

*Internationalisation and Higher Education:  
A Strategic Perspective*

Nathalie Hyde-Clarke (Ed.) & Camilla Wikström-Grotell (Ed.)

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## EDITORIAL FOREWORD

The aim of this publication is to further discuss and describe the development of the strategic choices and activities that have contributed to Arcada being one of the most international universities of applied sciences in Finland. The future perspective is revealed in the reflections on what internationalisation as a strategic choice can bring to higher education excellence and student success. The starting point is a competency-based curriculum design. The importance of intercultural competence in higher education is highlighted from different perspectives with a focus on a global labor market, as well as students' employment and career development opportunities. The publication highlights research and research results in various types of international knowledge environments and networks.

Our hope is that this collection will form the basis for the continued development of related work. At Arcada, we emphasise internationalisation at a strategic level and apply internationalisation in an integrated and versatile way so that all three perspectives internationalisation at home (IaH), at a distance (IaD) and abroad (IA) support our overall goals: excellence and global sustainability in education.

We thank all those who contributed to this collection.

*Målet med denna publikation är att beskriva och diskutera utvecklingen och några av de strategiska val och aktiviteter som har bidragit till att Arcada är en av de mest internationella högskolorna i Finland. Framtidsperspektivet synliggörs i reflektioner över hur internationalisering som ett strategiskt val kan bidra till en kvalitativt högklassig utbildning och studentframgång. Utgångspunkten är en kompetensbaserad studieplansdesign. Betydelsen av interkulturell kompetens inom den högre utbildningen belyses ur olika synvinklar med fokus på en global arbetsmarknad, studenternas sysselsättning och karriärsutvecklingsmöjligheter. Publikationen belyser forskning och forskningsresultat i olika typer av internationella kunskapsmiljöer och nätverk.*

*Vår förhoppning är att publikationen skall utgöra en grund för fortsatt utvecklingsarbete inom området. Arcada lyfter fram internationalisering på strategisk nivå och tillämpar internationalisering integrerat och mångsidigt så att alla tre perspektiv internationalisering på hemmaplan (IaH), på distans (IaD) och utomlands (IA) stöder det övergripande målet: excellens och global hållbarhet i utbildningen.*

*Vi tackar alla som har bidragit till detta samlingsverk.*



# Internationalisation as a Strategic Priority

Mona Forsskåhl<sup>i</sup>, Camilla Wikström-Grotell<sup>ii</sup>

## Abstract

In this paper we will give an overview of Arcada as one of the most international universities of applied sciences in Finland. This will be done by describing some critical steps taken in the past on the way to where Arcada is today. Secondly, we will discuss the importance of internationalisation as a strategic choice on a general level. Some major aspects of how to support internationalisation as an integrated part of daily life in higher education will be highlighted.

**Keywords:** International cooperation, strategic internationalisation, diversity

## 1. INTRODUCTION: DIVERSITY AS THE BASIS FOR SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Scientific knowledge and science – be it humanities or natural science – is fundamentally about presenting ideas, theories, methods and empirical results for testing by other scientists. The development of new knowledge, new understanding and new applications is best supported by different viewpoints meeting and diverse arguments being brought to light and weighed against each other. Diversity is the key here. Bringing scientists and students from different contexts, cultures and language areas together in a higher education and scientific context is one way of setting the stage for unexpected things to happen, new questions to be asked and surprising answers to be found. Diversity, and the disruption of conformity that a diverse group lays a basis for, are in fact among the best contexts for learning, innovation and development – on a healthy critical, scientific basis.

In addition to diversity and its benefits for the development of new ideas and innovation, international interaction and contacts are necessary for maintaining scientific quality and staying in tune with current scientific development. Higher education, not least within the fields of applied science, needs to keep track of what is going on, on a global scale, in various disciplines: what new topics are discussed; what new fields of development are being explored; and what needs are there in society, in working life? Science should not be locked in by borders. A high quality university of applied science should (keep in constant touch with what is going,) keep its finger on the pulse in order to be able to address and develop solutions for various stakeholders. The only way to stay abreast and secure high quality is to look across borders – both regional, national and cultural.

Based on these fundamental ideas, it is essential for any educational and scientific institution (universities of applied sciences just as much as classical theoretical universities) to constantly strive to promote diversity, both among staff and students. One way of doing this is to create and develop international contacts and international cooperation within

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research and education alike. Another method is to let internationalisation become a strategic priority and an aspect to be taken into account within all activities of the university. Arcada UAS aims to incorporate the former and the latter. Doing this is a natural next step down a path chosen when Arcada was founded about 24 years ago.

## 2. DEVELOPING ARCADA AS AN INTERNATIONAL UAS

Society is facing unprecedented social, economic and environmental challenges driven by accelerating globalisation and technological development. Consequently, higher education must be proactive and prepare students with competencies needed in future working life that enables a successful career and a good life (Cook, 2019). International and multicultural competencies are thus crucial for both academics and students and internationalisation of higher education is a necessary key.

