009–2015 (OPM 2009) higher education and expertise were seen as nationally significant exports, and the export of expertise and competence was one of the five main aims of the strategy. In 2010 the Finnish Government published the Finnish Education Export Strategy (OPM 2010) and three years later the Ministry of Education and Culture published an action plan to increase the export of education and expertise (OKM 2013). Finland's national Government Programme (VN 2015) also features commercial aims in the field of research, education and expertise and the latest policy paper, Roadmap for Education Export, released by the Ministry of Education and Culture offers an action plan for 2016–2019 for the export of expertise (OKM 2016).

In its International Strategy 2015 (SeAMK 2008) and main Strategy (SeAMK 2016), Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences (SeAMK) has also positioned the export of education and expertise as one of its aims. The aim of this is for SeAMK to have continuously increasing export of expertise activities in every educational field and in each focus area by 2020. The focus areas are linked to the food chain, health and wellbeing, energy-efficient and intelligent systems, new business concepts and entrepreneurship. Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences was a member of the Finpro Future Learning Finland (FLF) Network in 2011–2012, when the Network was established and at the end of 2015 its membership was renewed, with the Network also taking on a new name: Education Export Finland (EEF). SeAMK also participated in a pilot project concerning tuition fees for master's programmes in 2010–2014.

In 2014–2015 SeAMK coordinated a project entitled The Connections of the Food Chain from South Ostrobothnia to Europe, and one of the results of this project was a model for organisation of export of education and expertise activities in the Seinäjoki Region. The Networking Model was assessed as the best available model, based on a survey of SeAMK's partner organisations in the region. The export fields with the greatest potential were judged to be those focusing on the food chain and entrepreneurship (Korsbäck 2015;

Korsbäck & Peltola 2016.) In 2013–2015 SeAMK coordinated another project, this time entitled Conceptualization of the Business and Service Center of Latin America, the results of which are being utilised in the development of educational services. One result of the project was service packages featuring Latin American knowledge for the companies in the South Ostrobothnia region (Kitinoja, Mäkeläinen, Vallejo Medina & Virkamäki 2015). Both projects were financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Among Finnish universities of applied sciences (UAS), one third have been active in the export of education and expertise since 2010, but most UASs are still in the initial phases of these activities. Based on a survey for universities of applied sciences, the most important products in this sector are training for trainers, study visits and intensive programmes, consultation, tailor-made degree and double degree programmes and upgrading education. New innovations and individual profiles for UASs are also needed. Market areas where interest has been shown include China, India, Kazakhstan, Vietnam, Russia, South Asia and various African countries (Kitinoja, Perttunen, Räikkönen, Virtanen 2016.)

Different concepts are used in the fields where educational institutions and companies are trying to sell education and other expertise, and different stakeholders have different definitions and visions. In this article global education services also covers the concepts export of education and the export of expertise.

## DEVELOPING THE PROCESS OF GLOBAL EDUCATION SERVICES AT SEINÄJOKI UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

### 1. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Strategic decisions and management within the organisation are core elements when it comes to attaining positive results in the field of expertise export and global education services. The organisation must also have commitment, clear aims and human and financial resources (El Cheikh 2015, Kitinoja et. al. 2016.)

In September 2015 the Board of Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences decided to set up a two-year internal development project with the aim of strengthening global education services and the export of expertise. The preparatory work had already been carried out in former projects, and one of the first tasks was to describe the processes used by global education services at SeAMK. The organisational model also had to be clarified, although the final model will be decided based on the experiences of this two-year development

process. The highest decision making and steering body is formed by the president and management committee of Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences, whilst deans of the faculties are responsible for the preparations of export of expertise activities together with their academic staff members and the director of the development of global education services, whose role is to coordinate and develop export of expertise and global education services at institutional level. The working team for the implementation and development of global education services has been nominated and includes representatives from each faculty, the vice president, the marketing manager and the director of the development of global education services.

## 2. NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Strong and multidimensional regional, national and international networks and partnerships between educational institutions, companies and public administration are needed to achieve successful export of education and expertise, and business networks and personal contacts play an important role in exporting educational services (OPM 2010, El Cheikh 2015, OKM 2016.) Based on a survey carried out in 2016, Finnish UASs also recognise the importance of networks, strategic partnerships, consortiums, students and alumni in increasing exporting activities (Kitinoja et. al. 2016).

Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences has almost 200 partner universities spread across 52 countries, and utilisation of these contacts and strategic partnerships also is a possibility when it comes to developing global education services. Good cooperation with embassies and other organisations and networks is also important. Examples of the international networks SeAMK is involved in include the Health Africa Network, the eHealth for Regions Network and the Latin American Network. Important networks at national level include Finpro networks such as Education Export Finland (EEF) and Food from Finland, as well as the General Finland company network and partnerships with other Finnish higher education institutions. At regional level SeAMK belongs to the Team Finland South Ostrobothnia (SO) Network and to the Excellence Forum Network. Both of these feature organisations with a special expertise from the region, e.g. such as the Chamber of Commerce, Association of Entrepreneurs, Regional Council, Health Care District, SEDU Vocational School, Seinäjoki University Consortium and the City of Seinäjoki. Working together and sharing knowledge in these networks creates new service innovations and supports export activities.

### 3. SERVICE DESIGN BASED ON CUSTOMER NEEDS AND CO-CREATION

Customers, their needs and their expectations are the most important aspect of service design and product development, and in service design processes keeping a co-creation approach in mind is key (El Cheikh 2015; Keränen 2015; Kitinoja et. al. 2016.) Global education and expertise services can be developed based on competence in education, research and development, but also based on competence in management, administration and support services within higher education institutions. Quality labels, references and accreditation are also viewed as important in product development and marketing (Kitinoja et. al. 2016).

Seinäjäki University of Applied Sciences has set out its main product groups: tailor-made degree programmes, Open University studies, short and intensive programmes, study visits, training for trainers, tailor-made services integrated into the export activities of companies, evaluation and development services. The first experiences of the export of expertise have come from Argentina, Vietnam and Kazakhstan, whilst negotiations are ongoing in China and in Africa.

### 4. HIGHER EDUCATION – WORKING LIFE COOPERATION

Both higher education institutions (HEIs) and companies can gain extra benefits from cooperation in the field of service and product export. Internationalisation and the international business of the companies can increase by integrating global education services into the products of the companies, and HEIs can find new customers in global education markets.

Most companies in Finland are small and medium size companies, many of which do not yet have any international export activities, and this is the situation particularly in the region of South Ostrobothnia in Western Finland, where Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences is situated. In spring 2016 five universities of applied sciences signed a cooperation agreement to form the Food Learning Export Network, an aim of which is to work closely together with companies whose work is related to the food chain.

### 5. COMPETENCE OF STAFF MEMBERS AS A CORE ASPECT

If higher education institutions want to succeed in global education markets they need to educate their academic and support staff; new kinds of knowledge and competence are required, but at the same time, the competence and

connections of staff members should be utilised in developing export of education and expertise. Furthermore, HEIs should work together to combine their knowledge and resources to achieve better results in export activities; one example of this is exchange of knowledge and best practices in development of support services in the field of education and expertise export (El Cheikh 2015; Tekes 2015; Kitinoja et. al. 2016; OKM 2016.)

Seinäjäki University of Applied Sciences has begun orientation and education activities for its staff members in the field of global education services. Further education is needed in recognising and understanding the process of global education export, service design processes based on customer needs, and the co-creation approach in particular, as well as in the marketing and selling process. Increasing export of education activities also requires measures and knowledge to ensure the quality of education.

## CONCLUSIONS

There is a need for cooperation among Finnish universities of applied sciences and other stakeholders, such as companies and public organisations, and international strategic partnerships and networks should also be utilised. Through cooperation Finland can offer integrated services, concepts, high-level education and continuity to the international markets of education and expertise; exchange of knowledge and best practices can also save resources and offer added value for everyone.

Universities of applied sciences must change their stance from offering ready-made products to providing services and products based on customers' needs; co-creation, flexibility, continuous product development and service design are needed. Negotiations and meetings with partner universities abroad can also include market surveys, co-creation of joint products or marketing situations, and academic staff – as well as support and administrative staff – need preparation and training if they are to achieve new levels of internationalisation within universities of applied sciences.

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# LOOKING FOR RESULTS AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS – IS WORTHWHILE GLOBAL EDUCATION ONLY A DREAM?

Liisa Timonen, Harri Mikkonen & Helena Puhakka-Tarvainen

## GLOBAL EDUCATION AT KARELIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES IN SHORT

Global education at Karelia University of Applied Sciences (UAS) refers to chargeable education and expert services which are mainly targeted at clientele outside of Karelia UAS's international partner network. The idea is to concentrate on internationalising education as well as developing research, development and innovation actions within the partner network, and to identify the target groups with the greatest potential for global education elsewhere, to ensure clarity in relations and minimise the risk of misunderstandings. However, this distinction is not strict, as some partnerships do also include chargeable services – mainly in-service training for staff – which may be carried out when it is meaningful and beneficial for both parties.

## FIRST STEPS

Karelia UAS is still a relatively young actor in the field of global education. Its pathway into the field was opened up in the joint development project ISAT-EXPORT in 2011, where Karelia and Savonia universities of applied sciences worked together to strengthen organisational competitiveness, find markets and create products to meet the needs identified. Furthermore, the partners analysed development needs within their own export practices, support services, risk management and quality control. The greatest efforts were put into identifying potential fields of expertise that could be turned into products benefitting from high-quality Finnish expertise within education, as well as its well-known good reputation. Work was also devoted to creating networks in potential market regions, with a partnership with Shanghai Polytechnic University, for example, being created during that period; this partnership has since developed into one of Karelia UAS's key partnerships.

Following ISAT-EXPORT, the next project, KOLARI, was focused on quality and risk management within Karelia UAS's global education. The main result was a quality handbook – a tool which is still useful in developing practices.

Following KOLARI, Karelia UAS has continued the development process in its latest project, FEFE – Further East from the East, where the emphasis is on turning competence in active aging into a sellable product. The project has only recently been started and results are still to come, but the signs are already promising, especially as the project involves the local businesses dealing with health care services – if successful, FEFE might open great opportunities for North Karelian businesses and Karelia UAS.

## STRATEGIC GOALS

Even though a lot of work so far has been done with external project funds, the aim is to create sustainable and profitable global education services and well-functioning processes. Karelia UAS's strategy in global education is first of all to join forces and form networks with other Finnish universities of applied sciences and organisations, to ensure adequate resources, volume, expertise and references. However, Karelia UAS also develops small-scale training sessions for some partners to strengthen partnerships and create new expertise among all parties. In this article a case study looking at both approaches is provided. Finding the way to the Middle East discusses the first steps in creating a bioeconomy-related consortium in Jordan, whereas PedaCamp provides an example of a tailor made, small-scale, in-service staff training course for Chinese partners.

Karelia UAS has taken some steps on its path towards worthwhile global education; there have been some hardships on the way and road is not yet fully open, but the goal seems to gradually be growing clearer and we are confident about the future.

## HARDSHIPS ON THE ROAD – SOME PERSPECTIVES ON CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Global education is a challenging but fulfilling field to work in, but forms and practices are still being sought within Karelia UAS and more widely. Whilst rewarding, it is not always easy to make the processes smooth and well-functioning for one reason or another. Karelia UAS has analysed its pathway towards sustainable and profitable chargeable services and come up with a conclusion identifying the main needs for further development in the following fields: organisational arrangements, staff competences and partner consortiums. In the following chapters these are briefly reflected on, however the discussion in this short article is limited to some main points.

## ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Organisational arrangements in this article are discussed from the perspectives of practices in organising teams of experts. Agile practices and processes would be needed in organising staff teams for global education. However, this is often a great challenge in a higher education organisation, where teachers' workloads and resources should be defined well in advance; the structures are often inflexible and it might take too much time to bring together an adequate team of experts to meet the needs posed by the case. On the other hand, it is also difficult to book experts in advance, as such cases are still quite rare, volumes are small and there is always uncertainty as to whether the case will actually go ahead. Moreover, another challenge is related to the availability of time resources, as often the experts who would be needed for the cases are already dealing with several duties requiring specific expertise and therefore they cannot easily transfer these duties to colleagues.

The organisational arrangements are challenging and sometimes also demotivating for the experts, superiors and the staff on the whole – it is difficult to sell services without knowing for sure that the resources needed will be available if the deal goes ahead. However, starting from autumn 2016 Karelia UAS is applying a more holistic and target-oriented time management system which should facilitate more flexibility and significantly promote global education efforts.

## STAFF COMPETENCES

Being a trainer or a consulting expert in a different context calls for competences which are not self-evidently gained without training and support. Working in multicultural settings provides multicultural knowledge, intercultural competence and language skills, and it is important to be familiar with cultural contexts and communicational rules, at least to some extent, to be able to work effectively. However, intercultural competence and language skills are not enough: awareness of concepts and processes of diversity and inclusion, as well as understanding the blind spots we all have, are also crucial. This kind of understanding involves more than just knowing something about other cultures or good negotiation methods; this involves professional humanity – an ability to deal with other people in a way that promotes equity and participation, and at the same being able to act in a meaningful, professional way. Karelia UAS puts a lot of emphasis on staff development and, among other initiatives, is

creating mentoring material for staff members working in multicultural contexts. Furthermore, it is creating an open badge for multiculturally competent staff members to recognise and validate this expertise.

## PARTNER CONSORTIUMS

Finding the right partners is one of the key factors for achieving the goals of global education. Finnish universities of applied sciences, and in fact all Finnish higher education organisations, are very small players in the international markets. It does not make much sense to try to do things alone – we will all be too small if trade really starts to flow. Boosting team work with colleagues and joining and creating well-functioning networks have been placed high on Karelia UAS's priority to-do list. Besides creating meaningful consortiums, Karelia UAS also analyses its own partnerships to try to identify hidden potential for global education purposes that could be brought into the spotlight.

## ARE WE ON THE RIGHT TRACK – SOME OF THE LATEST CASE REFLECTIONS

### STAFF TRAINING FOR CHINESE PARTNERS

PedaCamp is a tailor made, in-service staff training product Karelia UAS has developed for its Chinese partners. This one-to-two-week intensive course implemented in Karelia discusses, in an interactive way, pedagogical approaches and practices applied in the education provided at Karelia UAS. A participatory approach and variation in the methods used enable experiential learning for the trainees, who also reflect on their own practices and share them in discussions and activities. Sharing and co-creation of understanding is fruitful both for the trainers and trainees; this brings joy to the classroom and provides meaningful learning experiences, enriching not only professionalism but also selfhood.

PedaCamp starts from the organisational level, describing the frameworks for teaching, learning and supportive services. The discussion continues during the training to classroom level and teachers' practices are reflected on from different perspectives, some of which also involve the students. PedaCamp is Karelia UAS's own small-scale product and it is growing to be profitable. It is easily organisable and the practices are flexible; furthermore, when organising PedaCamp, Karelia UAS also compiles its task forces for

global education. Many experts have the option to train to be a trainer working with a multicultural group at their home university, and they might be Karelia UAS's future global educators on a wider scale.

## CATCHING UP WITH THE MIDDLE EAST

One of Karelia UAS's latest initiatives in global education is building a knowledge sharing gateway to the Middle East, and especially to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, together with a Finnish consortium of educational, developmental and business organisations in the field of bioenergy. Jordan is a stable hotspot in the Islamic countries and very willing to evolve in cooperation with international partners. The strategic target areas for development include renewable energy sources and energy security, as well as health care and technology. Jordan has a vast number of higher educational institutes with wide international networks, but the secondary level of the education system is less structured. Jordan's universities attract crowds of international students, especially from former Soviet countries, thus internationality is taken into account well at universities and this also provides a smooth path for cooperation with Finnish actors.

Within the last few years, Jordan has become an appealing target country for global development activities and funds. Whilst the nation, which is home to approximately ten million inhabitants, is dealing with significant environmental and refugee challenges, it also offers a route into much larger markets in the Middle East. Getting into the market requires strong cooperation and will among Finnish organisations; individual universities of applied sciences and businesses are very small players, but as a well-targeted consortium, we will be able to find a way to establish collaboration. German universities and organisations have been very active in Jordan for decades already and have, for example, established the German-Jordanian University (GJU) in the capital. To our benefit, Finnish know-how seems to have a very good reputation in Jordan, at least in education and certain sectors of industry such as environmental management and cleantech. As a nation, Finland has not yet been active in promoting export or collaboration – the nearest Finnish embassy to Jordan is situated in Lebanon. Thus access into the market calls for a lot of legwork and network creation, both in Finland and especially in Jordan and more widely in the Middle East. Although not far from Europe, multicultural understanding and intercultural competences are key factors when planning cooperation with organisations in the Middle East. From students' and experts' point of view, the region might appear unstable and risky to work, study or even travel to; so one of the key success factors in creating a long-lasting global

education gateway is getting to know the culture and people. After succeeding with this task, the potential for capacity building, knowledge export and fruitful, long-term cooperation may be vast.

#### WHAT TO DO IN THE FUTURE?

Karelia UAS has set strengthening global education as one of its strategic goals for the years 2016–2020. This aim is closely interconnected with the internationalisation of the whole of Karelia UAS, involving development of international education and RDI, analysis and strengthening of selected international partnerships and development of multicultural and professional expertise amongst staff.

Support from presidential level at Karelia UAS and recognition in the key documents, strategies and annual agreements lead the way. One of the principles we follow is less is more – we concentrate on selected countries and organisations and do what we do in the best possible way. The roadmap to reaching the goal of worthwhile global education is starting to grow clearer; there is still a lot to do and there will probably be many hardships to confront, but it seems that we are on the right course!



# MEANS AND CONDITIONS FOR GROWTH OF EDUCATION EXPORT AT FINNISH UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Timo Juntunen

## INTRODUCTION

This article will discuss how the turnover produced by education export can be increased to account for up to 6–8 per cent of the university's total turnover, and what the preconditions for this are. The main purpose of this article is to fuel internal discussion within universities of applied sciences (UAS) concerning the financial goals of education export, business models for education export and the relationships between education export activities and statutory tasks. If the turnover generated by education export were at the same level as the turnover from RDI actions and services, it would constitute a significant function of a UAS, however, if it does not reach a similar level UASs might, in light of tightening budgets, lose interest in education export development.

## THE BUSINESS AREAS WITH THE GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR INCREASING EDUCATION EXPORT TURNOVER

Business areas and models suitable for UASs include, at the very least: international development consultation, education system development, operating colleges and having branch campuses abroad, strategic development partnerships with operators of HE and VET institutions and governments, and partnerships with Finnish export companies.

The turnover of further education can be also increased, however, programmes must be more scalable and virtual, utilising local trainers and the train-the-trainers model. Earning logics used successfully in other sectors, such as licensing and user fees, must be exploited to a greater degree than at present, and more attention must be paid to identifying solvent customer segments in the market. Dentists, airlines and private hospitals are examples of customer segments with financial standing identified by Finnish exporters, the Nordic Institute of Dental Education, Finnair Flight Academy and members of FinlandCare.

Donors of international development offer a wide spectrum of different type of business opportunities, but only with a deep knowledge of the market

and its competition conditions can customers be identified and business models suitable for the profile and strengths be applied. In Denmark, Aarhus Tech serves as a good example of an esteemed vocational school that has succeeded in combining development consultancy and internationalisation of the school. Aarhus has a professional team and the right tools for preparing proposals and managing projects, as well as a database to find experts and the relevant references, which are all necessities for success in this business.

In addition to this, governments and authorities fund education system development as well as development of other sectors in which human capacity building is essential. The value of these types of contracts, as in development consultancy, can vary from hundreds of thousands to millions of euros, but in these projects open public tenders are not always necessary. If a client can sign a contract with a service provider without tendering process, this is generally advantageous to the Finnish UAS.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia launched an extensive technical and vocational education development programme in 2012, the first and second phases of which were based on tenders for the successful bidders to operate in a total of 100 colleges around the country. In 2013 and 2014 UK training institutions and companies won operating contracts for 37 colleges through the tenders launched by TVTC and the College of Excellence. The total value of the contracts was over a billion pounds (FE Week 7.3.2016). Corresponding contracts for operating schools, based on the private-public partnership model, have also been signed in the Middle East by Qatari and Emirate authorities.

There are several models for running commercial degree programmes and having a branch campus abroad. A limited company established in the target country can operate a branch campus or it can be operated by a branch office, and a cooperation agreement with a local university or company provides the third option. Involvement of private sector and governmental bodies in branch campus projects should be discussed, as in the best case scenario, branch campuses can be a flagship of Finnish expertise in certain field, thus enhancing commercial relations and the national brand, as well as the business and image of the campus operator.