Arcada UAS is one of the most international universities in Finland. Our international students represent more than 60 different nationalities and make up about 20 % of our graduate students, the highest percentage of all Finnish universities (Linna & Wolff, 2019). This is the result of long-term goal-oriented work and several important strategic initiatives through the years. Within the three higher education institutes that later came to form Arcada<sup>1</sup>, the importance of international collaboration was considered important in order to promote quality in studies and knowledge development in education, as well as to support the competence of students and staff already before Arcada was founded. Contacts with other European universities and especially with the Nordic countries, has been active from the very beginning. Today Arcada has more than 120 mobility agreements and partnerships in all parts of the world, with a focus on the Nordic countries and Europe.

Several strategic initiatives can be pointed out during Arcada's 23-year history, all of which have contributed to the internationalisation and multicultural environment seen in the daily life of Arcada. First, the importance of student, teacher and researcher exchange was considered necessary for university excellence and student success. Different perspectives on knowledge and a wider critical mass were considered as crucial for high standards in teaching and research. Therefore, both staff and students were expected to be active on various international arenas. Mobility programmes such as Nordplus and Erasmus were used to build up an international network of higher education institutions, thus supporting a multicultural learning environment.

It was also recognised early on that international degree programmes benefit the whole university. The first international bachelor programmes, *International business* and *Human ageing and elderly care*, already started in 1997 with active student recruitment on the international market. Even if the introduction of English-language education brought many challenges for students and staff, including cultural and linguistic issues, the experiences were overwhelmingly positive. International staff and students enrich the education in many different ways, adding value for all (de Wit & Jones, 2018). The international contacts enhanced not only the development of the content of studies, methods of teaching and E-learning (Hyde-Clarke & Wikström-Grotell, 2016), but led to a more open and richer international culture both internally and externally, that characterises Arcada even today.

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<sup>1</sup> Helsingfors svenska sjukvårdsinstitut, Lilla hanken and Tekniska läroverket i Helsingfors



Arcada was a pioneer in implementing the European higher education reform (EHEA) and introduced the first competency-based curriculum as early as the 2000s. A competency-based curriculum represented a new paradigm that emphasises the complex outcomes of a learning process, knowledge, skills and attitudes to be applied by learners rather than focusing on what learners are expected to learn about in terms of traditionally defined subject content. (EQF; Wikström-Grotell, 2014; Wikström-Grotell & Tigerstedt, 2014). The reform's ambitious goals: *smart, sustainable and inclusive growth* have changed over time, but the lasting focus is to strengthen Europe in relation to the rest of the world based on excellent and accessible higher education (Europe 2020; European Commission 2011, 2013).

An important milestone was that Arcada was awarded the ECTS Quality label<sup>2</sup> as the first university in Finland and among the first in Europe in 2004 (Stadius, 2014). The competency-based curriculum was an important milestone enhancing both a student-centred as well as a collaborative learning view with a teacher-team approach (Arcada, 2016). The curriculum was based on competency thinking with descriptions of generic and professional competences and learning outcomes. Arcada took the first visible steps toward an interdisciplinary (multi-professional) study culture as the generic competences were prescribed commonly for all students from different education fields. Language studies were considered especially important and the basis for a curriculum that includes more language studies than usual at other universities of applied sciences, was created. Language support for both teachers and international students was also introduced and provided.

The launch of international English-language programmes in all central educational areas (Stadius, 2018) as a complement to the corresponding Swedish-language programme was an important milestone which was actualised in the early 2010s. The idea was that international education enriches the study environment so that collaboration between

Swedish and English programmes, students and staff increases for example would lead to joint courses and improve international student inclusion. This development was supported by actively recruiting international teachers and researchers. From the beginning, Arcada aimed to recruit international students to the international programmes, not Finnish students as in many other universities. Today Arcada has 3 bachelor and 3 master programmes in English and more than 20% of our students have a different mother tongue than Swedish.

Arcada also realised the importance of investing in international, high-quality research, which was supported at a strategic level and policy for research already in the 2000's. Arcada has through the years actively participated, initiated and led several high quality international research, development and innovation (RDI) projects with external funding (Arcada, 2019). Active international research has resulted in a relatively high proportion of publications in international scientific journals. Researchers with other cultural backgrounds than Finnish have been recruited, and researchers at Arcada have been encouraged to travel, connect and cooperate internationally. For several years, Arcada has been one of the top-ranked universities of applied sciences in Finland. The strong international profile has been a contributing factor to this success.

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<sup>2</sup> The ECTS Labels are honorary distinctions and are awarded to higher education institutions that demonstrated the correct implementation of ECTS principles and requirements according to the European higher education reform, the so-called Bologna process.

### 3. THE NEXT STEPS

Raising internationalisation at a strategic level at Arcada can also be seen as a response to the long-term goal of the Government Programme and national higher education policy goals. In 2025 Finland is expected to be open and international, rich in languages and cultures with a shared vision of ways to promote a smoother integration of foreign students, researchers and other staff into the Finnish higher education and research community (OKM 2019).

When Arcada chooses internationalisation as a strategic priority, it aligns well with the Government programme. It will also mean we need to go further in our development than where we are today. Internationalisation should in the future, not be an issue within the degree programmes and for the research staff to handle. Our international identity should be a feature that concerns everybody within Arcada and everything we do at our university every day.

At the end of 2019, new strategic goals for Arcada UAS have been laid down for the next ten years, stating that Arcada aims at global relevance through its Scandinavian network. This means that Arcada will be intensifying its already existing cooperation with different Scandinavian partners, offering globally attractive, joint degree programmes within all our disciplines. We will specifically be emphasizing and explicating the Scandinavian value basis (equality, trust, democratic principles and sustainable solutions) in all our international RDI-programmes, in our curricula and our ways of working. At the same time, we will also prioritize and try to develop RDI-programmes and curricula addressing global challenges and problems. The new strategy also states that all our students and staff shall have the opportunity to take part in Scandinavian and other international networking, and as part of this, develop international contacts while learning multicultural communication and team work skills. In addition, Arcada promises to further develop the service and guidance for international students and staff.

In order to reach all these aims, quite a few steps need to be taken in the form of prioritised development projects. The first over-arching step (already taken) was to assign a director responsible for further developing guidelines for internationalisation at a strategic level. She is supported in her work by a steering group consisting of both teachers, researchers and administrative staff. As a result of this group's focused work, new steps are taken during autumn 2019 to deepen some of Arcada's partnerships with academic partner universities abroad. By the end of spring 2020, a policy for Arcada's further work on internationalisation will be ready for implementation the following academic year.

Another strategic level step concerns the international recruitment of students to our English degree programmes. Arcada is trying out a new, more flexible recruitment process, starting this year, with the intent to make it easier for potential students to apply, accept their study place and prepare for the move to Finland. One major change is that it will be possible to apply and be admitted without travelling to Finland. Another one is the continuous application and admission process. Immediately after an applicant has made the application and can prove the set entrance criteria, he or she can be offered a study place. The supposed result is an increasing number of international students attending our international programmes. An increase in the amount of students from other countries would provide a wider diversity in the student groups, and a potential for acquiring cross-cultural communication skills much needed in society.

A further strategic level development project concerns counselling, support and guidance for our international students and their career development. The current situation in this regard is good, but during the next years, new forms of counselling and guidance will be offered in cooperation with partner universities and institutions in the Helsinki area.

The projects presented above are important for the internationalisation of the organisation as a whole. However, our international profile needs to be present also at a micro level, in all decisions we take and choices we make, in our everyday encounters with colleagues, students and partners and in our way of talking and communicating about our university to people outside it.

Arcada is heading towards an exciting new decade with fascinating possibilities and new internationalisation initiatives, both for the organization as a whole and for individuals working within or with Arcada. In the next chapters, some of the development lines and plans are laid out in detail, and discussed by some of Arcada's own experts and enthusiasts contributing to our future. The combination of the different discussions draw a picture of a university of applied science determined to choose internationalisation as a strategic priority.

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# Transforming University Experience through Internationalisation Strategy and Entrepreneurial Thinking

Denise Villikka<sup>i</sup>, Nathalie Hyde-Clarke<sup>ii</sup>, Camilla Wikström-Grotell<sup>iii</sup>,  
Mervi Hernberg<sup>v</sup>

## Abstract

In this era of change, higher education vessels, commissioned with the task of advancing knowledge, face the emergence of a global knowledge economy that call into question, the purpose, function, and delivery of education. By incorporating internationalisation aspects into the core of strategy, universities hope to strengthen their enterprise in an era where self-sustainment and continued renewal help ensure their future. Although supportive literature focuses on structural aspects of implementing internationalisation strategy (such as: the recruitment of foreign students and faculty, curriculums that consider employability globally and the nurturing of partnerships internationally), there seems to be a gap in literature that outlines issues relating to substance that could be beneficial for higher education institutions wishing to enact change through an internationalisation strategy. Creating university specific strategies that are communicated through entrepreneurial thinking, have the potential to provide fertile ground for innovation where higher education institutions can thrive in a continual *state of becoming*. The purpose of this conceptual contribution is to bring forward theory that can be used to support innovation, collaboration, and communication among faculty (academics, organisation staff). This is accomplished by bringing to the forefront, alternative views on the ideologies and rationales hidden within the concept of internationalisation, along with how change and disruption can contribute to development and knowledge creation by transforming how people experience university life.. This contribution contains rationales and ideologies that support both academic and organisational faculty and is part of a publication series that explores concepts of internationalisation as a strategic choice at Arcada University of Applied Sciences, located in Helsinki, Finland.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial thinking, Higher education, Internationalisation strategy, University experience

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Internationalisation strategies seem to be resurfacing with renewed vigour as a way of shaping policy and practice as global dimensions relating to the purpose, function and delivery of higher education take new forms worldwide. (Knight, 2004; Zolfaghari, Sabran & Zolfaghari, 2009). Several approaches to internationalisation in higher education can be distinguished. Internationalisation at Home (IaH) aims to develop intercultural and international awareness for students studying at an institution within their home country. Internationalisation Abroad (IA), refers to education across borders, including the

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movement of students, staff, and programmes. Internationalisation at a Distance (IaD) includes various forms of cross-border education where students, personnel and institutional regulations are supported by technology to eliminate the physical distance. (Knight, 2008; Mittelmeier et.al., 2019) It is necessary that these different approaches are supported by a relevant curriculum design and appropriately chosen pedagogical interventions.