Acting as a strategic development partner for governmental bodies responsible for college network management and development constitutes one business area that is currently relatively unknown in Finland. The bid launched by the Saudi government in autumn 2014, with the aim of improving educational outcomes in the colleges operated by the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation, represents this type of business opportunity. In China,

educational authorities support Chinese universities running a degree programme or school jointly with a high-profile foreign university. JAMK has taken advantage of this business opportunity by establishing the Sino-Finnish Nursing School in 2014.

In several countries there are private investors establishing and operating universities with an interest in cooperating with a foreign university that is able to provide support in areas such as curriculum design and provision of training. The most natural market segment for UASs is practically-oriented universities, whose development they can support with a different offering in each development phase.

## COOPERATION BETWEEN EDUCATION AND OTHER EXPORT SECTORS

In 2014, University of Turku and Planmeca established a joint venture, the Nordic Institute of Dental Education (see [www.nordicdented.com](http://www.nordicdented.com)), as a further education arm for dental care professionals worldwide. The cooperation model includes elements that UASs can apply to cooperation with other companies. Public-private partnerships are one way of creating a competitive edge and increasing customer value. The case can be used as an example of a cooperation model between an education provider and a non-education export sector company that supports customers in the introduction of the Finnish technology it has bought and increasing awareness of the Finnish high-tech industry. Education exporters can enhance exports in other sectors and other sectors can create markets for education export. Finland can learn how to put this into practice from various good practices in use in Germany. For example, in the Dena programme (Dena 2013) a group of Kazak specialists were trained in energy efficiency and energy management, and since the programme finished its graduates have been running training sessions in Kazakhstan based on German standards and have used the German solutions and technology as examples of options available on the market.

Finally, yet importantly, UASs should be active in local and national innovation ecosystems, as well as cooperating with institutions developing solutions, products and services related to game-based and mobile learning and digital learning platforms – the fastest growing field of within the education business (The Roadmap for Education Export 2016, 8). Innovations and the basis for growth of the education sector lies in a "vital education export ecosystem" (ibid.).

## PRECONDITIONS FOR INCREASING TURNOVER FROM EDUCATION EXPORT

The following list of the 10 most important preconditions for growth of education export is not based on the scientific research, but rather an analysis drawn from our own practical experiences in the field since 2004.

### 1. REASONABLE BUSINESS STRATEGY AND MODELS

Without a reasonable export strategy and functional business modes, cost-effective education export development can be considered mission impossible. Kim and Mauborgne's Blue Ocean Strategy (2010) and Osterwalder and Pigneur's Business Model Canvas introduced in the book Business Model Generation (2010) serve as tools for developing business models and education export strategies.

The cornerstone of the Blue Ocean strategy is value innovation, combining cost reduction and increasing customer value in parallel (Kim & Mauborgne 2006, 33–39). The fundamental idea of the Blue Ocean Strategy is creating a competition strategy by deleting, reducing, highlighting and creating new factors in relation to the prevailing strategy profile in the market or business field (ibid. 51–58). Changing the boundaries of the business field to gain a comparative edge is one of the basic principles of the Blue Ocean Strategy, and means to achieve this include exploring several business fields in parallel, exploring supplementary products and services, and exploring functionality and attractiveness (ibid. 69–102).

On the basis of several indicators, the Finnish education export sector is lagging behind the leading countries in the field, in addition to which, the costs of Finnish expert services are higher than in most of the competing countries, and winning open tenders is challenging. Instead of always taking market structure and competition factors as given, Finnish education exporters should adopt a reconstructivist view of the market structure and seek to apply the Blue Ocean Strategy whenever possible (see e.g. ibid. 38–39).

Regarding customers, the first block of the Canvas model is, I believe, that institutional customers – in particular public ones – must remain the most important customer segment. The more the higher education institutions have the courage to establish branch campuses abroad, the more they manage to digitalise educational services, and the more attractive studies in Finland are in the minds of foreign university students, the more important a customer segment individuals can be.

## 2. STORIES, SELLING VALUE AND DIFFERENTIATION

UASs are able to increase sales by differentiating their offering, explicating customer value in an understandable way and interlocking national success stories with their products, services and solutions.

In the view of the former US ambassador to Finland, Bruce Oreck, Finns have a fair chance when it comes to creating successful products and companies, but their abilities in terms of storytelling are lacking (YLE News 20.11.2015). Ira Kalb, another US citizen, also lecturing at Aalto University, considers the roots of the problems in the Finnish economy to lie in poor marketing. According to Kalb, "[Finland] has been named a world leader in more areas. While that is clearly better, the knowledge and recognition of these accomplishments has not gotten into the minds of enough people around the world to make a difference for Finland" (Huffington Post 7.1.2016). The fact that Finland is a forerunner in many sectors and areas, a fact indicated by several comparative surveys, should be covered in national stories supporting education export and those stories should be an integral part of the sales pitch of education exporters.

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2010, 272) "the solution to price competition is to develop a differentiated offer, delivery, and image." As stated earlier, Finland possesses an excellent image, but there is still a lot of work to be done to gain the full benefit of this image. Finnish exporters can still improve their offering and the channels used for marketing, selling, delivery and service development. Productisation and differentiation are also among the key elements of a successful competition strategy for UASs.

UASs should also invest in seeking for long-term customership, which will make it possible to understand customer needs at an in-depth level and, vice versa, allow customers to learn the value of the Finnish offering for their local education system, training institutions and professionals. The best options for selling value (see e.g. Kaario, Pennanen, Storback & Mäkinen 2004, 60–62) lie with customers who are not always obligated to launch an open public bid.

## 3. RELATIONSHIP-BASED BUSINESS CULTURES

In many countries, business is based on a so-called relationship-based business culture as opposed to a transactional exchange – the dominating business culture in Western countries (e.g. Palmer 1997, 319–321). For this reason, without long-term investment in constructing personal relationships

with business partners, customers and other stakeholders involved in the buying process, potential exporters will be unlikely to obtain as strong a position as an education exporter in Asia, the Gulf countries, South America and Africa.

For instance, the Doing Business in China guide published in the UK contains the following advice: "In China, getting to know someone face-to-face is often regarded as the only way of finding out whether a person is trustworthy. In general, the Chinese set great store on building personal relationships before entering into a business partnership, often saying, 'Let's first become friends, then do business'." (Doing Business in China 2013, 162)

Education exporters need to be present in a more active manner in the target countries, with options for achieving this including affiliated or associated companies, branch offices, agents or local companies with whom they have a contractual arrangement.

#### 4. INNOVATIVE EARNING LOGICS

Franchising, licensing, usage fees and operation and management fees, for example, are earning models that could be applied to a greater extent in education export than they are currently. Deepening cooperation between education providers and providers of digital solutions and learning content, as well as between education and other export sectors could generate new earning models that bring a competitive edge for all business parties (see Education Export Roadmap 2016, 5). The fact that "technologies are changing the paradigms of demand and supply in many sectors, and thereby their earnings logic" was noted in Powering up Finnish cultural export (2008, 11), and this also holds true in education export. The sooner UASs engage in innovative earning logics, the better their chances of expanding education export within a 10-year timespan.

#### 5. PROFESSIONAL SALES ORGANISATION AND ORCHESTRATION OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

All UASs engaging in education export must have an organisation to manage international sales in order to facilitate a customer-driven selling process. The selling process must be managed by personnel specialised in selling expert services, and they should receive support in contractual issues and international taxation. Experts managing the content of proposals, as well as experts in mastering the local business culture and language, must be

at the disposal of tender preparation teams. An organisation culture and quality management processes must support professional customer-project management.

## 6. SUFFICIENT EXPERT RESOURCES

Expansion of education export turnover is impossible if only in-house experts are used. Recruiting experts with temporary working contracts from outside the UAS for projects as and when needed is a precondition for increasing turnover.

## 7. MEANINGFUL AND DIVERSE PARTNERSHIPS

According to Möller, Rajala and Svahn (2009, 7) "several researchers regard companies' capability to act as a part of networks, and to create own business networks as a new but an essential precondition of the success." The capability to create meaningful partnerships for each case is an absolute cornerstone of successful education export. Generally speaking, major private companies are good partners for open large-scale international tenders; private edutech companies can help in the digitalisation of training services and other UASs in securing sufficient of expert resources; and local training providers have a role to play in the localisation of services, keeping prices at a competitive level and ensuring sustainable benefits for the local system.

## 8. RISK MANAGEMENT AND ACCEPTANCE OF RISKS

Drawing up a comprehensive risk analysis and having a toolbox for risk management are necessities in the decision-making process for large-scale education export contracts. Meanwhile, acceptance of the fact that contracts may contain some risks that cannot be controlled completely is also key.

In 2013 the Haaga-Helia led consortium Saudi Finnish Group won a tender for operating a catering and hospital college in Riyadh; however an operating contract with a value of MEUR 30 was not, in the end, signed with TVTC, because not all consortium members were ready to accept all the risks the contract would entail (see e.g. Suomen Kuvalehti 28.6.2013).

Doing business did not turn out to be a bonanza for the British operators in Saudi Arabia either; student enrolment has been lower than predicted in the operators' business plans, and the costs resulting from operating colleges, initialisation actions and hiring faculty and other staff members could not

be cut accordingly (see e.g. FE Week 4.12.2015). Dr Ian Baird, former CEO of Pearson and Hertvec (Hertfordshire Vocational Education Consortium) assessed the situation as follows: "the size and complexity of this project could actually cause British state-funded colleges to go bankrupt, as they incur costs without getting paid for the resources they are providing" (FE Week 4.12.2015).

## 9. LINKING EDUCATION EXPORT AND STATUTORY TASKS

Through projects linked with undertaking statutory tasks, UASs can create meaningful local networks and publicise their expertise locally, at the same time as collecting references and gaining an in-depth understanding of the local business environment. All this will improve UASs' competitive position in education export markets.

## 10. EDUCATION EXPORT SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Functional "hard and soft education export infrastructure" constitute the last precondition for increasing education export. The former refers to ministries and institutions under ministries (Tekes, Finpro, CIMO, embassies and expertise programmes) (Juntunen 2010, 23–24), whose support is often necessary for education exporters to make significant deals with customers. Programmes and support modes provided by the hard infrastructure, in turn, constitute the latter. The Sino-Finnish Learning Garden concept, a MoU between China and Finland on strengthening comprehensive cooperation on education and CIMO's Asia programme are examples of the soft infrastructure. Development of education export infrastructure is not under the direct control of the UASs, but they must be capable of exploiting it to gain maximum possible benefit. Most activities described in the Education Export Roadmap (2015, 9–14) are already implemented or planned actions intended to reinforce the soft infrastructure. One of the newest elements of soft infrastructure is establishing the post of Ambassador for Education Export (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Press Releases, 8/22/2016).

## CONCLUSION

The following table summarises the main conclusions of the article within the framework of the Business Model Canvas, forming nine blocks. The main conclusion regarding customer segmentation is that although Finnish UAS are



permitted to charge tuition fees in accordance with the amended Polytechnics Act, public institutional customers will remain the most important customer segment in the coming years, at least if UASs do not radically expand their virtual offerings and aggressively establish branch-campuses abroad, which seems unlikely to happen.

TABLE 1. Summary of the key preconditions for education export growth				
<b>Key partners:</b> Meaningful and diverse local, international and domestic partnerships with private and public institutions	<b>Key activities:</b> Professional sales organisation professional project/service management team	<b>Offering &amp; value proposition:</b> International development consultancy education system development operating colleges and having branch campus strategic partnerships with operators of HE / VET institution / governments innovative private-public partnerships scalable and virtual courses utilising local trainers and train-the-trainers model stories, well explicated value proposition & differentiation	<b>Customer relation:</b> Personal relations and long-term commitment experts in managing local business cultures available	<b>Customer:</b> Institutional, mainly public, customers growing number of individual customers (university students, specific fields)
	<b>Key resources:</b> Available & motivated in-house experts effective use of external experts long-term commitment		<b>Channels:</b> Local presence (marketing and selling) use of external experts and digital solutions in service delivery	
<b>Costs:</b> Exploiting synergies between education export and statutory tasks decreasing cost levels by using local/international experts/partners and digital solutions approving/managing risks		<b>Revenues &amp; earning logic:</b> Earning logics based on external experts' daily fees projects with budget of hundreds thousands of EUR and beyond		

Without rethinking their offerings and moving into new business areas, Finnish UAS cannot radically increase their education export turnover. The turnover of further education can be increased by offering more scalable and virtual provisions, for example, utilising local trainers and the train-the-trainers model. International development consultation, education system development, operating colleges and having branch campuses abroad, strategic development partnerships with operators of HE and VET institutions and governments, and partnerships with Finnish export companies are examples of business areas where contracts worth hundreds of thousands of euros and beyond can be signed.

In customer relations creation and management UASs must rely on and use experts in the management of local business culture and invest persistently in building personal relations with key persons in the target countries, ensuring a presence – either their own or in the form of a local partner – in the target markets. Use of local, Finnish and international experts, as well as digital solutions in service delivery is necessary if UASs wish to scale their offerings and manage large-scale customer projects.

The majority of UASs do not have professional sales and service contract management units that are within the university and have functional collaborative relationships with heads of degree programmes, RDI and service unit heads, but which still retain sufficient independence. UASs must still work on capacity building amongst their staff and improve the quality of cooperation between education export teams and other teams. UAS can improve their competitive position in education export markets through linking statutory tasks and education export activities. By successfully completing RDI projects in education export target countries, UASs can create meaningful local networks and publicise their expertise locally, at the same time collecting references and gaining an in-depth understanding of the local business environment.

The best partnership strategy is most likely to involve establishing meaningful local, international and domestic partnerships with private and public institutions based on market needs, instead of setting up mixed and very restricted Finnish consortiums in advance.

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CONSIDERING COMPETENCES  
FOR EDUCATION EXPORT

# VIEWS ON COMPETENCE BUILDING FOR FINNISH EDUCATION EXPORT

Krista Keränen & Kyösti Väkeväinen

## INTRODUCTION

Finland appears to have one of the most advanced educational systems in the world; the teachers are skilled and the level of education is high throughout the country. Moreover, until 2016, when a new law was passed, the whole education system was free of charge for everyone, regardless of where they came from. The new law stipulates that, for example, universities are required to charge tuition fees to students coming from outside EU. Furthermore, the effective outcomes of the Finnish education system, such as having the all-time highest PISA score, being the best country for exchange students in Europe, or being one of the most innovative countries in the world have made the Finnish education system attractive from a business perspective during recent years. In short, there seems to be more and more international demand for Finnish educational services.

In Finland this demand has generated development activities among educational professionals for the productisation of Finnish educational services to better serve the demand. Laurea University of Applied Sciences, among other educational organisations, has found this to be a positive movement and has launched a development project to develop education export. One of the most important aspects of this project has been the mapping of the competences needed in the education export process, as the mindset among Finns regarding pricing and marketing Finnish educational services has been hesitant to some extent, primarily because the education system in its entirety had been free of charge until recently.

The development project is still a work in progress, but some initial results and frameworks related to competence building can be seen. Thus this article demonstrates the early results of this project regarding the competence building needed for education export. This paper is structured in the following way: first, a general framework for capability development and competence building in the organisation is presented. Second, the results from a workshop featuring a focus on competence building will be presented, and finally, conclusions will be drawn.

## INTRODUCING A COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

In this article we will focus on an organisation's competence development, based on the framework adapted from the human resources department at Laurea University of Applied Sciences, and we will apply this framework to education export. We will also discuss the framework and the competences needed from an education export perspective.

Competence development can be discussed from several different perspectives. Business organisations have put a lot of emphasis on developing individuals' (employees') competences and organisational capabilities to maintain a competitive edge. Now, because of the new law and business possibilities in the education sector, Finnish educational organisations are being forced to rethink both individuals' competences and organisational capabilities from a business perspective too.

Based on the framework, an organisation is formed of individuals with certain individual competences, as shown in Figure 1. These competences are based on the individual's knowledge, skills, experiences, attitude and personal networks. In our case we define knowledge as theoretical understanding of something, a skill is defined as the ability to apply knowledge in practice, an experience is defined as knowledge gained through practising skills and personal networks are defined as a concept of individual's regular connections with other individuals.

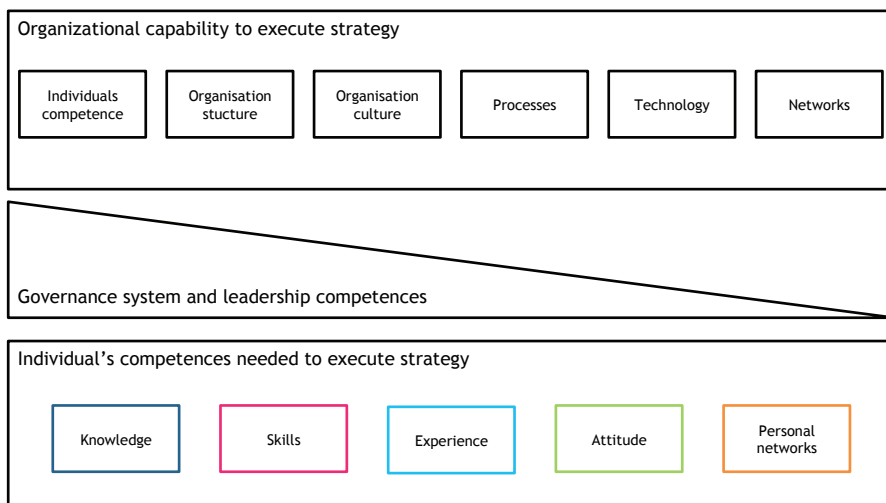


Figure 1. Competence and capability development framework

Based on our experience, these competences seem to influence to the execution of a strategy, and thus individuals' competences seem play an important role in building organisational capabilities. Moreover, if only a few people in an organisation have the competences needed for certain processes, this might pose a risk, and if some of the competences needed for certain processes are weak throughout an organisation, this can lead to an ineffective execution of the strategy.

Needs regarding individuals' competences depend on factors such as the strategy to be implemented. In the case of education export, understanding what competences are needed from both the customer's perspective and the supplier's perspective is fundamental if customer satisfaction is to be maximised. We therefore held a workshop to allow us to establish the sub-competences under the five main competence categories in the framework. The use of the framework allows an education export organisation to better identify its competence gaps and improve them in practice.

## PRACTICAL VIEWS ON COMPETENCE BUILDING

During 2015 Laurea set up a project to develop its organisational education export processes. Within this project a workshop was held to identify and prioritise individuals' competences for education export. The workshop was attended by 28 participants working in variety of positions at Laurea, and the initial results are presented below.

The workshop participants were set the task of brainstorming a market orientation, customer needs, products, competences and employee roles related to education export. As this article focuses only on the competences needed in education export, we will focus on presenting the results relevant to this.

Based on the results of the workshop there seem to be certain aspects of knowledge that are needed in order to succeed: ethical knowledge, cultural knowledge, knowledge of building policy, juridical knowledge, knowledge of how to handle processes, knowledge of content and knowledge of business logic. Regarding skills, certain skills were mapped: language skills, negotiation skills, pedagogical skills, skills in identifying a customer's needs, budgeting skills, and marketing and selling skills. The experience needed for education export was not precisely specified but there was a discussion around the idea that having experience of both international and business activities would be a strength. Additionally, in terms of having the right attitude, it was mentioned that persons included in the processes of education export need to have a



certain degree of courage and they need to be "mad" in a positive way. In this case this "madness" would mean that when you explore new things and there are no predetermined processes there will be surprises which you quite often need to quickly tackle without having any instructions thus your actions are savage. Moreover quite often these actions will take place outside Finland. Finally persons involved in education export need to be able to find and build networks (see Figure 2).

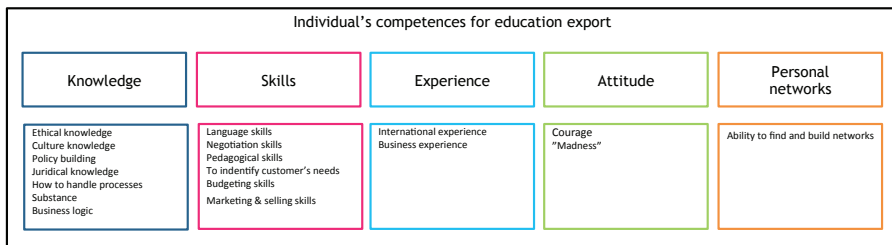


Figure 2. Individuals' competences for education export

After establishing what individuals' competences could be in terms of education export, it seemed important to gain a better understanding which of sub-competences are more important and which are less important. Moreover, it seemed important to discover which of these sub-competences are more important from a customer's point of view and which are more important from a supplier's point of view. In this article, by customer we mean an organisation or a person who is buying a service and by supplier we mean an organisation that is selling a service. As the project is still underway we have not had yet a full workshop to establish the answers to this, but we made an initial attempt to build a framework which could support categorisation of sub-competences, and we made also an attempt to roughly categorise the sub-competences (see Figure 3).