As vessels commissioned with the task of advancing knowledge, those working in higher education may struggle to find solutions that offer stability as they continue to experience the changing realities of this era (Robson, 2011). Approaches vary from institution to institution and within departments (Bedenlier, Kondakci & Zawacki-Richter, 2018). While some organisations seek assurance by increasing their mass through mergers, others hope to remain relevant by finding new ways to employ popular concepts found in globalisation (Altbach, 2002), internationalisation, and digitalisation into their strategic plans. Still others believe that staying the course without change while simultaneously poised to jump aboard the next new idea or object of salvation is the best course (Agnew & Van Balkom, 2009; Altbach, 2002; Barnett, 2014; Donoghue, 2018).

What if the proven strategic designs of the past cannot hope to offer the same benefits previously experienced because the nature of academia within the emerging global knowledge economy (de Wit, 2011) demands continuous recreation? Where in the past, universities built strategies around one paradigm like the recruitment of foreign students (Albach, 2002), the nature of education has changed so that linear approaches like this cannot hope to provide the same benefits previously experienced (de Wit, 2011). If university life is unique in this way, then adopting past strategies could simultaneously hinder experiencing full potential – even if it does mean survival at the most basic level (Agnew & Van Balkom, 2009). This article postulates that through the expansion of our ideas concerning not only the structure of the university experience but also its substance, (Barnett, 2014) fresh discovery and new insights could offer stability through transformation. (de Wit, 2011) Toward that end is the creation of a new type of institution specific university experience that is rooted in the future. Accomplishing this requires the expertise of faculty and academics coming together, which can be problematic in terms of slightly diverging interests (management vs academic freedom). (Agnew & Van Balkom, 2009) Common ground may be found in understanding and respecting co-workers thoughts, feelings and by taking up entrepreneurial thinking while engaging together in the work of creation. (Barringer & Ireland, 2012) The purpose of this conceptual contribution is to bring forward theory that can be used to support innovation and collaboration among diverse personnel who wish to enact change through internationalisation initiatives that align with their institution's strategy.

This article opens by grounding themes of internationalisation within the context of higher education. Exploring how people identify differently with the concept of internationalisation, their role, position, and contribution within their operating environment

uniquely, could facilitate collaboration. (Beck, 2012) For example, those who think differently and ask *what if* questions are often tolerated or marginalised by members who are more dominant. Understanding others positions can aid in explaining some of the roots that feed dynamics encountered during the mapping process of change and throughout the transformation of internationalisation from an idea into sustainable practice. (Agnew & Van Balkom, 2009; Beck, 2012) Next, strategic methods that nurture governance during organisational change followed by concepts within entrepreneurship are presented. For example, exercising entrepreneurial thinking in times of change can assist in working within an environment that is constantly in flux. (Barringer & Ireland, 2012) In closing, the article brings forward early pioneers who despite normative pressure, dared to think differently about the university experience. Together, their work has influenced how we conceptualise university life today.

## 2. INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY & HIGHER EDUCATION

Though internationalisation is not a new concept, definitions vary depending on context (Knight, 2004). While the root word *international* refers to interactions, activities or relations among or within two or more nations, the suffix *isation*, implies an end state in a process or the result of an effort (Bedenlier, Kondakci & Zawacki-Richter, 2018). Though there is not a consensus on *what* internationalisation means, there is a list of theories seeking to explain *why* society engages in international activities beginning in 1776 with Adam Smith's trade theory of Absolute Cost Advantage. Most of the known theories associate internationalisation with activities that help to ensure economic advantage and strengthen enterprise. (Alon, Anderson, Munim & Ho, 2018; Susman, 2007) With this in mind, it perhaps aids in understanding critics' points of view when they express ethical concerns integrating strategies that include internationalisation within higher education. These concerns stem from the idea that internationalisation process could result in the restructuring of higher education institutions (HEI's) as businesses with education as the commodity. (Donoghue, 2018; Knight, 2004; Khorsandi, 2014)

Not only is drawing one meaning out of the term internationalisation challenging, but also understanding how different individuals identify with the concept. (Beck, 2012). A variety of ideologies may exist within an organisation in departmental silos that may serve or hinder an organisation's ability to enact their strategic goals. Not only do individuals identify differently with the concept of internationalisation, they also view its role within their operating environment uniquely. This poses additional challenges and opportunities when institutions embark upon a change process that is dominated by a single paradigm. For example, some may believe that the recruitment and education of foreign students forms the core of international strategy, which would be unwise given the changing nature of higher education and its position within society. In order to assist others, it can be

beneficial for personnel leading the change process to not only become aware of the institutions rationale behind the chosen strategy but also be familiar with differing rationales in order to offer support. (Donoghue, 2018; Knight, 2004)

## 2.1. Identifying with Internationalisation Rationales

*Instrumentalism*, *idealism* and *educationalism* are three rationales that typically drive internationalisation strategy within higher education. (Knight, 2004; Steir, 2004) Those who identify with *Instrumentalism* lean toward a more pragmatic viewpoint that values transparency, inclusive education, intercultural understanding, critical thinking and social intelligence. The primary aim for those that subscribe to this rationale hope to bolster their faculty while ensuring it has the skills and competencies needed for a future that is complex and multicultural. Benefits on a national level could include a flexible labour force whose mobilisation results in enhanced competencies that together serve in helping to ensure economic growth, sustainability and a competitive edge. (Alon, Anderson, Munim & Ho, 2018; Susman, 2007) The avenue through which they hope to achieve this end state is by treating higher education as a commodity that is no different from any other market. Supporters may include governments, policy-makers and transnational corporations who strive for the unification of higher education systems around the world. Another term not often used, due to its potential negative association, is *the commercialisation of education*. Those in higher education, wishing to use internationalisation as a catalyst to enact change within this frame, choose to focus on attracting fee-paying students from abroad, seek standards for homogeneous grading and accreditation systems along with the exportation of expeditious university degree programmes that have general competencies and broad focus. (Beck, 2012; Steir, 2004) The drawback here is that these indicators may lead to focusing not on learning but on graduating early, nurturing a frenzied state of accreditation processes and fast-track programmes. (Bonner, 1998)

Those that identify with *idealism*, believe that international collaboration benefits society through, “the creation of a more democratic, fair and equal world” (Steir, 2004 p. 88). The guiding light of higher education institutions following this ideal is to nurture global mindedness, thus helping to ensure continued societal progress and improvement for humanity. One way this is accomplished is through internationalising the curriculum so that learners and faculty begin to comprehend differences and similarities in ideas, ways of communicating, cultural beliefs, and values. This increased awareness then births empathy for others outside their socio-economic sphere, expressed through actions of respect, democratic values and willingness to take action in ways that support a global community, prevent racism, self-righteousness and ethnocentrism. The potential drawback here is that the former does not necessarily ensure the latter. (Beck, 2012; Steir, 2004)

Those in the *educationalism* camp experience internationalisation as a way toward self-actualisation along with professional and academic growth. Instead of hoping to ensure economic prosperity or meeting labour markets’ demands, the experience of learning is



the cornerstone of their belief. The enlightenment, gained over time as learners and faculty discover similarities and differences in other cultures, opens possibilities where comparisons of *home* and *away* occur naturally. Exposure to new social norms and expectations, language and ways of doing life challenge one's attitudes, prejudices and stereotypes while facilitating the emergence of respect and equality for other perspectives, beliefs and values. In this way, learning is life-long, multidimensional and stimulated through the continuous reflection of cultural differences and similarities that results in a continuous cycle of emerging self-knowledge. Higher education institutions that value this rationale could place greater emphasis on cultural biases or embedded ideologies in their curriculum while offering opportunities for students and staff to experience life abroad. In this way, education is a means toward enlightenment and knowledge acquisition on a global scale. The potential challenge here is that individuals may become fixated on themselves and their experiences instead of building genuine relationships with others from outside their social circle. (Beck, 2012; Steir, 2004).

## 2.2. Strategy, Governance and Inclusion

Strategies are one avenue through which an organisation can realise their goals through their ability to identify and measure progress. Within higher education, indicators represent both academic and organisational perspectives. Academics typically focus on creating and sharing new knowledge, education development, building and nurturing network partners and cooperation nationally and internationally. Organisational staff focuses on operations, structures, and systems for coordinating and communicating along with resource allocation and the management of human resources. Together, academics and organisational faculty make up a holistic matrix that supports the change process. (Knight, 2008; Murshudova, 2011) When it comes to organisational strategies, structures and systems that support international dimensions, the mission, value and vision statements can assist in ensuring the facilitation of good governance as faculty enact changes together. (Knight, 2008) Examples can include diversity initiatives influencing how, when, where and with whom learning happens through the reshaping of multilingual curriculums that include distance learning opportunities. It is important to note that not only formal but also informal interactions aid in nurturing internationalisation and development. (Knight, 2008; Murshudova, 2011)

When it comes to governance, employees of an organisation who choose to place internationalisation at the heart of their strategic plan can expect to experience changes throughout their working environment. On the management level, these types of changes could affect the governance and structure of the organisation both physically and philosophically as administrators seek to prioritise the continued generation of revenue. Activities could include altering an organisation's operating structure, changes in the administration of processes and adjustments in the distribution of funds that use quantitative indicators like efficiency and productivity. Additionally, changes in policy could include new hiring practices that use a wider net and the recruitment of foreign students in order

to build a strong profile and reputation that secures their market-share. Just as the approach changes the relationship between learning among higher education institutions and society, it changes also the way educators and learners engage. For example, teaching and learning being one link in a chain of activities that produces a product, could draw on quantitative indicators like cost-effectiveness over qualitative indicators that rely on client satisfaction. (Alon, Anderson, Munim & Ho, 2018; Susman, 2007) Additional elements of internationalisation could include; (i) the recruitment of foreign students and faculty, (ii) nurturing partnerships domestically and internationally, (iii) alterations in curriculum that prepares learners for their future profession on the world stage, and (iv) exchange programmes for students and faculty. (de Wit, 2011; Khorsandi, 2014).