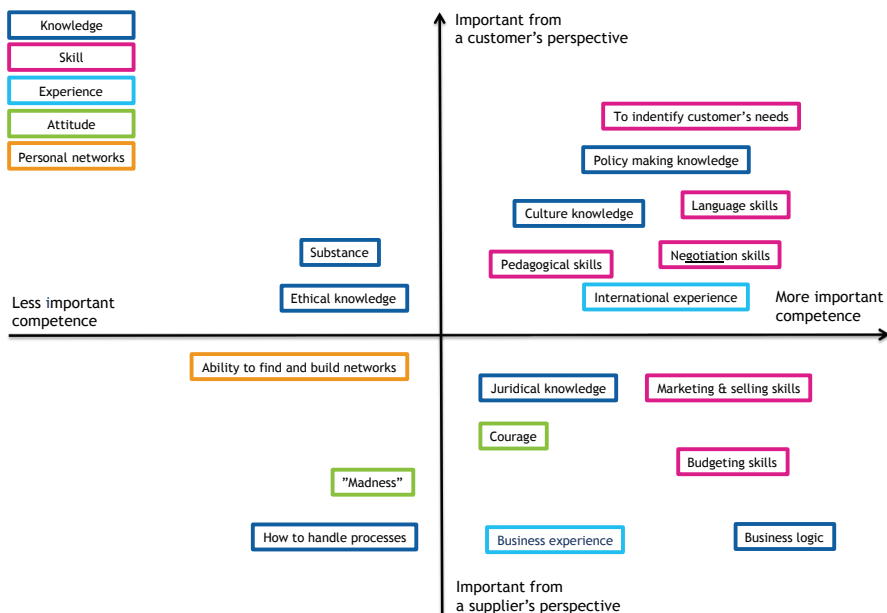


Figure 3. A framework for categorising sub-competences for education export

## CONCLUSION

To conclude, it seems that there are certain individual competences and sub-competences that employees working in organisations focusing on education export need to have in order to succeed. These competences seem to be focused around business knowledge and skills, cultural and language aspects, having strong communication skills and having a personal attitude that is predisposed to accepting certain kinds of uncertainty when encountering new things.

As this seems to be the first attempt to present ideas on how to map and understand the competences required from individuals to make education export a success in Finland, it would be beneficial to test the frameworks further and to collect data in order to map the current stage of employees' competences regarding education export and to draw up a possible competence development plan.

# BEYOND – ALLIANCE FOR KNOWLEDGE

Mona-Anitta Riihimäki, Janne Salminen, Tapani Pöykkö & Heikki Ruohomaa

## DIGITISING THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK) began efforts to export expertise in 2010. Professional teacher education, which has successfully built HAMK's reputation as a world-class expert, was chosen as the spearhead for the export of expertise. Now a new spearhead for the export of expertise – the circular economy – is being put together alongside teacher education.

The circular economy is a systematic, cross-cutting change in society, the realisation of which requires multidisciplinary expertise. The circular economy model is based on understanding regional strengths and conserving natural resources, as well as the sustainable management of their value chains. The circular economy alters the conventional idea of ownership and accelerates the development of new services and business models.

The circular economy—an industrial system that is restorative by design

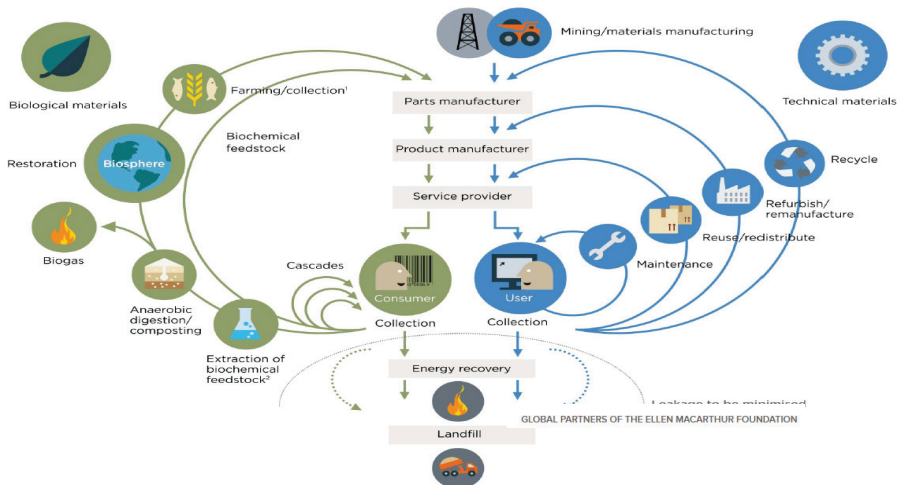


Figure 1. Mechanical and biological cycles of the circular economy (Ellen McArthur Foundation)

HAMK's view of the circular economy comes from its high level of expertise in the bioeconomy, which is based on the sustainable use of natural resources and resource-efficient primary production. HAMK also has a strong background in the post-processing of food, environmental technology and, in particular, exceptionally advanced expertise in waste and side flow management and processing.

HAMK's diversity as an educator and in the field of applied research offers a multisectoral, evidence-based perspective that promotes the transition to a circular economy and a bioeconomy. Professional expertise, technological fields, digitalisation, entrepreneurship, well-being and design serve as bridges, combining expertise in the bioeconomy and the recycling of industrial materials into a new kind of value-adding business, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

The cornerstones of exporting HAMK's expertise in the circular economy are:

- **Global need** – dwindling resource levels are forcing us to develop more efficient ways to use them. International financing opportunities.
- **National image** – Finland is known as a clean, innovative and high-technology country rich in natural resources.
- **EU policies on the circular economy** – this raises the profile of the issue and, in some cases, helps in obtaining funding from the EU.
- **National policies** – (bio and circular economy, digitalisation and clean technologies) show that Finland's national image and expertise in these areas are unparalleled in the world.
- **Finland's biggest bioeconomy educator** – a broad-based field of diverse technologies as well as bioeconomy and digitalisation research centres all serve to lay a solid foundation for expertise and applied research.
- **HAMK's operating area, business activities** and HAMK's regional development form a basis for 'references' and operational benchmarking.
- **HAMK's international partnership** network facilitates an understanding of cost-effective, local operating approaches, cultures and networks.

- **Permanent international and multidisciplinary cooperation** facilitates the creation of new innovations in different phases of the circular economy.

## BEYOND – ALLIANCE FOR KNOWLEDGE

”Beyond” is the name of the International Alliance of Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS). HAMK has established partnerships with Feevale University in Brazil and VIA University College in Denmark. The purpose of the alliance is the strategic development of UASs, as well as practical cooperation in education and research.

The form of cooperation used involves the building of an expertise pool, strengthening research activities, developing a common virtual campus, uniting UAS enterprise networks and exporting education.

The alliance enhances student and teacher mobility, and the aim is to establish international, network-based research units.

The expertise of the alliance forms a strong foundation for multidisciplinary research and development projects, of which the circular economy and wellbeing expertise are topics of common interest.

The circular economy is a very European concept: it is based on a European economic model and approach to thinking. Understanding regional challenges from an education export standpoint requires long-term work in the export target country. The UAS alliance, which operates all over the world in very different societies, fosters collective expertise, and the alliance also aims to lower the threshold when it comes to the export of shared expertise.

In addition to research cooperation, education related to the circular economy is developed in the UAS alliance. Realising the circular economy in society affects the development of business activities in the process of making them compliant with the principles of the circular economy, which, in turn, requires changes to operating approaches involving, for example, land use and legislation. Education ensures the availability of skilled employees who have a command of the circular economy model processes and cross-sectoral business. For them, a comprehensive understanding of the circular economy and bioeconomy value chains is a given. The joint development of education also allows for a partial joint realisation of the approach, thus refining circular economy thinking in each UAS.

## DIGITALISATION OF SECTORS NEEDED IN THE CHANGE

Technical development and digitalisation facilitate a transition to the circular economy. Digitalisation offers new opportunities for improving operational efficiency, thus promoting the creation of new circular economy services and business models. Thanks to more efficient processes, new markets, supply and demand are also created, accelerating the transition of society to the circular economy. Applied research, innovation and the implementation of digitalisation play a key role in the change, because customer needs and the business environment are constantly changing.

HAMK's strategy for exporting circular economy expertise is to engage in long-term cooperation with the customer in order to develop efforts related to realisation of the circular economy. HAMK's circular economy service concept does not just involve education or the selling of development packages, but rather it is a long-term collaborative process, in which understanding the customer's needs and situation, as well as providing benefit for the customer are first and foremost. This also makes it possible to develop the network expertise of both HAMK and the customer.

HAMK's approach is multidisciplinary and the circular economy is examined through the efficiency (value chain) and added value of the entire material flow, making use of the opportunities offered by digitalisation (Figure 3).

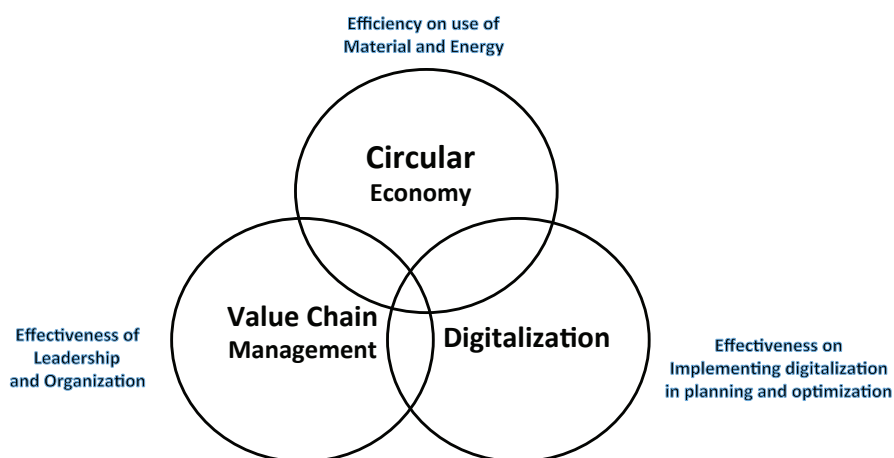


Figure 2. Future possibilities offered by digitalisation are used in developing the efficiency of the circular economy.

## SUMMARY

In addition to the multidisciplinary aspect of the circular economy, multicultural cooperation is also used in developing the export of education. Identifying customer needs and long-term cooperation, as well as management of the related supplier network play a key role in developing operational efficiency. In order to understand language, culture and local target markets, HAMK is building a co-operative network in target countries together with its international partners. These include, first and foremost, HAMK's international strategic partners VIA University College in Denmark and Feevale University in Brazil. Long-term strategic and operational cooperation make it possible to achieve the resource and applicability benefits facilitated by multiculturalism for education exports in target countries.

# BUILDING A NATIONAL EDUCATION EXPORT NETWORK FOR THE FOOD CHAIN – (FLEN)

Helena Kautola, Tomi Hyttinen, Leila Kakko, Karoliina Väisänen & Jarmo Alarinta

## INTRODUCTION

A national education export network focused on the food chain (FLEN = Food Learning Education Network) was founded in the spring of 2016 in Seinäjoki. The network will focus on the whole food chain, including the reuse and recycling of side streams. This article provides a description of the members of the network as well as the tasks and aims of working as a consortium to establish a new form of cooperation.

## BACKGROUND

Several education export networks have been formed recently in Finland to develop skills for marketing and building export learning packages, both for international and domestic markets. Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK) and Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK) participated in the Learning Bridge – education export network project for Pirkanmaa during 2012–2014 to learn about the system for establishing a consortium for education export. At HAMK experience has also been gained through professional development for teachers and pedagogical change projects (Ryymän et al. 2016). Several expert education short courses in industrial microbiology and hygiene have also been implemented in the Baltic countries.

Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK) has participated in several projects and consortiums on the topic of education export and food safety, some of which were implemented with other members of this consortium. In terms of the food chain, TAMK's expertise lies in Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) procedures and knowledge of hygiene management. TAMK is also coordinating an ERDF 2014–2020 funded project, Urban Agriculture – Resource Efficient Business Opportunities, which began in May 2015 with the aim of promoting business opportunities for urban agriculture in the Tampere Region. The kind of urban agriculture dealt with in this project would meet the requirements for low-carbon and energy-efficient food production, more resource-efficient nutrient use and challenges



related to the welfare of urban citizens. Knowhow concerning the possibilities and threats of professional urban agriculture will be increased through this project, which works as an innovation platform for different urban agriculture solutions. The project is being implemented through cooperation between TAMK and an NGO, along with numerous collaborative entrepreneurs, urban agriculture farmers and authorities. The results of this project can also be used in education export.

JAMK University of Applied Sciences (JAMK) provides education services globally by offering tailor-made programmes to customers and by engaging in development processes in partnerships with vocational and higher education institutions. Cooperation is also implemented with other organisations both in the public and private sectors. JAMK's products and services cover all the study fields offered within its different schools.

JAMK has been participating in projects concerning research exchange and nutrition, and one of the latest projects it has been involved in was Food4Growth project, funded by the Nordic Councils of Ministers. The overall purpose of Food4Growth was to establish a network to connect researchers in the Nordic countries and China in order to advance research and education within the areas of public health nutrition and clinical nutrition. The establishment of the network will contribute to the development of new, evidence-based interventions and innovations in the area of food service provision in public hospitals through strengthened research cooperation between Denmark, Finland, Norway and China. The network will aim, in the future, to harness the potential of hospital food and nutrition services to create value in terms of healthy and sustainable food production and consumption.

Savonia University of Applied Sciences (Savonia) provides education services through tailor-made programmes on topics such as water safety, the food chain, livelihood support / business concepts in agriculture, farm product development, food systems and laboratory analyses. Savonia has implemented programmes in locations such as the Republic of Kosovo, where training of 27 agricultural specialists was carried out in 2011–2013, with both students and stakeholders assessing the project as being very successful. The students' satisfaction was evaluated using a web questionnaire and the stakeholders' satisfaction through six focus group discussions organised in different parts of the country. Up to 90% (n=27) of the students found the training beneficial for their future career and all students were satisfied with the training.

Seinäjäki University of Applied Sciences (SeAMK) participated in the operation of the Future Learning Finland network in 2011–2012. The University

was involved in development cooperation projects implemented in Albania, Kosovo, Uganda and Kenya, and the education service strategy report was completed in 2015 by the University Consortium of Seinäjoki. In the first stage of the planning report, the organisation of the education services was designed, with a network model chosen as the organisation format. The region of Southern Ostrobothnia has been profiled as an expert in food systems and entrepreneurship, so the education service themes to be covered were chosen in the key relevant fields for the region.

## FOUNDING THE CONSORTIUM

In the autumn of 2015, SeAMK held a workshop to study the possibilities for working on education export together with several universities of applied sciences and research centres, as well as companies and other education institutes doing work within the field of the food chain. At the meeting a consensus on forming a consortium was reached and a decision to draw up a memorandum of understanding based on the results of the workshop was made. The first steering board meeting was held on 12 September 2016. After the workshop, each institute compiled their own relevant expertise, as well as any existing tailor-made packages for educating different types of organisations as samples. These were discussed at a second workshop, in order to establish which cooperation packages for expert education would be used in marketing and for all parties to learn from the expertise of the other institutes.

The first to sign the consortium memorandum were Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences Ltd, Häme University of Applied Sciences Ltd, JAMK University of Applied Sciences Ltd, Savonia University of Applied Sciences Ltd and Tampere University of Applied Sciences Ltd. A national consortium on food chain expert education was founded in April 2016, and will later be expanded to include research institutes, universities, adult education institutes and companies, according to the needs and wishes of the clients.

## INITIAL PERFORMANCE

The atmosphere within the consortium has been very positive from the beginning. A framework for the work has been identified and a network has been created to perform as a tool for cooperation. The next steps for the consortium will be:

1. To find financing. The consortium will try to apply for financing to build up its business plan.
2. To make pilot proposals. China was an initial target due to existing cooperation.
3. To widen the network. Based on the first workshops, the membership base will be widened to include research organisations, entrepreneurs and other organisations.

## BUSINESS PLAN FOR THE CONSORTIUM

The consortium began to form its business plan using the Business Model Canvas. We identified customer segments, such as the food industry and hygiene and safety authorities, as well as what kind of value will be added. The main focus will be on food safety in the food chain and tools to create healthy and safe foods. Trust and safety in the whole food chain is to be built up in the target countries, which will also require involvement with equipment and detergent suppliers and machinery and construction operators in order to establish a more complete package to sell.

## THE MAIN STEPS

In the food chain consortium, the main steps will be:

1. To understand the background and needs of the client
2. To produce relevant marketing and sales material
3. To identify the consortium members and the opportunities the consortium can provide
4. To build up an efficient, flexible and confident action output
5. To build up overall supply chain management that reaches the customer.

With these methods the consortium will be able to create additional value for the client's business.

## THE KEY RESOURCES

The consortium discussed different resources including personnel, financial and material resources, and the variety of resources is wide within this consortium, which will make it easier to find resources for the outputs offered

to clients. The connections with authorities and foreign sales contacts must start on a positive note, and in this respect some mandates have already been issued. Marketing and selling require more effort and innovation.

## THE READY, ON-HAND PRODUCTS

The consortium planned to start collaboration with targeted short courses lasting for 2–3 weeks. The clients, for instance in Asia, could be authorities, industry or other organisations. Longer courses, such as BSc or MSc level programs, will follow later when the needs have been identified.

During the workshops, an area common to the participants was found to be hygiene education, with all members of having slightly different angles regarding the aim: food industry, nutrition, food microbiology, cleaning etc. The education level of the Finnish Hygiene Passport, the qualification necessary to prove ability to work within hygiene regulations, and the Finnish Oiva-system, which provides inspection reports on safety and hygiene levels, gave a good start for collaboration on putting together a course package. The package will be formed in a way that allows all members of this consortium to share their knowledge and expertise to build a high quality education export product. The product will be based on well-known, high quality, safe food products like dairy, meat and convenience foods, and reliable delivery systems, as well as quality raw material, sustainable side stream utilisation and recycling systems.

Working as a network makes the education export more powerful in terms of high-quality education, brings together a variety of experts to build a high-quality product and gives support to each other when working side by side abroad. It provides a brand and gives a new meaning to ‘Finnish food education export’.

Working as a network makes the education export more powerful, brings together a variety of experts to build a high-quality, sustainable product and gives security in working side by side abroad. It provides a brand and gives a new meaning to ‘Finnish food education export’.

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# BUSINESS COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN ARABIC CULTURES

Katri Luukka & Bilal Qudisat

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this article is to propose a number of ideas and strategies regarding business communication skills that may prove useful in Arabic cultures. The Gulf area countries: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, as well as Iran, are interested in developing their educational systems, and in the Gulf area there are good opportunities for education export for those who have a good knowledge of Arabic business know-how. This article focuses on three main topics: effective business communication skills, cross-cultural communication and business communication skills in Arabic cultures.

## EFFECTIVE CROSS-CULTURAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Communication in and around business organisations has changed due to the new technologies, the demand for intercultural communication skills, the changing personnel–organisation relationship, and the global nature of organising (Waldeck et al. 2012). Waldeck et al. (2012) analysed 347 articles published in issues of ten different magazines during the period January 2005–June 2010, and as a result of their research, they found six business communication competences that offer important perspectives in the contemporary, changing world:

1. Relationship and interpersonal communication, which assists individuals in initiating, maintaining, or disengaging from inter-organisational and external relationships, for example: civility, conflict management, small talk, conversation management and rapport building.
2. Mediated communication, which assists individuals in using communication technologies effectively and appropriately, for example: online interaction etiquette, online social networking skills and willingness and ability to engage in online training and learning.
3. Intergroup communication, which assists individuals communicating within and across groups, for example: intergenerational communication and cross-cultural sensitivities.

4. Communication of enthusiasm, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit, which assists individuals in expressing enthusiasm and passion for their jobs, companies, products and ideas.
5. Non-verbal communication, which assists individuals in managing a diverse range of non-verbal behaviour important in the workplace, for example: time management, use of space and dress codes.
6. Speaking and listening, which assist individuals in public presentations and active listening tasks in the business context, for example: facilitation, public speaking and listening to others' ideas.