Having outlined some of the themes relating to internationalisation and grounding them within the context of higher education, it is important to note that the enactment of supportive policies do not automatically guarantee a more inclusive international mindset institution wide, genuine collaboration, nor the sustainability of new globally-minded practice. Reasons can vary but examples include unclear or absent organisational strategies that encompass internationalisation with measurable outcomes, (Bedenlier, 2018; de Haan, 2014) the level of readiness for faculty to engage in the change process, (Agnew & Van Balkom, 2009) and competing ideologies and rationales on implementation. (Ellwardt, Labianca & Wittek, 2012)

The concepts highlighted above may explain some of the roots that feed dynamics encountered during the mapping process and throughout the transformation of internationalisation from an idea into sustainable practice within an organisation. (Agnew & Van Balkom, 2009; Ellwardt et al., 2012; de Haan, 2014; Stier, 2004) It may not be possible for all participants to agree on a single rationale and indeed that may not be the goal; however, it is important to note that communication skills, terminology, and their definitions become essential in the beginning stages as a type of crude rudder for the organisation embarking upon change. (de Haan, 2014) The common belief is that people can communicate effectively with others who are from another background by exercising various forms of restraint (tolerance), thereby facilitating the emergence of equality and justice for all people regardless of differences in social standing and culture. Early accounts of tolerance date back to the times of Aristotle while; Karl Popper's (1945) *The Open Society and Its Enemies* draws on the works of Plato in analysing social change and discontent. He argues that sustaining a golden standard of tolerance is doomed to failure, for tolerance could not defend against an onslaught of intolerance, for by doing so, it would undermine their core belief in that very tolerance (Popper, 1945)

The absence of an inclusive culture that values the merits of diversity could lead to disputes and the marginalisation of those who hold divergent beliefs or those who find it difficult or impossible to articulate their beliefs. This can lead to the creation of entrenched types of silos where versions of the most popular rationale held by the majority, live. (Ellwardt et al., 2012; Staley, 2019) To combat this, managers can clarify the importance of both academic and organisational viewpoints, while supporting all faculty,

regardless of their orientation toward internationalisation. By shifting the focus away from differences holding negative connotations and introducing the idea that differences can serve as a positive attribute for an organisation, can reassure participants that their voice is heard and valued. (Popper, 1945) It is important to note, whatever rationales an organisation seeks to identify with, the terms and their definitions should be relevant to the specific issues faced within their institution and align with their strategic goals, with an eye to the future. (Brandenburg & de Wit, 2011; Knight, 2004). Above, concepts relating to internationalisation have been brought forward. In the next section, entrepreneurial thinking is introduced as a method of leading change within an organisation

### 3. INTRA- AND ENTREPRENEURIAL THINKING

The term *entrepreneur* takes its meaning from the French word *entre*, which means ‘between’ and *prendre* meaning, ‘to take’. Joined together, they imply a willingness to take on risk. (Knight, 2004) While some theorists conceptualise the term entrepreneurship as a cluster of value systems or beliefs that can be joined for the purpose of creation, (Molan & Leleux, 1997) others describe entrepreneurship as an avenue through which one can pursue an objective, despite a lack of resources. (Barringer & Ireland, 2012). Whether the term is understood as a process or a compilation of connected concepts, those that engage in entrepreneurial thinking are those who are creative and willing to take a calculated risk although the level of risk taking varies. (Barringer & Ireland, 2012)

The four characteristics of impactful entrepreneurs include: (i) passion for the business, (ii) product/customer focus, (iii) tenacity despite failure, and (iv) execution intelligence. While *passion for the business*, is considered to be critical because it fuels the vision throughout the ups and downs that come with innovation and change, a *product/customer focus* assists in maintaining momentum by providing a simple and continuous stream of support during key intersections. Maintaining focus during the creative process despite setbacks is coined, *tenacity despite failure*. Leaders, who have this trait, can navigate their way through unforeseen trials and help others. The final characteristic is *execution intelligence*. A way to look at this characteristic is one’s ability to juggle a host of activities over time while motivating others. Most importantly, entrepreneurial leaders should be able to relate to key partners, have a clear understanding of their key activities and resources so that they can communicate and support those within their circle of influence. (Barringer & Ireland, 2012)

Intrapreneurship, on the other hand, can be defined on a general level as the innovative initiatives undertaken inside an organisation. Innovation orientation in higher education and pedagogy corresponds to requirements in working life that have arisen due to rise in globalisation, as well as rapid changes in technologies and the labor market. The understanding of how an intrapreneurial mindset can be created among university students has increased, and the emphasis for entre- and intrapreneurship education and pedagogy has shifted from a model where the focus was on learning and how to start your own business

towards a broader view where an intrapreneurial mindset is at the centre (Hoppe, Westerberg & Leffler, 2016). In professional higher education, there is a growing interest in enhancing student's intrapreneurial skills through active learning and reflection in real environments and in multidisciplinary collaboration. At Arcada, several pilot projects are underway aimed at improving students' intra-entrepreneurial skills<sup>3</sup>.