These six communication skills are important, but they alone are not enough for effective international business communication; there is also a need to look at the issues relevant to the cross-cultural context. Shah (2004) considers the interviewer's role in the cross-cultural context, highlighting that more detailed factors like age, gender, language, nation, region, faith, social background and knowledge status should be taken into account in a cross-cultural context. Furthermore, the following six stumbling blocks are also represented as elements of a cross-cultural context:

1. assumption of similarities
2. language difference
3. non-verbal misinterpretations
4. preconceptions and stereotypes
5. tendency to evaluate
6. high anxiety.

Ahmed (1993) emphasises that Finnish and Arab cultures are very distant from one another. Furthermore, the Arab countries are far from homogeneous; while the Arabs may be among the most racially diverse, loosely defined people, a sense of deep affiliation to one cultural heritage seems to run deep. By contrast, Finland represents a fairly distinctive and relatively isolated national group; six hundred years of Swedish domination, followed by over a hundred years of Russian domination did not dilute the Finns' sense of national identity (Ahmed 1993, 149–150). The differences between Arabs and Finns should not be ignored, as they can have an important impact on intercultural communication.

Ahmed (1993) has compiled the following division of items that also relate to communication between Arabs and Finns.

Situation	Finns	Arabs
Objectives	Calculated Differentiation	Social Interaction
Communication Medium	Visual	Verbal
Organization	Formal, Functional	Informal, Interpersonal
Negotiations	Planned Agenda	Getting To Know You
Response to Problems	Impersonal/ Direct	Personal/ Indirect
Managing Differences	Immediate & Direct	Camouflaged & Indirect
Attention to Details	Precise	General
Procedures	Start Soft	Start Hard
Decision Criteria	"Rational" "Objective"	Social Relations
Time concept	Punctual	Relaxed
Behavior	Generally Formal	Formal At Beginning
Social Interaction	Only After Task	Central At All Times
Privacy	Strictly Observed	Often Not Observed
Decision making	Decentralized	Centralized

## HOW TO COMMUNICATE WHEN DOING BUSINESS IN AN ARABIC CULTURE?

The authors of this article have created a framework for business communication skills in an Arabic culture, presented below. The perspectives presented in Waldeck et al.'s (2012) research into effective business communication skills, Shan's (2004) article on cross-cultural context, and Ahmed's verification of Arabic and Finnish intercultural communication all contribute to the framework. The following ten proposals for business communication skills in an Arabic culture are also based on the knowledge and experiences of this article's authors.

1. Finns are direct because the Finnish language lends itself to this, and this does not change when they use a foreign language. Finns should try to be a little more indirect. Otherwise they may offend Arabs, who do not necessarily express their feelings overtly. Finns may not even recognise that something is wrong and this might affect the business relationship. This should be particularly noted in new relationships.
2. Finns should carefully consider their own business English language skills, as there can be disadvantages associated with an inadequate knowledge of the language. It is always politer to do business in Arabic with Arabs.
3. Formality is important in Arab Countries, so being too informal should be avoided, as it will not be forgiven easily. Initially it may be useful to observe

- how the other party behaves and use this as guidance. If there are several Finns in a party, it might even be a good idea to be formal within the party.
4. In negotiations Arabs value good preparation. Hesitation or showing a lack of confidence should be avoided, instead being prepared and able to answer questions are in a key position. Unprofessional behaviour can damage an image.
  5. If there are a number of Finns involved in the negotiations, the roles and tasks must be agreed on precisely. For example, in Finland the managing director might be present only to listen, but in Arab countries he/she takes part in the discussions and draws the conclusions. Finns should remember this and not take too casual an approach.
  6. Multicultural negotiations should always be taken at a slower pace than those within only one culture, and it must be taken into consideration that misunderstandings are possible, and perhaps even likely.
  7. A basic knowledge of Islamic culture is key, including elements such as Sunday being a working day and Friday being a holy day. In addition, women do not shake hands with men unless the man initiates it, men and women should both adhere to formal dress codes in business situations, and the older someone is the more respected he/she is.
  8. Good online communication skills are advantageous (for example using video conferences, chat facilities and social media) and modern technology should be used as much as possible as part of international business. However, even though modern technology is useful, it is not the best solution for building up trust at the beginning of business communications with other cultures. A lack of or weak non-verbal communication can lead to misinterpretations, which does not promote cross-cultural business communications.
  9. Never evaluate, make assumptions of similarities or assume that there is any truth to stereotypes while doing business with other cultures. Each culture has its own advantages and disadvantages, which means that global business will be more rewarding if an overall cross-cultural approach is adopted. Differences between the cultures should be accepted, and in turn people from other cultures will also be culturally accepting.
  10. The recent terrorist attacks in Europe are creating anxiety within global business, especially in the Gulf area, and we should all show that terrorist attacks of any kind are unacceptable and an insult to humanity regardless of country or culture. However, we must be aware that situations may change quickly and be prepared to carry out a risk analysis and reconsider the business opportunities in locations in which we have interests.



## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, this article has presented effective business communication and cross-cultural communication skills that can be applied in the context of an Arabic culture as proposals for Finnish education export companies. The ten proposals regarding business communication between Arabs and Finns are useful for those who do not have business experience in the Arabic countries, as trying to ignore or minimise cultural differences in a cross-cultural communication situation will rarely end well. Indeed, many barriers to intercultural communication are due to ignorance of cultural differences rather than a rejection of those differences, and it is a fact that better language skills and understanding of cross-cultural differences facilitate communication, especially in business situations.

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# DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS' COMPETENCES WHEN WORKING IN TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION

Seija Mahlamäki-Kultanen, Maaret Viskari & Tiina Mäenpää

## INTRODUCTION

Finland is well known internationally for the prestige of its education and the high levels of competence amongst educational staff. There is widespread international interest in Finnish education and many countries and organisations want to learn from Finnish experiences. Internationalisation of education, and especially higher education, became a global phenomenon a long time ago, but transnational education in the Finnish context is only a fairly recent dimension in the internationalisation, international cooperation, and interaction between universities of applied sciences (Machado dos Santos 2000, 6–8). By definition, transnational education can bring diversification of income, reputation and brand; new research initiatives; increased tolerance of diversity; innovation; mobility and projects; and new viewpoints, and is targeted outside of Finland (Opetus ja kulttuuriministeriö 2010). The service providers of transnational education, such as Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK), utilise their accumulated competence and experience, as well as productisation (Koulutusviennin tiekartta 2016.); thus such efforts are not only commercial ventures, they also help to develop the ethos, processes and competence of the entire university much more holistically. However, as this phenomenon is still in the development phase, we still need to analyse and conceptualise the competence needs of the experts working in HAMK's transnational programmes and courses.

HAMK recently passed an international audit and specifically requested feedback on its Global Education services from the international audit team. One of their recommendations was that experts are provided with the necessary competence on a broad scale (Campbell, Karjalainen, Lorber, Milta, Tanskanen, Mustonen & Auren 2016, 61). HAMK recognised this need some time ago, and initiated the accumulation of information, knowledge and human intellectual capital by conducting evaluations and research, collecting data through surveys and interviews, and forming and re-forming teams and networks on specific topic.

HAMK is currently proposing – together with four other universities of applied sciences: JAMK, Haaga-Helia, Oulu and Tampere, as well as a

number of universities and other stakeholders – a new specialisation course to be included in the national education provision to guarantee the quality of transnational education provided by Finnish institutions at a global level. The competence needs frame of reference presented in this article is one key result of the long-lasting, knowledge-building development process.

## GLOBAL EDUCATION AT HAMK IN BRIEF

The Global Education services at HAMK aim to provide a range of programmes and services to meet the needs of life-long learners around the world. The clientele includes governmental and regional development organisations, higher education institutions and vocational education providers, other educational organisations, companies and businesses, and individual students and professionals. We are specialised in professional development programmes tailored and contextualised in cooperation with client organisations and programme participants. Global Education at HAMK operates in conjunction with HAMK's four research units, which concentrate on strengthening regional, national and European competitiveness.

On a global scale, professional development programmes for teachers initiate a tremendous amount of interest in teacher education providers from Finland. Universities of applied sciences, such as those in Häme, Jyväskylä and Tampere, cooperate and pool together experts and design programmes that have become solutions in educational reforms.

## TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DRIVES FORWARD EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

The drivers for educational transformation can be traced to the competence needs of the 21st century workplace, which affect the content and assessment of education, delivery methods, and institutional cultures, as well as significantly altering the role of the students and teachers (Hainline et al. 2010). These competence needs include, according to the World Economic Forum, complex problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, people management and emotional intelligence, to name a few (World Economic Forum 2016).

National governments look internationally when attempting to locate professional teacher development programmes aligned with their own policies and frameworks, and which meet the needs of the teachers and are effective in delivering impacts and results. The opportunities for professional learning should extend far beyond just short courses; they should be a combination

of formal, non-formal and informal learning, giving teachers enhanced career prospects. Teachers should also be encouraged to implement and experiment with newly acquired ideas in their own context, ultimately resulting in teachers inspired to undertake further professional growth (European Commission 2013). The impact of the professional development programmes can be seen in the transformation from a teacher-centred to a learner-centred approach in competence-based educational delivery, diversification of learning environments physically and digitally, diversification of assessment methods, collaborative and active learning, growth of teachers' professional identities and network building, and changes in institutional cultures (Hainline et. al. 2010).

The provision of the high-quality, competence-based, transnational programmes described above requires specific and complex competence from Finnish teacher education experts. HAMK has been developing and researching innovative arrangements for transnational teacher education programmes for the past four years together with international partners. Through this process, HAMK aims to guarantee high-quality, tailored programmes, and ensure that its own experts are ready to work with adult learners from all corners of the world. The frame of reference entitled *Teacher educators' competence needs in global teacher education* illustrated below is the first attempt to analyse what competences Finnish experts need, and the new specialisation course mentioned above aims to support the professional development of our experts.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SERVICE DESIGN STUDY

This study is based on an anticipation study focusing on future teacher educators' competence needs and work in 2025 by Mäki, Vanhanen-Nuutinen, Guttorm, Mäntylä, Stenlund and Weissmann (2015), commissioned to be undertaken by five Finnish universities of applied sciences (HAMK, JAMK, TAMK, OAMK and HAAGA-HELIA) by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. The original study consisted of three phases of iterative cycles. The first cycle consisted of five workshops, each of which hosted a total of 65 representatives from different stakeholder organisations. The workshops each produced a chart of the change dynamics, their likeliness (strong–weak) and significance (critical–not critical) to teacher educators' work in the year 2025. The research group constructed future scenarios and assertions and put these to an expert panel at the teacher educators' national seminar. The panel was participatory in nature thanks to the utilisation of an online discussion wall and was also videoed. All the data was analysed by a research group, which then

formed a change-dynamics chart and five final scenarios. The second phase was a workshop attended by professionals from all Finnish vocational teacher education organisations, where they placed the content on the scenario charts. In the final and third phase, all the data was combined and analysed to create the final scenarios, the vocational teacher educator profiles, a description of a normal working day, and a description of the competence needs of the vocational teacher educators.

It was logical to take the frame of reference as a platform for a transnational education competence needs analysis, as the original frame of reference had already highlighted transnational education and efficient processes (Mäki et al. 48–49). Mahlamäki-Kultanen, based on interviews with HAMK's Global Education customers and teacher educators, contextualised and operationalised the needs to create a more targeted and concrete competence description level. The other authors provided feedback on this, and it was then presented to representatives of all the universities of applied sciences listed above, as well as four universities and four global education enterprises in a virtual workshop. They were given the opportunity to provide feedback on each item, and rate its importance in the global context. The feedback confirmed the final result presented in Table 1 and verified its relevance for teacher education practices.

## RESULTS

After the workshop with the representatives from the world of work, four universities and five universities of applied sciences, the frame of reference for the competences needed in transnational education was formulated into Table 1. Although the frame has been designed using experiences from teacher education, it can be applied in other fields as well.

## A FRAME OF REFERENCE FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS' COMPETENCE NEEDS IN GLOBAL EDUCATION

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TABLE 1. A frame of reference for teacher educators' competence needs in global education	
<p>Area of competence of teacher educators in Global Education</p> <p>Note: In this frame, "Global Education" term refers to programmes and courses provided by HAMK Global Education</p>	<p>Criterion for the level excellent</p> <p>The teacher educator</p>
Pedagogical competence	<p>is able to plan, implement, evaluate and develop personalised learning processes for foreign paid customers and customer groups participating in teacher education processes both abroad, in Finland and on-line</p> <p>is able to support a foreign customer during their preparation and participation in a Finnish teacher education process</p>
Building and communicating a global education mind-set and a chosen strategy	<p>has the ability to communicate, as part of their teaching work, in their work organisation, regionally and internationally, about the chosen strategy and products in a way that will strengthen the positive image of the own organisation, Finnish teachers and Finnish teacher identity</p> <p>is able to motivate themselves and activate new teachers and staff members in own organisation to participate in global education with an entrepreneurial mind-set</p>
Management and leadership of teaching and competence	<p>is able to analyse the situation and possible development needs in the potential customer organisation and based on them, suggest educational solutions</p> <p>knows how to build learning environments (physical, virtual, social, psychological) for the paid international teacher education process, optimising the expenses and benefits of the process with regard to customer expectations, (quality, impact, success and prestige) and participants' learning and wellbeing</p> <p>is able to work as part of teams on international-level</p>

Facilitating personalised solutions	<p>is able to utilise the global education processes' non-formal, informal and formal learning possibilities cost-effectively in a manner that best supports the customers' needs and skills</p> <p>has the ability to improve one's own learning in the global education context in a goal-oriented and documented manner</p>
Workplace network competence	<p>is able to recognise, innovate and implement synergic solutions for global education activities and the related processes that will create a competitive edge for companies and educational institutions</p>
Multicultural competence	<p>is able to take part in global teacher education activities, identifying differing policies, approaches, concepts and the importance of cultural differences with regard to them as well as constructing new products and sales based on the differences</p> <p>is able to act functionally and professionally in global teacher education using the English language, and has an ability to acquire command of the English terminology used in the target country in question</p> <p>has a sufficient command of the basics of the language spoken in the target customer organisation and country so as to be able to communicate on matters related to the bought global education product</p>
Building learning communities	<p>has the ability to build a learning community that will support the participants and their home institutions to guarantee both the short- and long-term learning and impact as well as after-sales activities</p>
Optimisation of learning resources	<p>is able to identify new possible customer groups, niche areas and innovate alternative forms of funding for global teacher education activities, to give valid reasons for funding to different actors and implement education activities so that they meet with the profit expectations of financiers</p> <p>is able to plan, implement, evaluate and develop global teacher education so that it is linked as effectively as possible to the education provider's other processes (student recruitment, guidance, education, graduation, recruitment)</p> <p>has the ability to share his/her own competence with other global education actors in the own organisation and to learn from others all the while renewing and developing activities</p>
Substance-related competence	<p>is able to compile and analyse information in connection with the own subject matter nationally and globally to support his/her own teaching, product development and professional development.</p>
Other objectives of an international organisation	

It has been proposed that the specialisation course for teachers who work in transnational education consists of three modules, which are combined based on the frame of reference.

## DISCUSSION AND PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE

The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture aims to guarantee the quality of the transnational education provided by Finnish higher education institutions by commissioning the specialisation course described in Table 1. According to research, the quality of transnational education is one of the key areas in need of development globally. The development of professionals' competences against contextualisation of learning outcomes requires diverse perspectives on what education quality is in transnational education (O'Mahony 2014, 16–17).

HAMK is going to develop and use open badges for the development of its own organisation in order to validate existing competences among professionals, based on their experience and learning in the global context. Digital open badges can be used to motivate teachers, as a pedagogical tool, as a signal and as credentials (Ahn, Pellicone & Butler 2014, 3–5).

Furthermore, the frame of reference can be used as a freely available competence analysis tool for professional development in organisations providing transnational education. With the tool, the professionals and their superiors can consider whether an individual or a team is willing and competent to undertake this challenging work; not all are, but for those who are, it can open up interesting work opportunities and numerous career paths. The frame of reference is also a good starting point for competence assessments within organisations. It can be beneficial in recruiting new employees and in career development discussions for formulating career development plans. Employees themselves can assess their competence in relation to the areas of competences formulated in the frame of reference when they are planning the launch of transnational activities or when implementing programmes.

Transnational education creates new possibilities for teachers, as well as visualising teachers' competences in universities of applied sciences. For professionals, such programmes and courses create an opportunity to gain international academic experience, which can further career development and help to build the reputation of the institution in the international education market. Simply put, transnational education strengthens relationships and understanding between different countries (Margine & Gibbs 2009, 82–99).



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CASE STUDIES OF FINNISH UNIVERSITIES  
OF APPLIED SCIENCES IN THE FIELD OF  
EDUCATION EXPORT

# EDUCATION EXPORT EXPERIENCES FROM CHINA: A PREPARATORY STUDIES MODEL

Milla Laisi, Sari Lappalainen, Leena Liimatainen & Jukka Mustonen

## INTRODUCTION

Globalisation has led to the increased internationalisation of education (Altbach & Knight 2007). This phenomenon has also been observed in Finland, as the Finnish education system is thriving at a global level. Good PISA-rankings, the high educational levels of teachers and equality within the education system have drawn attention in Finland and abroad (Crouch 2015; Sahlberg 2015; Schatz 2015), with the Finnish system even being described as a "model of excellence" (Sahlberg 2011) and a "miracle" (Niemi, Toom and Kallioniemi, 2012). In recent years, Finland has taken the first steps towards launching its own education export, with the objective of becoming one of the leading actors in the field, together with Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom, whom are considered to be the first active education exporters. (Schatz 2015.)

In order to utilise its good reputation, the Finnish government has launched various measures to join the field of education export, however, the task ahead is a demanding one, as Finland is a newcomer in this field. The current strong actors have long-running experience of higher education export, whereas the emphasis in Finland has been mainly on primary education, with higher and vocational education left to one side (Sahlberg 2015; Schatz 2015). One reason for this might be that Finnish universities rarely appear in the league tables of top universities. However, Finnish higher education is gaining ground; its most important asset is its high and constant quality of learning. The Finnish education market has also gained attention because tuition is free, even for students coming from outside the European Union. (Nieminen 2015.) According to various studies (see for example Nieminen 2015), this is one of the reasons 'the Finnish higher education market has attracted international students, regardless of the country's demanding language, culture and climate conditions. As Carrington, Meek and Wood (2007) highlighted, the education export market is highly competitive among English speaking countries.

The situation in the Finnish higher education sector is set to change in autumn 2017, with the country following in the footsteps of several other European countries (such as Denmark, France, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom) and introducing tuition fees to non-EU / EEA students instead.

Finland's motives for moving towards commercialised higher education have been analysed and are believed to include the increasing global demand for high-quality education, as well as the need for new income sources for the Finnish economy and the various higher education institutions (Nieminen 2015; Schatz, 2015).

## EXPERIENCES FROM THE CHINESE MARKET: A PREPARATORY PROGRAMME FOR CHINESE NURSES

Lahti University of Applied Sciences (Lahti UAS) started operations in China in 2011, after the University was contacted by a Chinese businessman who saw many possibilities in combining the Finnish education system and China. As paying for education is the norm in China (Li 2007), his idea was to sell Finnish nursing education to Chinese markets. As the degree program education could not be sold due to Finnish legislation (Nieminen 2015), Lahti UAS decided to offer a three month further education program for the Chinese nurses, whilst at the same time the programme acted as a preparatory programme for those wishing to study in Finland.

After the pilot programme, based on programme evaluations Lahti UAS created an enhanced model for the preparatory programme. The target group was still Chinese nurses, but in this model the nurses studied for six months in China, after which, if the student successfully completed their studies, they would be accepted as degree students at Lahti UAS and have the opportunity to graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing. The programme was intended for nurses already in possession of diploma or bachelor's level nursing education from an institution in China. Furthermore, their English skills had to be at level B1 (Common European Framework), and both their English language skills and their ability to study and participate in the programme were tested in the entrance examinations.

The purpose of the preparatory programme is to improve participants' English and give them sufficient skills in Finnish, in order to be able to graduate with a Finnish bachelor's degree. The studies consist of courses in English language and academic writing (10 ECTS), Finnish language (10 ECTS) and nursing studies (7 ECTS), making up 27 ECTS in total. The students who successfully complete the preparatory programme are accepted as degree students at Lahti UAS's Faculty of Social and Health Care.