Presented in this section is the idea of exercising entrepreneurial thinking during change that involves diverse clusters of people working together. Developing awareness through learning how others think and feel about internationalisation and their role in the process aids in facilitating leaders as they support the acceptance of diverse opinions during collaboration in a fluctuating environment. (Agnew & Van Balkom, 2009) Bridging entrepreneurial thinking with internationalisation strategy can assist leaders in supporting both organisational and academic members of faculty. (Barringer & Ireland, 2012) As mentioned in the previous chapter, one of the obstacles an organisation can encounter is the marginalisation of faculty who hold divergent views and have differing levels of tolerance. In order for leaders to motivate and promote self-sustaining development initiatives that together contribute to organisational strategic goals, players need to be informed, and genuinely come together in support of one-another despite their differences. (Ellwardt et al., 2012) Understanding the ideologies and rationales of others who hold different views from themselves concerning internationalisation and change, can assist in not only forming collaborative clusters where the core truths for all participants are respected but can nurture creativity and innovation into the future. (Ellwardt et al., 2012; Staley, 2019)

Presented in this section are some of the works of forerunners who dared to challenge the establishment while imagining a future where education happened naturally. Hopefully, their work will ignite flames of creativity and courage among those working in higher education to enact changes that are institution specific instead of feeling obligated to follow the wake of larger, more established vessels of learning. It should also inspire them to move beyond awareness and acceptance toward long-term actions that involve people from different backgrounds, cultures and languages (Staley, 2019). The following scholars dared not only to think differently but acted by moving away from the traditional higher education culture of their time. The ability to use their changing era to build new philosophies and pathways in learning that utilised experiences in society, culture, art and dialogue to nurture new knowledge development and transfer within university life, has helped shape ideologies of higher education and rationales behind policies and practice, today. (Barnett, 2014; Bonner, 1998; Robson, 2011)

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<sup>3</sup>. See more details of the Työpeda project <https://www.tyopedafin.fi/>, Arcada coaching clinic <https://inside.arcada.fi/entrepreneurship/creating-work-life-skills-in-an-entrepreneurial-environment/>, the Creathon project <https://creathon.metropolia.fi/> and the Demola collaboration <https://www.demola.net/>.

#### 4. TRANSFORMING THE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

In this section, the concepts introduced previously (internationalisation and the adoption of entrepreneurial thinking) are brought together and examples are given of people who used the challenges of their time as a catalyst for transforming university experience. (Barringer & Ireland, 2012; Barnett, 2014; Bonner, 1998))

The idea of using alternate drivers in strategic planning as a disruptor to facilitate change within the university environment is not a new concept. Pioneers include Ronald Barnett, John Andrew Rice, Abraham Flexner, John Sperlberg, and Ronald Barnett. As Barnett describes it, his ‘corpus of work’ springs from the idea that a university is many things all at once. He argues that it is possible to be imaginative, practical, critical and conceptual. Academic discourse relating to his thoughts on the intermingling and super complexity of life on a university campus continues. (Barnett, 2014; Bonner, 1998)

While Barnett focuses on campus life, John Andrew Rice challenged education methods that considered one’s ability to memorise, store and replicate knowledge as proof of learning. Drawing on the earlier work of John Dewey, Rice created lasting change by opening Black Mountain College near Ashville, North Carolina, where he placed experiences at the heart of education philosophy. He used lectures, discussions and mentoring that focused on emotional and social maturity as a way toward the development of intellectual intelligence. Some examples of his entrepreneurial leadership include the central role of non-formal social and cultural activities in accentuating concepts. For example, he was able to recognise the opportunity found in the European refugees who were seeking asylum during World War II as vessels of knowledge and invited them as guest lecturers. During sessions, learners experienced what was happening in the world at that time from the mouths of those who lived it. Non-verbal outlets of expressing meaning such as music, painting, and dance were everyday experiences and embedded in campus life. (Hill, Pierce, and Guthrie, 2009; Stankiewicz, 1988)

Abraham Flexner opposed the standard model of education by questioning assessment practices that used attendance, exams and grades. He postulated that students were required to jump through so many hoops at such a frenzied rate, there was little time left for learning. Flexner believed learning was a natural process in a conducive environment. Like Rice, Flexner’s graduates received invitations to leading universities and other high-ranking education institutions began to take notice. In 1930, he opened The Institute for Advanced Study. Like Rice, Bonner assisted Europeans who were seeking asylum, which led to Albert Einstein’s inclusion as members of faculty. (Bonner, 1998)

Despite the controversy surrounding the introduction of the first for-profit public university, let us not fail to recognise that John Sperlberg was a pioneer who recognised the potential in serving the adult-centred market. His ideas on experimental adult education

as a way of developing workforce excellence, led to the offering of options for accreditation and fast-track placement through an early recognition of prior learning concept that considered experience gained from working-life. (Donoghue, 2018)

Each of the individuals mentioned created environments of discovery by focusing on developing learning pathways that nurture experiences (Donoghue, 2008) and exchanges (Bonner, 1998) in a stimulating environment. (Hill et al., 2009; Stankiewicz, 1988) One immersed in international influence. (Barnett, 2014) Learners and faculty engaged the notion of university life being a continuous *journey of becoming* (Marginson, 2019) where diversity added richness. (Popper, 1945, Staley, 2019)

## 5. DISCUSSION

This contribution begins by highlighting some of the changes universities are experiencing in an age where the very notion of education and its role within society is in question (Knight, 2004; Zolfaghari, Sabran & Zolfaghari, 2009). Where in the past, universities were centres for knowledge creation and transfer; nowadays they are also business enterprises with a strong strategic focus (Susman, 2007). The world is changing so quickly putting added pressure on universities to offer diverse learning paths that prepares individuals for their future as global citizens. (de Wit, 2011; Robson, 2011) Though higher education organisations seek inspiration in an era of continuous change, the ideal path, or university to which all other institutions should aspire is a myth. (Barnett, 2014) While a cookie-cutter approach (whereby all students receive a similar education experience and outcome) may help to ensure short-term survival, but it may inevitably backfire, hindering an organisation from reaching its full potential. Additionally, the strategies of the past may not be able to address the pressures of our new reality.