The Chinese partner of Lahti UAS has been responsible for recruiting candidates for the programme, as well as arranging the teaching facilities in Beijing and helping with practical issues. The first group of nurses (nine students)

came to Lahti in August 2014, with the second group (18 nurses) arriving in January 2016. In essence, the students in the second group were the first ones to complete the whole preparatory programme in China as planned. Currently the third group of students is undertaking the preparatory programme in China, whilst the first students who started their studies in 2014 will graduate in autumn 2016, with some already having been successful in finding work in Finland.

After having some successful experiences with the nursing programme, Lahti UAS decided to expand the operations to include its Faculty of Business and Hospitality Management and the International Business degree programme in 2015. The expectations were fairly positive as the University's Chinese counterpart estimated that at least hundred applicants would participate in the first round of entrance exams, but the reality was somewhat different. Lahti UAS has now organised five entrance exams in Beijing, and the number of participants has been relatively low. The first three students were chosen for the preparatory programme and started their studies in August 2016, meaning that the first International Business students studying via this path will start their studies in Finland in January 2017.

## CONCLUSIONS

China is a large country with a lot of potential for education exporters. Based on Lahti UAS's experiences, all means that will streamline the students' journey from Chinese culture to Finnish culture will be beneficial for the process of settling into Finnish society. Finnish pedagogy differs from Chinese, which means that the students also need to learn how to study in the Finnish way, so the preparatory programme has been a good stepping stone for Chinese students on their journey to becoming degree students in Finland.

The previous years have taught Lahti UAS's staff a lot about the Chinese education market. The main challenges faced have to do with applicants' poor English skills and recruiting candidates for the programmes. Naturally, the fact that all the main, established education exporters (Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom) are active in the Chinese market, poses challenges for Finnish actors; for example, the fact that English is not the native language of Finland can be considered a drawback. However, Finland is known for its clean air, nature and safety, which can prove to be attractive for many families of potential students.

Although there are various challenges, the Finnish higher education sector has a lot to offer Chinese students. The forthcoming tuition fees will change the environment, but it will take few years to see how much this will influence

the larger picture. Lahti UAS has considered several possibilities in the Chinese market and the direction of future developments is more or less clear: we want to increase our partner network in China and become an even more desirable destination for Chinese students.

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# USING A SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIP TO BOOST THE EXPORT OF EDUCATION – TIANJIN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AS A CASE STUDY

Kirsti Virtanen & Taru Kakko

## INTRODUCTION

Turku University of Applied Sciences (TUAS) is one of the largest Finnish universities of applied sciences, with 10,000 students and 700 experts. TUAS's vision is to be an internationally esteemed institution of higher education, making a positive impact on the competitiveness and wellbeing of Southwest Finland. Studies at TUAS are working life oriented, combining theoretical studies with professional skills. At the core of all activities is innovation pedagogy, a new approach to learning developed at TUAS; innovation pedagogy emphasises the RDI and working life viewpoints, and thanks to this approach, TUAS graduates are independently minded professionals with excellent international and communication skills.

## TUAS'S MOTIVATIONS FOR EXPORT OF EDUCATION

Since 2010, Turku University of Applied Sciences has been striving to develop the export of education as part of its international activities. In addition to economic reasons, education export motivators include the need to increase the skills and expertise of TUAS staff, promotion of TUAS's RDI activities, support for regional development in the form of joint export projects with companies in Southwest Finland, and the objective of increasing the international attractiveness of TUAS.

The international contacts of TUAS's staff have played a major role in the development of education export. Over the past 20 years, international cooperation and international project activities at TUAS have grown significantly and long-term international cooperation relations have opened the doors to the education export.

In addition to the core tasks of TUAS, the development of education export has required new kinds of activities, such as the establishment of export processes, analysis of the target markets, creation of an expert register, design of networking activities related to export, and increasing the



international business and intercultural skills of the staff. In all development activities, TUAS has emphasised a customer-oriented approach, teamwork and multidisciplinary.

The most significant task in the development of education export over the past few years has been the definition of the TUAS's core competencies, where research and development and educational innovations have been seen as the basis for international business. From the beginning, innovation pedagogy has been defined as the main TUAS export brand. Another important task has been the productisation of TUAS knowhow and its crystallisation as a customer product, as well as selection of target countries.

TUAS is an active participant in the national network of Finpro's Education Export Finland programme. Regional networking has also been strong as TUAS promotes education export with other educational institutions in Southwest Finland, through a consortium called FinnWayLearning ([www.finnwaylearning.fi](http://www.finnwaylearning.fi)). TUAS's aim has been to operate together with companies and other organisations in geographical regions which are important for Finland's foreign trade, and especially for Southwest Finland.

## CHINA'S EDUCATION MARKET

China is one of the most important cooperation partner countries outside Europe for all TUAS faculties. From the beginning, one of TUAS's main education export destinations has been China, and specifically Tianjin. Located next to Beijing, Tianjin is one of China's largest cities and a major port city on the Hai river and the Bohai Gulf of the Yellow Sea. Tianjin is nowadays seen as the growth centre of northern China, as the Shanghai region was in the 1990s.

Long-term international cooperation relations have taught us that operating in China requires active building of long-term networks, as well as formal contractual relationships. A great support in the development of international business has been the City of Turku, whose cooperation with Tianjin City began in 2000 when a cooperation agreement was signed. Turku–Tianjin sister city relationship has been a good basis upon which to expand cooperation with different organisations and companies. The major industries in the two regions are the same: shipbuilding and logistics, food and agriculture, electronics and telecommunications, environment and energy, biotechnology, and health and wellness.

The management bodies of the City of Turku are strongly committed to cooperation with Tianjin, and the City set up an office in Tianjin in 2012.

This office passes information between the Turku region and Tianjin area companies and public organisations, and helps with the emergence of new businesses and research and educational cooperation, for example. The Tianjin office has also assisted TUAS in the creation of contacts and other hands-on activities.

Tianjin has been an important educational cooperation area for all TUAS fields of study. TUAS has a number of partner universities in Tianjin and cooperation has covered both teacher and student exchanges, as well as joint projects and expert seminars. Teacher and expert exchanges efficiently promote research and development projects between Finnish and Chinese universities. Tianjin–Turku cooperation networks have created potential in various fields for the diversification of activities and the strengthening and consolidation of cooperation between universities and local businesses and organisations. This has strongly contributed to the initiation of education export.

## JOINT PROGRAMME WITH TIANJIN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

One of TUAS's partners in Tianjin is Tianjin University of Technology (TUT) which was founded in 1981. This multidisciplinary university has 16 faculties and units on two different campuses, 16,000 students and 600 staff members. Higher education is provided in almost exactly the same fields as at TUAS: engineering and technology, natural resources and the environment, social sciences, business and administration, natural sciences, cultural studies and humanities. The cooperation agreement between TUT and TUAS was signed in 2012 and since then delegations from both institutions have regularly visited each other and student and teacher exchanges have been carried out.

In spring 2015, Turku University of Applied Sciences signed a visiting student agreement with Tianjin University of Technology's International College of Business and Technology to offer an annual fee-based study programme for third year TUT students on the Bachelor of Business Administration programme, majoring in entrepreneurship. The first group of TUT students will arrive in Turku for one academic year in autumn 2017.

The studies they undertake at TUAS will be included in the students' degree in their home university, and the study programme has been designed based on the needs of TUT, focusing on subjects such as sales, finance, innovation competences, digital business, project management and customer projects. The curriculum utilises innovative teaching methods, giving the students an

opportunity to practise entrepreneurial skills by selling and marketing in the same way as they would in real life, and the Chinese students will work in an international and multicultural team together with TUAS students.

In many cases, innovation is a prerequisite for entrepreneurship, and a fruitful environment for innovation consists of individuals working together on the same problems, sharing knowledge and combining different points of view and approaches (Penttilä & al. 2013).

Turku University of Applied Sciences offers different learning environments in which the TUT students can study subjects related to entrepreneurship. BusinessAcademy is an extension of the innovation pedagogy approach and is based on student-owned cooperatives where problem-based learning, real-life projects and the changing role of the teacher come together in an inspiring learning environment (Kallio-Gerlander & al. 2013). According to Wai Mui Yu and Wing Yan Man (2007), their findings indicate that the co-operative method is one of the best ways to practise entrepreneurship education.

This form of studying creates both challenges and opportunities for teaching staff and students, and is a very different experience for students with a traditional classroom background. The major issue is the element of surprise; when what is to be learned is defined by actual projects from actual companies, it is impossible to fully plan when and where learning will take place, and in this kind of learning environment, the students learn to not fear the unexpected. (Kallio-Gerlander & al. 2013). Furthermore, entrepreneurial learning motivates students to take initiatives and responsibility for their own actions, and they learn with support from other students, learning together by interacting with each other. (Kallio-Gerlander & al. 2016)

The visiting student programme with TUT is a very important and beneficial form of cooperation for TUAS and Southwest Finland, with the students at TUAS being able to study in very multicultural teams and learn about different business cultures. Given China is the second largest economy in the world and is increasingly playing an important and influential role in the global economy (World Bank 2016), we need to increase our business knowledge concerning the Chinese market. This new form of cooperation allows us to extend and deepen cooperation with TUT, as well as to create new business connections and opportunities for our students and the companies in Southwest Finland.

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Tianjin Eye, a 120-metre tall giant observation wheel built above the Yongle Bridge, over the Hai River in Tianjin. Photo: Anu Härkönen



Delegation from Tianjin University of Technology visiting Turku in May 2016. Photo: Taru Kakko.

# KAZAK-FINNISH PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPING NURSING EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

Johanna Heikkilä & Hannele Tiittanen

## INTRODUCTION

This article provides a report on a capacity building partnership between the Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kazak medical colleges and universities and Finnish universities of applied sciences (UAS), JAMK and Lahti UAS in particular.

Internationalisation is one of the strategic priorities set for higher education by the Finnish Government and the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland (Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö 2016; Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö 2013). Finnish universities of applied sciences have been profoundly committed to the Bologna process, with a key example of this being the genuinely competence-based bachelor's and master's degree programs that have been implemented over the past ten years. The quality systems of all the universities of applied sciences passed the audit carried out by the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre in the first decade of this century (see karvi.fi). European Union recognised the intensive investment made by JAMK UAS in internationalisation in November 2013, when JAMK received a gold Erasmus Award, awarded for staff mobility and quality in higher education institutions in Europe. Lahti UAS also has a strategic aim of strengthening its position as a contributor to internationalisation in the Lahti region. With the intention of building up their international campuses to enhance international student exchanges and boost staff prospects for international collaboration in education and research in their fields, both JAMK and Lahti UAS have, over the last 20 years, offered several international study programmes taught in English.

## BUILDING THE TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY AMONG PARTNERS

The representatives of JAMK and Lahti UAS visited Kazakhstan for the first time in October 2012, as members of a governmental delegation led by Mr Alexander Stubb, then Minister for European Affairs and Foreign Trade of Finland. Cooperation with Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development (MOHSD) in

Kazakhstan began immediately after the visit. Our Kazak partners had a very clear view of what they wanted from Finland, and the MHSD representatives, together with JAMK and Lahti UAS, then drew up a roadmap for collaboration. Through the involvement of the highest leadership from the very beginning in planning, the common pitfalls of building a partnership that is limited in scope or between individual experts or departments was avoided (Hamrita 2012).

The first collaboration where Finnish expertise was incorporated was the updating of the Kazak educational state standard for nursing as a specialism (Order of the MOES 2013). Our role was to facilitate the competence-based curricula reform and support the development of training to correspond to the needs of the developing primary health care system in Kazakhstan. Numerous agreements were signed with Kazak medical colleges, and JAMK and Lahti UAS supported the establishment of wide-ranging commitment to a long-term partnership. The collaboration was not limited to just education but instead also allowed for best practices from clinical practice in health care to be shared. Several training events were arranged in Astana and a number of primary health care doctors and nurses visited Finland to observe the contemporary health care services provided here.

## PLANNED COLLABORATION FOR 18 MONTHS

During the period March 2014 to June 2015 Finnish experts from JAMK UAS, Lahti UAS, Häme UAS and Laurea UAS participated in the World Bank funded project Kazakhstan Health Sector Technology Transfer and Institutional Reform. The objective of the consultancy project Nursing Care Development and Improvement was to provide technical and methodological assistance to the MHSD in nursing care development and improvement. An educational program leading to an applied bachelor's degree in nursing was developed and the pilot started (Order of the MOHSD 2014b), the capacity of medical colleges' faculty staff was increased through several training events focusing on competence-based pedagogy, and a study of professional competencies of medical college and university nursing graduates was conducted. (Heikkilä et al. 2015). Working with an open mind, free of preconceptions, using evidence-based knowledge and respecting cultural differences gave us the chance to earn the trust of those we were working with. This work gave us the opportunity to learn about and understand the health care system and the professional role of nurses in Kazakhstan, in comparison with the international context. It also gave us the opportunity to critically reflect on Finnish nursing and nursing education practices.

## JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A PARTNERSHIP PLAN

One of the stages recognised as central to the success of these efforts was the joint process of planning the educational partnership (Wanni, Hinz & Day 2010). In spring 2014 we were involved in designing the Comprehensive Plan of Nursing Care Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan up to 2020 (Order of the MOHSD 2014a). The goal of the nursing reform is to increase the functional efficiency of the public health system through reform of nursing care and creation of new competences of nurses in accordance with both the modern challenges society faces and international requirements. In this plan, problems were identified, expected outcomes established, preparation of regulatory documents started and indicators defined. The plan was published at the Nurses Day's conference, and we had the privilege of witnessing the establishment of the Kazakhstan association of nursing professionals.

The next step in this joint strategic planning was the development of the Roadmap for the Modernization of Nursing Education in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2016–2019. In accordance with this plan several actions have already been developed: the assessment of upgrading 16 medical colleges to higher nursing colleges, updating the applied bachelor's educational standard and new fast track training, as well as the academic bachelor's educational standard and corresponding fast track. It can be concluded that in spring 2016 all the actions set out for the collaboration had been realised within the set timeframes by JAMK and Lahti experts.

## STRONG COMMITMENT AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

As Finnish partners, we have shown our commitment to the partnership by obtaining external funding for the collaboration. The KZ-FI Modern Nursing Education (MNursE) higher education mobility consortium, accredited by the EU's Erasmus Plus programme, was established in autumn 2015. The Erasmus Plus programme aims to strengthen collaboration between Astana Medical University, Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University and the Kazakh Medical University of Continuing Education and JAMK, Lahti and Häme UAS in order to develop Kazakh nursing education at the higher education level, and through this also support reforms to nursing in Kazakhstan. The mobility consortium is targeted to ensure the quality of the exchange by providing the necessary experts and facilities for Kazakh students and staff coming to Finland. An important goal of this programme is for JAMK, Häme and Lahti UAS, as a



consortium, to establish better possibilities for improving and developing their own international processes for cooperation with countries outside Europe, especially in Central Asia, as well as learning from their internationalisation practices. Sharing information between the consortium partners provides greater benefits than any single university could attain individually.

Strategic partnerships, if executed successfully, can accelerate development and improve competitive positioning (Frost and Sullivan). The Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development has set an aim that each medical university should have one international world-class strategic partner. On 2 September, JAMK and Lahti UAS signed agreements for strategic partnerships with Astana Medical College and the Republican Higher Medical College in Almaty. This is yet another step forward in the Kazak-Finnish Partnership for Developing Nursing in the Republic of Kazakhstan.



Astana, Kazakhstan. Photo: Johanna Heikkilä.



Workshop for Nurses in Kazakhstan. Photo: Johanna Heikkilä

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# NOVIA UAS ENTERING NEW MARKETS IN THE MARITIME FIELD – A CASE STUDY

Örjan Andersson & Per-Olof Karlsson

## INTRODUCTION

Finnish universities of applied sciences are increasingly striving to increase their exports, and there are many reasons for this. Naturally, this is a potentially a way to strengthen the financial basis of the university, especially in times of governmental cuts, however gaining international influences, collaborating with those in the world of business and securing human resources development are other reasons. At Novia University of Applied Sciences (Novia UAS) we emphasise our ambition to have cutting edge technology and competence, which requires involvement in global competition.

Novia UAS provides maritime education at bachelor's and master's level in Turku, Finland. The education we provide builds on a tradition started in 1813, which makes it the oldest vocational education provided in Finland.

## SIMULATOR BASED TRAINING

Educating seafarers, especially Master Mariners (sea captains), is capital intensive. In order to learn about ship handling and navigation, it is essential that students have the opportunity to practise their skills in a realistic environment. This environment usually comes in the form of a simulator, consisting of a simulator platform and a supervision centre connected to the actual training simulator, which in our case is a full-scale command bridge. Needless to say, the set-up requires heavy and costly equipment.

A major challenge for the University is keeping up-to-date with developments and providing state-of-the art technology and competence. Our strategy builds on an active collaboration with the business world, which includes partnerships with and provision of training services for the shipping industry and authorities on a commercial basis. This collaboration brings the working world to the campus, providing a dynamic learning environment for our degree students. It also maintains and develops cutting-edge competence amongst our trainers, as the training is designed to meet the current and future needs of our customers, and through active R&D the knowledge base our staff possess can be strengthened further.

The core of the operation is the simulator environment. The training simulator can be generic or customised to mirror specific ships or fulfil customer needs, which, especially in the latter case, provides a partnering opportunity between the University and the ship owners.

## ABOA MARE TRAINING CENTRE, TURKU, FINLAND

The maritime training centre Aboa Mare is part of Novia UAS and is located in Turku, Finland. The Aboa Mare simulator centre is one of the biggest in Northern Europe, comprising a total of ten training simulators, most of which are customised to suit the needs of specific customers.

The customised training simulators have been co-financed by the shipping industry, and in return, the industrial partner has the advantage of access to training capacity and competence to suit their needs. Through these partnerships, Novia UAS can provide a competitive state-of-the-art simulator environment for both degree students and active seafarers, and the scheme also results in collaboration and exchange of ideas and development needs.

Sales of training are managed through a company, Aboa Mare Ltd, in which Novia UAS is the majority owner, with Axxell vocational institute holding a minority of the shares. In 2015 the company's turnover was EUR 1.2 million (approx. USD 1.3 million). Over the last few years export has accounted for around 30 per cent of this.

## GIGAMARE INC., SUBIC BAY, THE PHILIPPINES

When it comes to provision of manpower within the maritime sector, the Philippines is the biggest market in the world. Therefore in 2013 Novia UAS entered into a joint venture in Subic Bay in the Philippines, resulting in the creation of GigaMare Inc., which was established through a management buyout. Novia UAS had been collaborating with the predecessor to GigaMare Inc. since 2004, and since 2011 had a trainer on-site at the training centre in Subic Bay. This history of successful collaboration was a key factor when the decision was made to enter into a joint venture.

GigaMare Inc. provides tailor-made training for the maritime sector as well as further education for Filipino cadets. Furthermore, the company provides training within the energy sector, in particular for operation of combustion engine power plants. Novia UAS brings simulator-based training competence to GigaMare Inc., much of which is a result of the close cooperation with

industry and the authorities, as previously described. Recently, Novia's activities in Subic Bay have been extended to include engineering training.

Through accreditation by the Finnish Transport Safety Agency (Trafi), Novia UAS now provides on-site training according to Finnish curricula, resulting in Finnish Certificates of Competence within the maritime field.

In 2015 the turnover of GigaMare Inc. was PHP 116 million (approx. USD 2.5 million), with the company's main customers being European ship owners. By the end of 2015, the number of employees was about 40, including contractual experts.

## LOCAL PRESENCE – A PLATFORM FOR EXPORT AND FURTHER EXPANSION

From a strategic point of view, GigaMare Inc. gives Novia UAS an opportunity for growth and global competition, both of which support the ambition of the University to stay at the forefront of development. The company operates mainly on a local basis in the Philippines, however, it also benefits from the Aboa Mare / Novia UAS competence centre in Turku.

Establishing a presence in Subic Bay in the Philippines, through GigaMare Inc., has given Novia UAS access to a market of almost 100 million people. Not only has the University benefitted from GigaMare Inc. as a channel for exporting maritime education from Turku, but the presence in the region also provides a platform for future expansion into other fields of education, outside the maritime sector. Furthermore, the experience of operating in a market on the other side of the world is of great value in Novia UAS's overall internationalisation process.

Novia UAS is presently exploring new global partnering opportunities and new markets for maritime training. The successful joint venture and presence in Subic Bay can be seen as proof of this concept.



Training simulator at Aboa Mare / Novia UAS competence center in Turku. Photo: Juha-Pekka Palmulaakso



Training simulator at GigaMare Inc. Main bridge with 270 degrees of view. Photo: Alvin Soriano Jr.

# EXPORTING MARITIME KNOWLEDGE TO NAMIBIA

Heikki Koivisto, Meri-Maija Marva & Juha Kämäri

## THE BACKGROUND OF MARITIME ACTIVITIES

Namibia is a country in southern Africa with a coastline of almost 850 nautical miles along the west of the country, bordering on the southern Atlantic Ocean. Namibia's population is 2.1 million, its land area 824,292 km<sup>2</sup>, and it has land borders with Angola, Zambia, Botswana and South Africa. Namibia has one of the most productive fishing grounds in the world, based on the Benguela Current System. Of the 20 fish species commercially exploited within Namibia's 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone, eight species are regulated by the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR).

The Namibian fishing sector brought in an estimated NAD 10 billion (MEUR 660) in revenue from the 550,000 tonnes of fish caught during the last fishing year. In addition to this, the industry provided 15,000 direct jobs over the same period, and sustained a further 45,000 indirect jobs in the provision of supplies for fishing vessels, stevedoring activities, logistics and other related marketing and trade activities (speech by Minister Esau, 12 August 2016). The management system for Namibian fisheries has evolved over the years, consisting today of monitoring, control and surveillance activities, as well as stock rebuilding operations, with the overall aim of developing industrial fisheries in a sustainable manner (Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources 2016).

To serve the management of Namibian fish stocks, Japan donated the research vessel R/V WELWITCHIA to the Republic of Namibia in 1993. To replace this vessel, the MFMR decided to commission a new fisheries and marine research vessel from the Rauma-based STX Finland shipyard in 2011. The ship building process started with a five-month design phase with the objective of meeting all the latest technical standards set for this type of vessel. The planning required, in particular, special care in the design of laboratory equipment, propulsion and the power generation system. On board the vessel are special laboratories for fish, water, chemicals, acoustic and plankton, and the building of the R/V Mirabilis laid the foundation for a wide-ranging and successful collaboration.



## TRAINING THE CAPTAIN AND OFFICERS OF R/V MIRABILIS

To fully utilise the new cutting edge ship technology, Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (SAMK) and the MFMR began discussions in November 2011 on the provision of further training for the captain and officers, as well as for the deck crew of the vessel. After a few meetings, many emails and a number of phone calls it was decided that the training of the captain and officers would commence immediately after their arrival in Rauma. Due to the timing of the delivery of the vessel in June 2012, the timetable for the training programme was very tight. Before the delivery, numerous inspections were carried out, which placed a lot of pressure on the timetable, especially as the crew members carrying out the inspections in the shipyard were also participating in the training programme at the same time.

The first part of the training was financed by the MFMR and started with an assessment of the knowledge of the captain and officers using the NetOSKAR Online Maritime Training Assessment Tool (Maritime Training 2016). This tool, funded by the EU's Leonardo da Vinci programme under SAMK's coordination, promotes the competence evaluation of seafarers with a database of multimedia questions defined by STCW (IMO Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 2016). The first actual training sessions included simulator testing, a basic course on dynamic positioning, medical training, bridge procedures, stability, international conventions, personal safety, and a course on the theory of ship handling. Moreover, the route from Rauma through the English Channel to Namibia was planned and simulated as part of the training.

## THE MARINAM PROJECT

The appraisal report from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Finland recommended that institutional cooperation should be arranged both between the Finnish and Namibian Research institutions and with SAMK, with ongoing cooperation with the MFMR and its Namibian Maritime and Fisheries Institute (NAMFI). On that basis, the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) developed a project called MARINAM for the MFA's Institutional Cooperation Instrument (ICI) to assist with the utilisation of the research methods offered by the new vessel. At the same time SAMK, as a sub-contractor in MARINAM, continued to provide further training in maritime skills for the masters, officers and operational crew of the new vessel.

The training within the MARINAM project was carried out firstly in Rauma, then on board R/V Mirabilis and finally in Walvis Bay, Namibia. The training included simulator training, environmental and security training, and training on ship handling and bridge procedures. During a later phase of the project, in autumn 2013, the officers returned to Rauma for an advanced course on dynamic positioning and for the first part of the vessel maintenance management training. By the end of the project in early 2014 it was obvious that more additional training for the captain and the officers of R/V Mirabilis was needed. The MFA approved a new supplementary budget for the continuation of the additional training, which was especially important for maintaining the complex electrical systems of R/V Mirabilis. The last on board training session focusing on the electricity systems of the ship was successfully conducted in Walvis Bay in November 2015.

## THE MARIBIA PROJECT

The next step, bringing the capacity building process to a national level, a project for the Institutional Cooperation Instrument of Higher Education Institutions (HEI ICI), was coordinated by SAMK. The objective of the project, named MARIBIA, was to improve the national higher maritime education available in Namibia to a level that, in the long run, could be approved by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). This objective is in line with the overall objectives of the HEI ICI programme, which supports HE institutions as they develop their subject-specific, methodological, educational and administrative capacity.

The submission of the MARIBIA proposal was preceded by a long planning and negotiation process that culminated in the signing of a cooperation agreement between the NAMFI, the Polytechnic of Namibia (since November 2015 the Namibian University of Science and Technology, NUST) and SAMK, with the intention of collaborating on education, the development of maritime education-based curricula, programmes, educational and administrative processes, and capacity building amongst educational and administrative staff. The application for the MARIBIA project was accepted and approved for funding by the MFA in March 2013.

The MARIBIA project had four planned results; benchmarking the maritime cluster in Finland, improved curricula for the deck and engine crew, improved teaching facilities and an improved student administration system. This project was finalised at the end of 2015, and on the basis of the project deliverables, Namibia has now all the educational elements ready for starting STCW-based

university-level degree programmes. Moreover, Namibia's institutions have the relevant knowledge to develop this education to the level required by the IMO's white list (The White List 2006).

## CONTINUING THE NAMIBIAN COLLABORATION

The events and processes described above are related to continuing education and training, capacity building and institutional development. One activity has always led to another, and opened up pathways to new collaboration opportunities. The joint development activities have expanded greatly from purely maritime-related educational initiatives to large projects generating new, sustainable business in developing countries. Two recent projects coordinated by SAMK are running under a joint programme of Tekes and the MFA – Business with Impact (BEAM).

The latest initiative concerns the establishment of a global network of Maritime Technology Cooperation Centres (MTCCs), a joint initiative by the EU and IMO (IMO seeks hosts for MTCC, 2016). Altogether five MTCCs will be established in target regions by the selected host institutes, to build regional capacity and increase the uptake of low carbon technologies and operations in the shipping sector; the maritime sector is in focus due to its rapidly growing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. A proposal to establish a MTCC for Africa in the Walvis Bay area was prepared by an international consortium, with SAMK as an active member, and this proposal was shortlisted by the IMO in June, from 12 candidate locations around Africa. Ultimately, only one centre will be selected for Africa, and the MTCCs will be officially announced in December 2016.

Irrespective of whether the proposal is successful or not, the process of working together has convinced us of the power of collaboration. Committed international interdisciplinary networks are a remarkable resource for tackling complex and wide-ranging issues.

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# CO-CREATING BUSINESS WITH IMPACT – LUMWANA CASE STUDY

Miika Kajanus, Antti Iire, Tuomo Eskelinen & Jyri Wuorisalo

## INTRODUCTION

This article discusses an education export project that started in 2013 through co-creation workshops, as a part of Team Finland's efforts to develop sustainable mining communities in Zambia. Now, three years later, several pilots are in progress covering issues such as low cost housing, tractor entrepreneurship, and water safety.

To start with, why in Africa? Carlos Lopes (2015), the UN's Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa provides a number of arguments. Africa's economic growth has been faster than the global average since 2000, registering an average growth rate of 5%, with eight of the world's top 10 performing countries in Africa. ICT advances show how Africa can leapfrog its development through technology, and mobile penetration rose from 1% in 2000 to 54% in 2012, surpassing the number of mobile users in the US, India or Europe. Furthermore, contrary to common perceptions of conflict, the vast majority of Africans live in countries that are now democratic, peaceful and with improved governance. Lopes (2015) goes on to suggest industrialisation through business partnerships with foreign partners. Zambia is relatively stable and fast growing, and is classified as a so-called 'From Aid to Trade' country, all of which makes Zambia attractive to Finnish business actors.

Zambia is located on a copper belt area in southern Africa and the mining industry is of utmost importance for the overall development of the country. Our focus is on solving today's challenges within mine-host communities in sustainable ways. Equally important for sustainable development and business creation is finding a balance between the four pillars of sustainability, which are all essential elements in the creation of wellbeing for the communities for decades to come. The four pillars of sustainability are social, cultural, environmental and economic sustainability.

In global business and commerce, the value network approach has increased in importance. According to Christensen and Rosenbloom (1995) the value network is an important factor affecting whether firms will be successful in their innovation when competing and solving customers' problems. Each

network member relies on the others to foster growth and increase value (see e.g. Allee 2000). This approach requires those involved to think in a different way to how they would when dealing with traditional export promotion. A Finnish company can seldom enter African markets with a sales-oriented approach, instead the focus must be on establishing common understanding thorough co-creation and joint learning.

## THE CONCEPT DESCRIPTION

Savonia UAS is developing and testing an education export concept in Lumwana, Zambia. The concept has been constructed in close collaboration with local Finnish companies – mainly small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The concept is part of the process of developing a value network for sustainable mining. The aim of the whole process, starting from opportunity identification and continuing on to business partnership, is to develop offerings for sustainable mining communities. As a part of this process it is essential to identify skills shortages and to provide training to fulfil those shortages.

The value networks, which Savonia UAS is part of, create solutions for global value chains, and uses the following methods: 1) co-creation, 2) a culture of experimentation and 3) business partnerships for industrial development. Co-creation builds cohesion between the private sector of the mining community and the mining industry, and user orientation and a focus on local needs are emphasised in co-creation workshops. A culture of experimentation aims at innovative solutions, improvements in services and promotion of entrepreneurship, with demos, prototypes and pilots forming practical tools for experimentation and providing an array of learning opportunities for students. Business partnerships for industrial development are based on the insight that sustainable development and responsibility are factors that can enhance competitiveness. Joint offerings, joint ventures and scaling up are examples of how to construct business partnerships. The themes of sustainable mining are clean technologies, health security, food security, the forest sector, building and shelters, agriculture, learning solutions, digitalisation and small-scale mining.

The aim of the network is to enhance Finnish companies' abilities to do business with African collaborators. Zambian-Finnish cooperation for sustainable mining creates business partnerships that improve the supply chain for the mining sector, and the partnerships increase the opportunities available to Zambian companies to offer services and products to the mining industry. For Finnish companies they create access to the global mining industry in

emerging markets. The value network approach combines technology and expertise in one service business ensemble, and education is seen as an important tool with which to achieve this aim.

## THE LUMWANA CASE STUDY

The Lumwana-Kalumbila area is located in the outskirts of the Solwezi district of Zambia's North Western Province. The area is characterised by three large mines, the fast-growing city of Solwezi and three traditional leaders i.e. chiefdoms. The area provides the framework to put theory into practice: developing a bottom-up operation model for joint pilot projects. In May 2013, the Team Finland network initiated, together with Kuopio Innovation Ltd, a new kind of pilot experiment: a serie of co-creation workshops in Zambia, in a mining area, with the locals of the village of Lumwana (see Pentikäinen 2014). As a part of this, Savonia UAS run a the FinnPartnership project to develop and test the education export concept. The co-creation operational model ensures that the cooperative development projects are created with bottom-up principles in order to serve local needs. Companies, public officials, representatives of civil society organisations, educational institutes, developers from both of the countries involved, and local beneficiaries participated in the workshops. Some 100 people participated actively in analysing burning developmental needs, co-creating solutions for them and forming partnerships between Finnish and Zambian private and public sector players and civil society organisations for further development cooperation projects. The projects launched cover areas such as incubating and accelerating new enterprises, improving energy supplies, providing low-cost housing and increasing the contribution of arts to development (Pentikäinen 2014).

Savonia UAS developed the ideas further and organised the next workshops in autumn 2014 in Lumwana. More than twenty local companies were involved, resulting in a list of potential practical business partnerships for further development with Finnish companies. The process continued with the Zambia–Finland Business Week in June 2015. In Lumwana workshops to establish joint understanding on the creation of business partnerships were set up, and a structural fund project was established in the North Savo region, in Finland, to increase the capabilities of Finnish companies to create sustainable mining business partnerships. Key areas explored are agriculture and the food chain, low cost housing, water issues and road construction and maintenance. Vocational training and entrepreneurial skills development activities support the overall project objectives by providing much-needed capacity building.

During 2016 those opportunities have been actively developed further; preparatory work by local Zambian consultants and Finnish project workers in Zambia are resulting in several pilots with Finnish companies: one in low cost housing, one in tractor entrepreneurship and one in water safety. A training courses for restaurant workers and innovation courses for engineers are also under construction. The value network approach necessitates new business models, and a practical innovation tool (see Kajanus et. al 2014) has been used to promote new business model designs in co-creation workshops.

## CONCLUSIONS

The process started over three years ago and whilst we are still in the pilot phase, these pilots will soon give way to practical activities. This shows how challenging and time consuming this kind of endeavour is; everything is based on joint understanding and trust. There are no shortcuts, instead those involved have to work together in order to achieve common understanding and trust. Finding the right partners, understanding the real needs and possibilities, and constructing the competences needed requires investments. SMEs may find it impossible to invest as much, which is why public participation in providing a stable framework is essential.

A value network approach is essential, particularly in ensuring involvement of companies – mainly SMEs, public officials, representatives of civil society organisations, educational institutes and developers from both of the countries, and in making sure that local beneficiaries are participating in the value creation. This calls for special kinds of skills and competencies, both in the actors and the facilitators, which poses educational challenges, and new kinds of educational implementation are needed to create the value network framework. Joint learning by doing, and applying innovation tools and methods are key elements.



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# VOCATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION IN COLOMBIA – WITH THE HAAGA-HELIA TOUCH

Jari Laukia & Irmeli Pietilä

## HAAGA-HELIA SCHOOL OF VOCATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION

Colombia and Finland may be geographically distant, but the two countries do have something in common: both are interested in developing education. The aim and objective of the government of Colombia is to renew education and become one of the leading countries in the area of education by 2025. Similarly, a strategy published by the government of Finland sets out an aim of Finland being a leading provider of education and modern learning by 2025. In this article the focus is on Haaga-Helia's vocational teacher education programme, which was implemented in Colombia in the academic year 2014–2015.

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences is a privately owned university of applied sciences located in Helsinki, Finland, and the School of Vocational Teacher Education is a department within Haaga-Helia. The history of the School of Vocational Teacher education (SVTE) goes back to 1950, when vocational teacher education for teachers who were teaching in business sector schools started (Laukia 2013, 31–32). Since 1996 SVTE has been part of Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, and today it educates teachers for vocational upper secondary education, adult education and universities of applied sciences, for all vocational education sectors.

## EDUCATION WITH INTERNATIONAL APPEAL

Finland has an excellent reputation internationally in the field of education, with a number of PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) studies carried out by the OECD during the past two decades contributing significantly to making Finnish education famous around the world (Sahlberg 2015). One specialty of the Finnish education system is that both academic and vocational education are appreciated (Laukia, Mauffret 2015, 178; Stenström, Virolainen 2014, 19). After nine years at a comprehensive school, students continue their studies in general upper secondary education or vocational upper secondary education, and regardless of which track they choose they are eligible to apply to universities of applied sciences or even to scientific universities (Laukia

2013). In 2015 vocational education attracted more applicants than general upper secondary education.

Vocational teacher education is another specialty in Finnish education, and teachers working in vocational schools, vocational adult education or universities of applied sciences are required to complete 60 ECTS points (European credit transfer system, approximately one academic year) worth of pedagogical studies. In addition to this, nationwide teacher qualification requirements also include degree studies and work experience.

## INTERNATIONALISATION OF EDUCATION – IMPLEMENTING THE HAAGA-HELIA STRATEGY

Haaga-Helia SVTE's vocational teacher education programme has been offered in English since 2004, with the English-language programme primarily intended for immigrants who have come to Finland and have difficulties with following Finnish-language teacher programmes. The English-language programme has an important role in the internationalisation of the School, however offering programmes in English is only one of the first steps in the internationalisation process (Söderqvist 2002, 39).

According to Downs and Toivanen, cultural diversity in education is seen from too narrow a viewpoint if it only implies an ethnic mix of students. Cultural phenomena are multi-layered and complex (Downs and Toivanen 2016), and we at SVTE want to embrace that complexity.

One of the strategic aims for Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences for 2007–2012 was significant growth in its international activities (Haaga-Helia ammattikorkeakoulun strategia 2007–2012). In line with that, the SVTE implemented its first full export of education programme online in Sweden in 2010–2011. Since that pilot, the export of our pedagogical education has significantly increased; we have provided commercial activities for Saudi Arabian, South Korean and Chinese students, for example. In some implementations the participants attended the training in Finland, and in others Haaga-Helia teachers travelled abroad to provide further education in the participants' home countries.

These export cases have provided staff members with more experience in working with students from different countries and with different cultural backgrounds. In the process we have accumulated the skills and competencies needed in international activities and we have matured, and are now able to develop education programmes together with our customers to better meet their needs.

## CASE COLOMBIA STARTS

The vocational teacher education programme in Colombia got off to a running start; the first negotiations were held in spring 2014 and the programme in Bogotá started in August the same year.

Our customer was SENA, (Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje – The National Training Service), a Colombian public institution offering a wide range of vocational programmes for free at its centres all over the country. Vocational training at SENA takes two years, and the last six months take place in industry, showing that close cooperation between schools and workplaces is something Finland and Colombia have in common.

This was one of the reasons why SENA selected Haaga-Helia SVTE to train 15 of its permanent teachers. The participants came from different regions of the country and represented several fields: the largest group was English teachers, but there were also several participants with engineering, IT or business backgrounds, and even one veterinarian and one ethics teacher. SENA wanted to train these teachers so that they could disseminate new pedagogical ideas and methods to their peers in their home institutions. Officially the language of the programme was English, but once in Colombia, we soon noticed that Spanish would be an asset.

Six teachers (two tutors and four specialist teachers) and a host of other staff members from Haaga-Helia SVTE were involved in the SENA implementation. The role of the two tutors was to provide continuity and to strengthen the process; they kicked off and wrapped up the programme together, and took turns during the rest of the contact weeks. They also provided online guidance and counselling during the distance learning periods. One of the guidance counsellors was fluent in Spanish, and so he coordinated the programme with the SENA personnel, and his Spanish skills also came in handy with some participants who needed instructions and feedback in their native language. The specialist teachers, on the other hand, served as experts on the theme of the week. They planned and implemented the week together with the tutors, but did not evaluate or give feedback on the participants' assignments. For them, participation in the programme meant one intensive week in Bogotá, but no need to commit to the programme for months.

The teachers worked in pairs during the contact weeks, and as a bonus a colleague from Haaga-Helia's international business programme popped in to facilitate a one-day workshop on PBL (problem based learning). This was possible because he was undertaking a practical placement in a company in Bogotá at the same time as a contact week was being held there.

Four of the six teachers who were involved in the SENA implementation had been teaching and tutoring on the English programme, and all of them had participated in previous export of education implementations and partnership projects. The fact that they had experience in multicultural contexts, were fluent in English, could rely on each other's expertise, and knew each other's strengths and weaknesses from several earlier projects, was of great importance during the unpredictable contact weeks. Not to mention that it helped during the endless hours on planes and in airports: a one-way trip from their homes in Helsinki to the hotel in Bogotá took over 24 hours!

## VOCATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION IN DIFFERENT CULTURE

The curriculum of our English programme offered a good starting point for the Study Guide for the SENA programme. Its three core competence areas – Guidance & Counselling, Teaching and Assessment Competence, Work Community and Networking Competence, and Research and Development Competence – served as the basis for the programme. It was easy to take on board the customer's requests and provide special emphasis on themes like quality assurance, while still following the requirements of Finnish legislation, specifically Section 8 of Act for Universities of Applied Sciences 932/2014 and Section 3 of Decree 1129/2014, pertaining to vocational teachers' education in Finland, as well as the aims and objectives of Haaga-Helia's teacher education programme.

The programme was divided into six modules, each of which consisted of a contact week in Bogotá, online activities in teams during the distance learning periods, and individual development work carried out in the participants' own institutions. Contact weeks were scheduled to be once every two months, but there was an unexpected pause in the middle of the programme, which lengthened the interval and delayed graduation by a couple of months.

At Haaga-Helia SVTE the teachers are used to facilitating blended programmes where contact periods and distance learning vary. Guidance and counselling regarding participants' personal development paths is our strength, and we are experienced in using a variety of digital pedagogical tools. Nevertheless, there were some special issues that had to be tackled in the SENA programme, with one of the most prominent ones being the time difference of eight hours. Synchronous online sessions, like team meetings in Google Hangouts, could only be arranged outside normal office hours: in practice this meant that tutors often met with the teams during the weekends,

and sometimes even in the middle of the night Finnish time. To overcome this, asynchronous tools like blogs, collaborative mind-mapping and video clips were introduced.

The programme included two development projects: a teaching practice project and a networking project. It was anticipated that organising teaching practice implementation could be a challenge; Haaga-Helia SVTE teachers normally observe the student teachers in action, and conduct feedback discussions after the sessions, however the Colombian participants came from different, remote regions of the country, and on-site teaching practice observation was not possible. When implementing the programme in Colombia it was decided that the participants would make video recordings of their sessions and the guidance counsellors would assess them through these videos. The participants were also encouraged to invite peers to observe the sessions and give feedback, and self-reflection on the teaching practice sessions also formed an integral part of the process.

What was not anticipated was how difficult it would be to arrange observation opportunities, as only 15% of the SENA teachers have permanent contracts, with the rest hired with temporary contracts on a course-by-course basis. This situation, together with the autonomous teaching culture, made some teachers reluctant to allow the participants into their classrooms, as there was a fear that observers would report their findings to administration. It took a lot of convincing, but finally all participants were able to complete the observations.

In the second project the participants developed their internal or external networks and the outcomes were displayed in a poster session, which was open to SENA regional directors. Students and personnel of the institution in which the event took place were also welcome to visit the exhibition. The poster session was a great success; through it the participants had an opportunity to share their hard work with the colleagues, and what mattered even more for some of the participants was the chance to convince the directors that research-based development is a good way to organise further education.

The programme for SENA included also two seminars for school directors and supervisors. The first seminar dealt mainly with education, pedagogy and quality of education and teaching, whilst the second seminar dealt more widely with directing educational institutions. The aim of these seminars was to help the management in creating pedagogical development programmes for their institutions. The director of Haaga-Helia school of vocational teacher education was responsible for these seminars.

## MAKING THE CHANGE

Education – teacher education in particular – is closely connected to the history of the country, the values of society, and the plans the government has for the future. During their studies the participants of the Haaga-Helia SVTE programme learned versatile teaching and tutoring methods, but what is even more important is that they assumed a research-based development approach to their own work.

While vocational teacher education is important for the individual participants, Haaga-Helia also hopes to have a deeper impact on vocational education in the target country. By developing the quality of education SENA promotes social change in Colombia. During the programme on several occasions we heard the slogan: "education has the power to change people's lives". We at Haaga-Helia SVTE are proud to be part of that process.

The Colombian implementation also developed the work of Haaga-Helia SVTE; during the programme the staff members developed their cultural skills and competences, but they also had many practical takeaways for further projects. The culture of sharing strengthened, and the process of handling learning materials was streamlined. SENA expected detailed activity reports after each contact week, and we soon realised how useful these reports can be when a new staff member needs to get a quick overview of the implementation. As a result, activity journals are now a standard part of our international projects.

Vocational teacher education is a special type of education offered by universities of applied sciences in Finland. Similar education does not exist in many countries, which makes it an interesting option for countries developing vocational education and university education.

Haaga-Helia SVTE received excellent feedback from the participants and managers involved in the SENA implementation. Our work in Colombia continues, the takeaways from the projects are being put in action, and this project has given us the courage to continue the export of education projects to other countries as well.

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# VET TEACHERS FOR THE FUTURE: FINNISH – BRAZILIAN COLLABORATION

Sisko Mällinen

## INTRODUCTION

Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK) in Finland was delighted to receive 18 professors from different Federal Institutes (IF) all around Brazil in spring 2015 to participate in the VET Teachers for the Future programme. This Certificate Programme for Professional Development was created in cooperation with Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK) and with the Brazilian Ministry of Education. The programme challenged the participants to critically reflect on their pedagogical approach in light of the paradigm shift in education, and to develop their teacher identity. It consisted of two five-month periods; during the first five months in Finland the participants worked in collaborative groups to familiarise themselves with 21st century skills and cooperation between universities and the world of work. This was followed by a five-month development project in their own institutes in Brazil, an implementation of what they had learnt in Finland.

In the following article I describe a small-scale study on the transformation of the Brazilian VET teachers (teachers in Vocational Education and Training) from subject specialist professors to teacher-facilitators with new pedagogical understanding and skills, during their studies in Tampere in spring 2015. Tentatively, I would also like to suggest that this transformation may lead to an identity shift in their work as professors of Federal Institutes (see also Mällinen 2007 and Avraamioudu 2016).

## TRANSFORMATION FROM PROFESSORS TO TEACHER-FACILITATORS

Four Brazilian professors were interviewed individually in spring 2015 towards the end of their five-month stay in Finland. The aim was to find out about any changes that had occurred in their understanding of teaching and learning. In the theme interviews the professors discussed their teaching in Brazil and their experience of the programme, as well as their future plans in Brazil. The interviews were transcribed and the data content analysed. Regarding the interviewees' conceptions of teaching and learning, the analysis showed the

baseline situation in Brazil before the programme and the transformed situation at the end of the programme. The four professors who were selected to be interviewed represented different disciplines: science, mechanical engineering and automation, business, and physiotherapy. Their teaching careers varied in duration between 7 and 26 years, and in this respect they gave a good representation of the whole cohort. One criterion for the selection was their mastery of English, which was the language used in the interviews. The four interviewees were asked to read the report and comment on the interpretations made on the basis of the analysis of their interviews. They all confirmed that the interpretations correctly described their conceptions of teaching and learning before and after the programme.

The analysis of the interview data on the teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning before their arrival in Finland yielded four categories: learning environment, teaching approach, student, and professor. The results presented a very traditional picture of the situation in the interviewees' institutions, with professors focusing on publishing instead of teaching and the main teaching method being lectures, where the most important aspect was making sure that the content was covered. The students were described as passive recipients of information.

*A: In Brazil we study a lot of theory but we don't apply. We are always do the same lectures in the same lectures in the same classroom with one student behind the other.*

Pedagogy and teaching seemed to be strikingly separate in the professors' attitudes, as well as on an organisational and conceptual level. The concept of professor did not seem to include the attribute of pedagogical skills:

*C: ...we have around 200 engineers in my institution, teachers. And they don't like too much pedagogics. There are eight pedagogues... . The teachers think about this: "we are here working so hard, teaching and discussing and they are in the second floor just watching and criticizing me."*

*D: In Brazil we don't have another word to characterize teacher. The word in Portuguese is "professor".... We don't have another word. So it's complicated to explain for my colleagues in Brazil what's, what is the teacher making another thing. Because teacher, "professor" does these lectures.*

Pedagogy belongs to pedagogues, and professors are not pedagogues. It is tempting to infer that this conception may be so deep-rooted in the working culture that separate pedagogues have been hired to take care of pedagogy.

I would like to suggest that when the interviewees discussed the baseline situation in Brazil, they were, in fact, describing the formation of their own frame of reference (see Mezirow 2009, p.92) regarding teaching and learning before their arrival in Finland. However, evidence of a more student-centred understanding of teaching and learning emerged from the analysis of data pertaining to interviewees' plans when back in Brazil after the five-month experience in Finland (see Table 1).

TABLE 1. Interviewees' conceptions of teaching and learning in spring 2015

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	TEACHING APPROACH	STUDENT	TEACHER AS FACILITATOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• flexible classroom</li> <li>• out of classroom</li> <li>• everywhere and all the time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individualized classes</li> <li>• PBL</li> <li>• use of new technologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is an individual and important</li> <li>• has experience</li> <li>• has their own way to learn</li> <li>• needs to understand why</li> <li>• searches for information</li> <li>• discusses</li> <li>• learns to learn</li> <li>• collaborates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• varies approach and methods</li> <li>• sometimes lectures</li> <li>• doesn't aim to cover all content but helps to learn</li> <li>• supports students</li> <li>• plans teaching and learning</li> <li>• needs pedagogical training</li> </ul>

The categories are otherwise the same as in the first analysis, but to highlight the change in the interviewees' conceptions of the role of teacher, the last one is named *Teacher as Facilitator* instead of *Professor*. The interviewees now considered themselves teachers, whose main aim was to help and support students in their learning processes. The interviewees no longer saw themselves as professors but as teachers supporting students and facilitating their learning to learn. Learning became the focus of their attention instead of covering the content, they frequently referred to student-centred methods and even their thinking seemed to have become student-centred. The students now appeared active and empowered in their learning, and teachers' work was explained through its impact on students.

*A: But we have to consider the students' experience. (....) I think they need to know what I am doing, why I'm doing these things. (...) I can help these students from the high school to be better students so they can improve themselves like students, not like chemists*

The interviewees' references to students contained active verbs that carried meaning: "they need to know", "they can improve themselves", "the students to learn deeply".

The results show several features of transformative learning (Mezirow 2000; 2009). A case in point is how the interviewees were able to critically analyse their own work. This critical reflection may have been prompted by "a disorienting dilemma" (Mezirow 2009, 94), when realising the discrepancy between their own practice and the pedagogical thinking that they had encountered when faced with new pedagogies in Finland. The interviewees also frequently mentioned collaboration and interaction and seemed to have the "courage to change routines and try something new" (Kohonen 1999, 58). The interviewees also had a strong desire to spread their new understanding within Brazil, which Kohonen (1999, 58) describes as "seeing oneself as a resource for others' professional growth." One of the greatest results of transformative learning is that once the fixed frames of reference start to accommodate new ideas and change, they become more flexible and open to new learning, "reaching right into the changes of identity" (Mezirow 2009, 90). This was evident in the interview data:

*A: we can realise that what we are doing now is life-long learning. We are learning something. And I think this life-long learning perspective is very important to us.*

*D: I can say that the Finland can change our life, that this project changed my life while as a teacher and as a human-being because this relationship is very linked – human being and education. ...And this program for me changed my, my life. My teacher's life and my human life.*

I would like to suggest that the results are evidence of a change in the interviewees' frames of reference; their idea of themselves as professors of Federal Institutes has undergone a dramatic change from a rather narrow conception of an expert who lectures, to a holistic view of a human being cum teacher-facilitator cum life-long learner, who is also an expert. One of the interviewees aptly summarised all this to his colleague on his return to Brazil: "Eu não sou um professor, sou um educador."

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HARNESSING FINNISH EDUCATION  
EXPERTISE FOR GLOBAL MARKETS

# RETHINKING THE FINNISH BRAND? THE ROLE OF STUDENTS IN EDUCATION EXPORT

Pauliina Savola & Anni Vesa

## INTRODUCTION

What sets Finnish higher education culture apart from most of its counterparts in different countries? What is the brand and what are the defining qualities that have sparked international interest in the Finnish education system? While opinions may differ, we feel, and will justify this claim in the article below, that the Finnish tradition of student involvement is one of the defining features of the Finnish system.

Education export has been a buzzword in Finnish higher education since at least 2008. Fast forwarding to 2016, the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture publishes yet another vision and plan of action for education: the Education Export Roadmap (Ministry of Education 2016); in this roadmap, it is stated that the promotion and marketing of Finnish education needs confidence in the concept of high level of know-how and Finnish strengths. It goes on to state that Finnish education is known for being cost-effective and of high quality, as well as promoting societal equality and democratic values (Ministry of Education 2016, Appendix 2, page 1)<sup>1</sup>.

The difficulty of marrying the Finnish brand of social equality in education and education as a commodity or a brandable product is rather paradoxical in nature, and the views of the student movement are well known (see e.g. Kangas et al.<sup>2</sup>), so we will not delve into this debate in the confines of this article. However, we will take on the challenge of exploring the other aspect of the Finnish education brand mentioned previously, that of an equal society and the promotion of democratic values. It is with this feature in mind that we will now discuss the role of students and student participation as a core value in the education export<sup>3</sup> activities of the higher education institutions – both, we feel, have been next to non-existent in education export thus far.

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<sup>1</sup> Roadmap and appendix (in Finnish) are available at: <http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2016/koulutusvientti.html?lang=fi>

<sup>2</sup> Suomi – Koulutuksen supervalta. Näin Suomi luo miljardin koulutusviennin vision paper available (in Finnish) at: <http://samok.fi/uploads/2013/11/Suomi-koulutuksen-supervalta-1.11.2013.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> In this article, when discussing about education export, we focus on the activities taking place outside of Finland.



An anecdote from spring 2015 further emphasises both the novelty and importance of student involvement. Last spring, both national higher education student unions, University of Applied Sciences Students in Finland – SAMOK and the National Union of University Students (SYL), were contacted by the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (FINEEC) and invited to come to present and discuss the role of students in Finnish higher education. As a result of this, we met with both Armenian and Azerbaijani experts taking part in the Twinning project. According to the feedback from the Azerbaijani participants, many felt that the most important lesson they took home from the visit was the role of students in the development and quality work conducted in the higher education institutions, both in universities of applied sciences and universities.<sup>4</sup>

In this article, we will first briefly explore the role of the student movement in Finland. In the latter part of the article, we propose some ways of including students in education export activities.

## STUDENT DEMOCRACY AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF EXPORTING EDUCATION

Finland has a long history of having an active student movement; the roots of student activism go back a hundred years, to when Finland was taking its first steps towards becoming an independent nation. From those days onwards, the student movement has been one of the most influential movements in Finland. During the first decades of 1900s a vast majority of governmental and municipal actors were university educated, which made the alumni networks of universities and student activists very influential and important.

The basic concept of an active student community was also backed up by the European university ideal of seeing universities as tight communities with a strong independent status. The universities had, and in Finland they still have, an autonomy that gives the universities the responsibility and freedom to manage themselves collegially. In Finland, student participation is also backed up by Universities Act and Universities of Applied Science Act, which state that the boards of Universities of Applied Science must include at least one student member.

Students participation in the administration of universities is seen as a positive thing, and students have an important and active role, for example,

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<sup>4</sup> FINEEC news: <http://karvi.fi/en/2016/azerbaijani-experts-benchmark-quality-management-in-finnish-higher-education/>

in curriculum design and quality assurance. Students are treated as valued experts on the study experience and their insights about the subject are respected. Creating an active and inclusive community within the institution is seen as a way to foster student ownership of all the activities of the institution.

This mind-set of respecting the student voice and showing interest in learning more about the students' experiences could also be something that those implementing education export projects could learn from. The tight connection between the student community and the institution is also something that is a central part of the Finnish higher education system, thus, it is unfortunate that Finnish higher education institutions have not yet given students a more active role in education export projects.

When Finnish institutions propose education export projects that do not also include active student participation as a component, they might be actually delivering something other than what the customer has requested. One of the key strengths of the Finnish higher education system – and also one of the most distinctive feature that separates us from other national systems – is our strong student participation. If our institutions want to utilise all of their strengths and the Finnish trademark of democratic participation, they must also take a closer look at how student democracy could be included in all education export activities.

A recent audit of Häme University of Applied Sciences (UAS) noted that there is a great deal of interest from the students in being more included in the internationalisation activities of their institution:

*"Students wanted more opportunities including international elements in their courses, different possibilities for student exchange and double degrees including at the Master's level" (Campbell et. al. 2016, 62).*

It should be clear from this that the institutions should pay more attention to utilising student enthusiasm and eagerness to learn more and be part of the internationalisation activities of the institution.

## EDUCATION EXPORT AS A SUPPORT MEASURE FOR INTERNATIONALISATION OF THE INSTITUTION AND INTERNATIONALISATION AT HOME

From students' point of view, there should be a clear connection between all education export activities and the strategic goals of the institution. Relevant questions that need to be asked include: to what end do the projects serve the internationalisation of the institution? and are the projects inclusive for students and staff? A similar note on the need for strategic alignment was made by the aforementioned audit report concerning Häme UAS (Campbell et al. 2016, 60–61). A strategy must have a sounding board that resonates not only with the leadership, but in order to be successful, significant parts of the staff and student bodies as well.

According to Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) statistics, roughly 20 per cent (5,000 students) of UAS students who complete their degree complete an exchange period lasting at least three months (studies or internship) abroad (Garam 2015). Another 5,000 students complete a mobility period of less than three months. It is very likely that there is significant overlap in the students that take part in these activities, as the internationalisation of students tends to be cumulative in nature (see e.g. Siekkinen 2013; Siltala 2013).

While 20 per cent mobility is an impressive number – if compared to other European countries – and is in accordance with the goal set in the Education and Training 2020 strategic framework published by the European Commission, it does mean that approximately 80% of students, the great majority, either do not want or do not have the possibility to undertake a mobility period. Being able to work in a multicultural and/or international environment is nowadays part of the set of skills and competences that a graduate must have. While Finland, for the time being, can boast having a reasonable number of international students, the onset of tuition fees for non-EU nationals will decrease the number of international students and at the very least decrease the diversity of the countries and cultures represented in the institutions currently. It must be noted the number of students present is not a solution for internationalisation in itself, equally important is the diversity of students and other aspects of internationalisation. For instance, integration into the higher education community and the interplay between international and domestic students could, at current, use some improvement. Responsibility for this lies with both the institution and the student community.

## BUILDING COMPETENCES – STUDENTS AS EXPERTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Education export activities should be used more often to increase and enhance the skills and competencies of not only the few working on the project, but also to offer an opportunity to diversify possibilities for internationalisation at home. Many institutions have separated their education export activities and placed them in a different unit that stands apart from the regular activities of the institution. While in practice this probably offers some benefits, it makes the integration of learning from the projects and support for internationalisation at home difficult, if not impossible.

Another aspect that the education export projects have, in our opinion, failed to acknowledge, is the contribution that international students and other migrants already living in Finland could make to the efforts. There is a wealth of cultural knowledge already in the institutions in the form of students; currently Finnish institutions have students from all over the world, the most numerous nationalities being Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese and Nepali (CIMO 2015), with strategically important countries such as India also making the top ten. In the now defunct Strategy for the Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions in Finland 2009–2015 (Ministry of Education 2009), one of the goals set was for institutions to support a multicultural society. According to the evaluation conducted on the internationalisation strategy mentioned above, the two hardest goals to promote have been 1) supporting a multicultural society and 2) global responsibility. In our opinion, inclusion of migrants or students with a migrant background in the education export activities could serve as one tool for the promotion of these goals.

Education export cannot be about simply carbon copying current programmes; the culture and expectations of the recipient country must also be taken into account. A fine balance must be struck if an institution wishes to structure a programme in a way that it does not result in loss of its essence or brand, while still respecting or meeting the needs of the client. Cultural sensitivity, structures of society, methods of persuasion and sales, networking and building alliances – these are the kinds of cultural information that may be very hard for the institutions to tackle on their own. However, at the core of the Finnish higher education system is the very central concept of the student as a stakeholder, rather than merely a consumer. As information about education export projects is scattered, we lack national statistics, and everyone seems to have their own definition of what education export is, we cannot claim that this has never been taken

into account. However, as far as we are aware, none of the current projects have even begun to explore the concept of student participation in their education export activities.

## CONCLUSION

Finnish higher education institutions are still trying to create a Finnish way of conducting education export. With the strong support from the Ministry of Education, the institutions should take a closer look at everyday life within their walls and try to see what really sets apart Finnish institutions and education in the international context. One of the central features is, in our opinion, the way the Finnish institutions include students in their activities, from curriculum design to creating a close-knit community.

As we have proposed above, the trademark of the Finnish higher education system has been, and should continue to be, the true involvement of students in the higher education community and processes of the institution – be it planning, evaluation, decision-making or education export. In the same manner, students should be included in education export activities; institutions can give their students a new way of getting international experiences both abroad and through internationalisation at home. The institutions could also benefit greatly from the fresh views and energy students bring, doing things the modern way, and utilising the vast cultural knowledge that international students have.

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# WORKING LIFE BASED MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMMES AT FINNISH UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES – AN INNOVATIVE MODEL OF MASTER'S-LEVEL EDUCATION

Riitta Rissanen, Hannele Seppälä & Juha Viitasaari

## INTRODUCTION

This article focuses on UAS master's degrees in Finland, and especially on their profile and pedagogical characteristic as innovative working life based higher education. The aim of this article is to describe the principles and strengths of UAS master's degrees for international benchmarking.

Universities of applied sciences (UAS) form part of the higher education system in Finland, together with research universities and universities of technology and arts. There are 26 universities of applied sciences in Finland, and the mission of UASs is stated very clearly in the new UAS act passed in 2014 (932/2014). The aims of these institutions include carrying out applied research in close cooperation with the world of work, society and regional development, as well as carrying out innovations and boosting entrepreneurship at various levels of higher education and research.

UASs offer bachelor's and master's programmes and also provide specialisation education, open education and continuing education. UAS master's degrees are worth 60–90 ECTS credits, and take about 1.5–2 years to complete; master's degrees provides eligibility for positions in the world of work where a postgraduate degree is required. Finnish UASs do not provide doctoral degrees on their own, but many UASs have links to national and international universities to be able to support the life-long learning of their alumni.

The empirical data presented in this article is based on a study carried out on Finnish universities of applied sciences during spring 2016, and the empirical part of this article consists of survey data gathered from master's students and alumni in 2016 (922 respondents).

## UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES AND THE MODERN KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

Many reports and studies (e.g. OECD 2016, European Commission 2016, Hazelkorn 2013) emphasise the growing importance of higher education in a knowledge-based economy. Higher education institutions need to have close relations with working life and society in its entirety, from businesses to individual citizens. The profile of UASs in Europe ([www.uasnet.eu](http://www.uasnet.eu)) in particular is based on innovations and future competences, in the sense of open innovation. The social responsibility and impact of the HEI system is also a critical issue. This has become a topic of discussion following both investment in the higher education perspective and interest from actors in the world of work in cooperating more closely with universities (Guile & Griffiths 2001).

The pace of change in the world of work is rapid; professionals in the world of work need more means and means that are more flexible for knowledge creation, in order to be able to empower themselves and to achieve new careers and wellbeing. Innovations and new competences are created in innovation ecosystems, combining mode 1 and mode 2 knowledge and connecting learning with authentic working environments (Carayanis, Campbell 2012; Gibbons, Limoges, Nowothy, Schwartzman 1994). The focus of knowledge creation is on learning networks, with *co-creation* as a basis – not only through traditional knowledge transfer in university-industry networks.

## UAS MASTER'S PROGRAMMES AS A PART OF THE FINNISH EDUCATION SYSTEM

UAS Master's degree programmes have been available in Finland since 2004, and student numbers have risen every year. By 2015 the number of students graduating was over 13,000, and as of the 2016–2017 academic year there are 275 master's programmes at UASs.

Finnish UAS master's degree programmes are based on Bologna model principles. According to the evaluation of the Bologna process implementation the objectives for second-cycle degrees at UASs have been completely achieved (Niemelä et al. 2012). Requirements for acceptance onto a master's degree programme at a university of applied sciences include a bachelor's level degree and at least three years of work experience. Bachelor's degrees at Finnish UASs are practically-oriented first cycle degrees (210–240 ECTS).

The requirement for work experience is a unique feature of UAS master's programmes; UAS master's students have real-life work experience and they



also act as professionals in working life during their master's studies. Studies have also shown a strong link between applied research and innovations, as the students complete master's theses connected to companies and working environments. (Figure 1.)

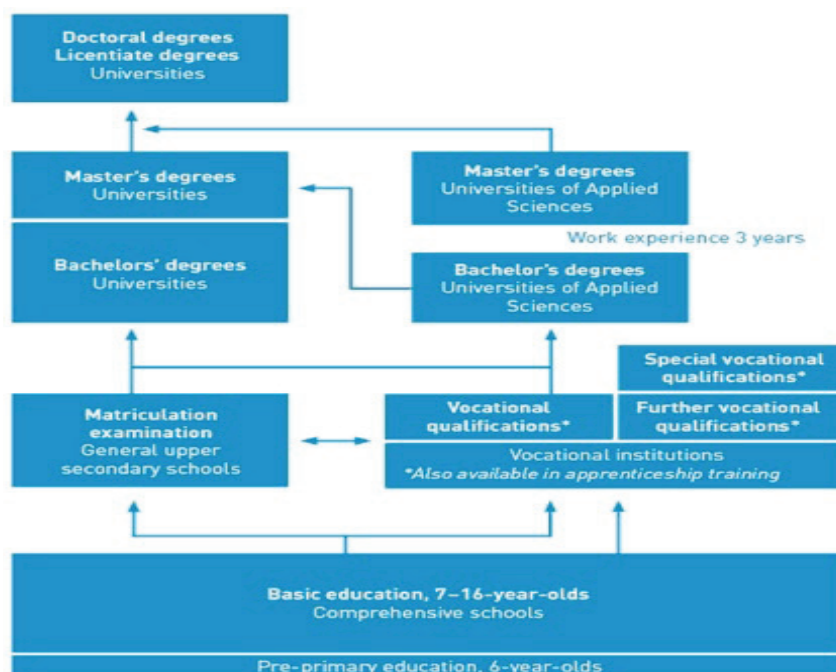


Figure 1. The Finnish education system as of 2016. UAS master's competences – what are they?

UAS master's programmes are profession-oriented master's degrees that are closely connected with working life. Learning outcomes and pedagogical approaches are designed not only to meet the requirements of working life but also to create new competencies for the future of work. Most of the students also work while studying for their master's degrees, which increases the effectiveness of the education they receive and facilitates direct utilisation of the educational outcomes.

The learning outcomes of UAS master's degrees are defined as being at EQF level 7 and they are, for the most part, the same as the learning outcomes of profession-oriented master's degree programmes<sup>1</sup>. However,

<sup>1</sup> European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

there are some attributes that are unique or are emphasised to a greater degree in profession-oriented education, for example the multidisciplinary approach, RDI methodology, creativeness and future-orientation, as well as cooperation skills and skills relating to the co-creation of knowledge and application of that knowledge to real-life problems. Through the training the student receives broad and in-depth knowledge and the necessary theoretical skills to develop their future working life.



Figure 2. The key aspects of UAS master's degrees<sup>2</sup>.

## TAILORED PROFILES OF UAS MASTER'S PROGRAMMES

In accordance with the specific needs of different fields within industry and business, the profiles of UAS master's programmes can be tailored to focus either on advanced expertise in a specific field or a multidisciplinary approach. The strengths of multidisciplinary master's programmes include broad-based expertise and the ability to use it in multidisciplinary and innovative working life environments. Key competencies in these master's programmes are a

<sup>2</sup> See also the discussion paper of the master's level profile: QAA Scotland, <http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/docs/report/what-is-mastersness.pdf>

critical understanding of the interfaces of the various disciplines, as well as the ability to use new types of working approaches and operating models for the benefit of working life. Many of the master's programmes in the field of technology and communication, social and health care, and tourism and hospitality management are designed to have a multidisciplinary knowledge base.

Master's programmes that focus on advanced expertise, skills and knowledge within a specific discipline have a strong connection to the R&D activities of the UAS. These programmes aim to generate in-depth knowledge and expertise, as well as capabilities regarding the efficient application and utilisation of such expertise and knowledge in industry and other fields of working life.

TABLE 1. Learning outcomes of the UAS master's programmes.	
European Qualifications Framework, level 7, second cycle degrees	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research.</li> <li>• Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields.</li> <li>• Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields.</li> <li>• Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches.</li> <li>• Take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams.</li> </ul>	
Profiles of the UAS master's programmes:	
Advanced/specialised expertise	Multidisciplinary approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The specialised expertise and methodological skills required in research and innovation activities.</li> <li>• The advanced skills and knowledge needed in specific fields of industry, business and society.</li> <li>• The ability to co-create knowledge related to one's own field of expertise and to transfer the knowledge in one's own organisation and outside it.</li> <li>• Skills and competencies to create new knowledge related to one's own field, application of the knowledge and evaluation of the effects of the input.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and diversification of expertise in multidisciplinary and multiprofessional teams in working life.</li> <li>• Creation of new knowledge and competencies to share knowledge and expertise.</li> <li>• Future-orientation and willingness and capabilities to innovate.</li> <li>• Skills and competencies needed in multidisciplinary research and innovation activities.</li> </ul>

UASs have listed the following as the key pedagogical principles of UAS master's degrees:

- dialogue and cooperation in learning
- peer learning and co-creation of knowledge
- research-oriented development work, problem based learning
- creativity and responsibility
- flexible and individual learning pathways
- digital learning environment
- tutoring and mentoring models

## KEY COMPETENCIES FOR STUDENTS AND WORKING LIFE

The results of the student and alumni feedback<sup>3</sup> show that UAS master's programmes have claimed their place as effective master's degrees in the Finnish education system. The combination of theoretical and practical studies offers students great possibilities to develop their skills and knowledge and challenge themselves.

Furthermore, employability rates are very high amongst graduates of UAS master's programmes, as these programmes give the qualifications needed in working life. A sign of these useful competencies is the fact that of all UAS master's programme graduates, 95% had a job within a year of graduating. Employment rates are very good in every field – some have rate of 98% and even the worst have a rate of 90%.

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<sup>3</sup> Feedback was gathered from Master's students and alumni in 2016 (n=922).

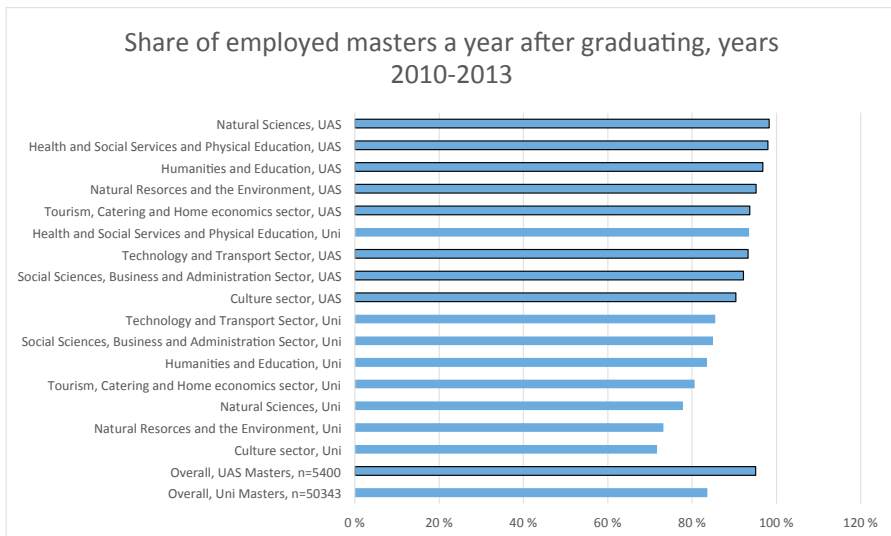


Figure 3. Proportions of employed master’s graduates a year after graduating, 2010–2013.

## UAS MASTER’S PROGRAMME GRADUATES ARE SATISFIED WITH THEIR DEGREES

Arene organised a survey of UAS master’s programme students and alumni in May 2016. In total 922 students and graduates responded to the survey (40% of the answers came from those who were taking or had taken programmes in social and health care, 24% from economics and 19% from technology).

The main result of the survey was that students and alumni are delighted with their master’s degrees and the associated competences. Altogether, 74% of students and alumni were happy or very happy with their degree. Feedback was also collected with an NPS survey tool, which is commonly and globally used to evaluate the achievement level of companies. Students and alumni were asked to evaluate on a scale from 1 to 10 with 10 being the highest and 1 the lowest, whether they would recommend their master’s programme to their friends. Overall, 71% gave a score of seven or higher. If we calculate the NPS score of all UAS master’s programmes, it would be 30, which is better than the medium score of all Finnish companies.

UAS master’s degrees also give students the skills, knowledge and competencies needed in the labour market; 91% of students and alumni

believe that the competencies they gained in their courses meet the needs of working life well or excellently. Noting that most of the students are already in working life, that all potential students are required to have three years of work experience, and that 95% will be in work within a year of graduating, we can trust that they have a genuine perspective on working life.

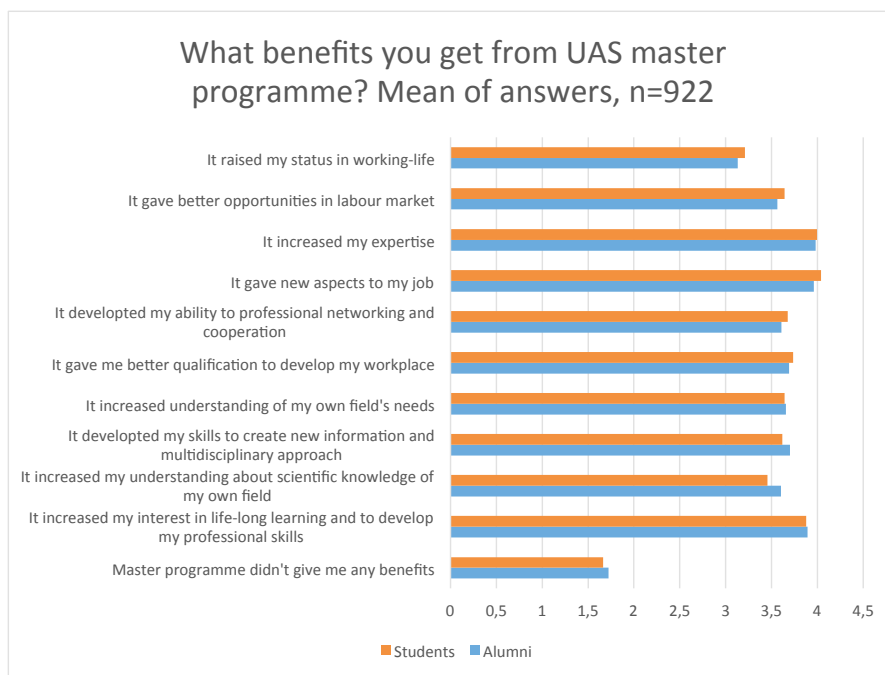


Figure 4. What benefits did you get from UAS master's programme? Mean of answers, n=922. Scale: 1 = do not agree to 5 = totally agree.

When comparing the skills and knowledge to the competencies required of EQF level 7 education, UAS master's degrees comfortably meet these requirements and in some cases – for example in working life cooperation and development skills – even surpass them. Overall, 76% of alumni and 66% of students stated that they had had cooperation with the world of work during their studies. Furthermore, 13% stated that the results of their Master thesis are being or have been used indirectly or in other ways to develop companies and working life. This is vital not only for companies, but also for regional development and the societal impact of higher education. A sizable proportion of enterprises, about 20%, are SMEs, and it is they who benefit most from this development.

One area of development is the international approach of programmes; when students and alumni were asked whether the programme developed their skills in terms of operating internationally, the mean result was 2.91 on a scale 1–5. This result shows that international approaches to studies should be expanded, however, the fact that all programmes are different and some have great international aspects already must be taken into consideration.

## CLOSING REMARKS

The role of higher education is undergoing a change. Universities and especially universities of applied sciences need to be more engaged with society, industry and the needs of SMEs. Entrepreneurship, innovation and new digital competences have a key role to play in professional higher education. The mission of UASs is based on applied science, creating professional knowledge to combat unknown challenges of the future world of work. Open innovations and co-creation models also challenge the whole HEI system. Based on the experiences of Finnish UASs, the UAS master's programme model can be one tool to achieve these goals; UAS master's programmes have a strong link with regional economies, and the programmes are flexibly designed to support changes in local working life and business.

Quality is the key to success, so the only way to develop UAS master's programmes is to keep the working world profile very strong and invest in international partnerships and cooperation. On the basis of the student survey, it is clear that the Finnish master's model is very innovative; it has definite advantages, which are attracting interest globally in the higher education and professional sector.

For the purposes of international benchmarking and cooperation, the following successful practices of Finnish UAS master's programmes are provided as examples:

- Cooperation and interaction both with working life and in higher education networks.
- Interactive and authentic working environments as UAS master's students' learning environments.
- Working life based higher education pedagogy and inspiring, up-to-date learning methods.
- Master's thesis: theses are drawn up as working life assignments.

- Principles of student admission: flexibility, competence- and motivation-based criteria.
- Teachers' competencies: both academic competencies and working life experience.

In principle, the concept of a UAS master's programme provides a good platform to build even more visible contacts between master's students and the world of work at a global level. At the same time the UAS master's concept also connects even stronger business networks with higher education. Digital tools are already in existence, so global expansion could be a future step for Finnish UAS master's programmes.

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# GREETINGS FROM BRAZIL

Marja Suhonen & Jarkko Wickström

During recent years many steps have been taken in Finland to develop Finnish education export, with examples including removal of legal obstacles and reorganisation of organisations providing support for education export. Additionally, ideas surrounding what education export can be and what Finns can offer abroad have been refined.

At the Embassy of Finland in Brazil we have been working together with Finnish education actors interested in the Brazilian market at an ever-growing pace for the last five years, with the very good reputation the Finnish school system has in Brazil having provided a stepping stone. Our small country is familiar to many Brazilians not only because of Santa Claus and the northern lights, but also thanks to the quality of our schools and teachers; this positive reputation is an excellent starting point.

We have already seen many education export success stories in Brazil in the last few years, especially in the field of vocational education. From the point of view of the Embassy, there is still plenty of potential to increase cooperation in the field exponentially, despite the downward trend of the Brazilian economy. Why is there so much potential, even now?

At the Embassy, it is clear to us that education export is not only about selling; being able to put a price on Finnish solutions and our know-how requires long-term groundwork. Brazilians want to get to know their potential business partners and everything is based on personal contact, with the best success stories taking place when people have taken the time to visit Brazil several times a year, built a personal relationship, got know their potential partners a bit more and taken the time to have a beer and dance local dances with them. An email sent from the other side of the ocean will not be enough for Brazilians. Whilst this means that Brazil can prove to be a demanding country and market, it is still a continental country with 200 million inhabitants and possibilities to offer at federal, state and local level. Due the size of the country, Brazilians also know their value and have their proud – even though Finnish education is appreciated here, it would be ill-advised to come and speak to potential Brazilian partners about importing our education solutions to this, a developing country. Instead, talking about cooperation where both sides are on the same level and want to build something together is much more likely to yield successful results.

Here at the Embassy we have noticed that education export is most often not about fast and easy deals, but instead, due to the nature of the field, deals struck here require a much more profound basis. We might even dare to suggest that at its best, education export combined with wide-ranging education and scientific cooperation can produce new, outstanding Finnish–Brazilian cooperation networks and research. At the Embassy we seek to bring Brazilians and Finns together – because we are sure that there are many Brazilians who are still to find their Finnish cooperation partner and vice versa.

## CONCLUSIONS

# CONCLUSIONS

Riikka Vanhanen & Riitta Rissanen

When talking about the export of education, the starting point should be – first and foremost – the high quality of education and education expertise. However, in order to bring this expertise into the global education market and awaken interest in it, the offering needs to be well-constructed and the mechanisms for delivering the products and services clearly established. For higher education institutions in Finland, engaging in these kinds of commercial activities internationally is a relatively new phenomenon and has necessitated not only the creation new operating models and enhancement of competence development, but also the adaptation of novel ideas regarding the role and tasks of higher education institutions.

This publication serves to provide a wide-ranging overview of the development and implementation measures that Finnish universities of applied sciences (UAS) have taken in the field of education export. The articles highlight the variety of initiatives taking place around the world and disclose the means and methods enabling these operations.

Regardless of the differences in the levels of organisation and experience between Finnish UASs, it is evident that systematic development to advance the education export activities has been carried out widely. As a result of these development measures and successfully established cooperation initiatives, UASs possess a significant amount of know-how in terms of global education markets and are well-positioned to take these activities even further. Finnish UASs have clear evidence of the modernisation of learning environments and the implementation new pedagogies and digital learning. Nevertheless, there is still a lot of work yet to be done and new approaches will be needed along the way.

One of the key measures for taking these now established practices to the next level is channelling the UASs' expertise into tighter cooperation. As pointed out in several articles, Finnish educational institutions, let alone UASs, are far too small to make a difference as individual actors; joining forces to create a united front may better serve the need to be recognised as a strong and plausible player in the global education field. Furthermore, digitalisation of the global economy and education also offers strong support and new possibilities for new kinds of networking, and at a more general level for the implementation of education export.

It is hoped that through the in-depth accounts on current practices, as well as reflections on the future aims and objectives of education export, this publication will bring about fresh ideas and allow for new goals to be set for the development of internationalisation in UASs.

We wish to extend a warm thank you all the authors who have contributed to the creation of this publication, and we hope that they will continue with their efforts to develop the internationalisation of education.



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In recent years, many Finnish universities of applied sciences (UAS) have engaged in systematic development of their educational expertise and services by adapting them for global education markets. The export of education has been acknowledged as its own sphere of operations, which is not only reliant on top-quality education but also requires new skills and competences, as well as novel mindsets, from the actors in higher education institutions. This publication, initiated by the international committee of the Rector's Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences (ARENE), gathers UASs' experiences of education export so far, while also providing ideas regarding future aims and expectations for operations in the field. The articles have been drawn up by 52 education experts representing 13 Finnish UASs, as well as their important interest groups and cooperation partners.

ISBN 978-951-830-436-7