(Alon, Andersom, Munim & Ho, 2018; Robson, 2011; Susman, 2007) In this section, we will include some references to how Arcada has attempted to address the need for a more relevant and inclusive internationalisation strategy.

With this in mind, is the reemergence of internationalisation strategies a way of fulfilling the mandates and expectations of society while offering new opportunities to reshape university life in ways that help to ensure their relevance in the future? If this is the case, then developing an inclusive culture within an organisation using internationalisation comes with risks and challenges. (Agnew & Van Balkom, 2009; Donoghue, 2018; de Haan, 2014; Stier, 2004) One of the greatest challenges during organisational change is marginalisation. Those who have the loudest voice may push the agenda in a direction they feel most comfortable, attempting to create their version of equilibrium and in doing so silence others who are as passionate to contribute but less aggressive in their presentation. (Ellwardt et al., 2012). Knowing this, during Arcada's recent review of the overall strategy (led by the ProRector for Research and Innovation: Dr. Henrika Franck), staff and management were invited to participate in focus groups and workshops. In certain instances, staff were intentionally paired with people from outside their units to remove

previous relationships of familiarity, power and influence. This created a more forthcoming environment from which to develop ideas. This approach was also replicated to some extent in the Steering Group for Internationalisation, when the chair (Dr. Camilla Wikström-Grotell) held a workshop where members could reflect on what the term 'internationalisation' meant to them with a colleague from a different unit, and then share those thoughts with others through the use of posters. This approach again ensures that all participants have a chance to share their own ideas with the group, and have 'voice'. The challenge though is to maintain this level of consultancy throughout the process.

Another aspect to consider when implementing internationalisation strategy is the idea of exercising tolerance as a way of mediating differences. This 'golden standard' is impossible to sustain, resulting in interactions springing from varying levels of intolerance, depending on the temperament of individuals. (Popper, 1945) Additionally, developing awareness of people's differences or accepting that people are different does not necessarily preclude a positive corporate culture for all people in the working environment. (de Haan, 2014) Group perceptions and beliefs have the potential to outweigh organisational truths, hindering the fulfilment of strategy. (Agnew & Van Balkom, 2009) Therefore, by understanding others ideologies and rationales, it is possible to create a diversely rich and inclusive environment while guarding against the pitfalls that can accompany collaboration among diverse faculty during organisational change. (Agnew & Van Balkom, 2009; de Haan, 2014). It was for this reason, that prior to the discussion around overall strategy, staff at Arcada had been asked to reflect on and identify core values to which they could relate in the workplace. Notably, respect and trust were at the top of the list. This meant that during the strategy sessions, it was possible to remind staff of those core values in order to better enhance a willingness to attempt to understand other people's stance on an array of different matters.

Using indicators that support international dimensions while aligning the mission, value, and vision statements may assist in ensuring the facilitation of good governance as organisation staff and academic faculty enact changes in concert. (Knight, 2008) This article postulates that while building a strategy around a single paradigm like the recruitment of foreign students might have been sufficient in the past (Altbach, 2002), the emergence of a global knowledge economy (de Wit, 2011) that calls into question, the purpose, function, and delivery of education (Knight, 2004; Zolfaghari, Sabran & Zolfaghari, 2009) changes the game *per se*. Therefore, by nurturing the university experience of the future through change that positions internationalisation strategy (Robson, 2011) and entrepreneurial thinking (Barringer & Ireland, 2012) at its core, innovation, and fresh discovery (Barnett, 2014; Bonner, 1998) can facilitate not only survival but also the ability to thrive in an age of unprecedented change. (Donoghue, 2018; Hill, 1995; Stankiewicz, 1988)

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

If we believe that the ideal learning experience includes what we glean about others and ourselves, then we can appreciate that internationalisation within the higher education sector is as much about *our* conduct, attitudes, and beliefs as that of others. (Agnew & Van Balkom, 2009; Ellwardt et al., 2012) As the higher education sector forges ahead, it is important to interact and learn while we focus on being inclusive and educate as we strive toward an open society where tolerance is not the golden standard. (Altbach, 2002; Haworth, 2002; Popper, 1945). Instead of seeking to maintain a steady state of equilibrium within higher education environments, we could embrace the idea that the nucleus of higher learning consists of continual change in a *journey of becoming* whereby creativity, innovation and discovery thrive. (Barnett, 2014; Hill et al., 2009; Knight, 2004; Stankiewicz, 1988)

Today's labour market is changing rapidly, current occupations are disappearing and new competencies are needed. The expanded educational frame of reference, with intrapreneurship as a core concept, gives students broader readiness to create or shape their own workplaces and proactively develop working life. The ultimate aim of higher education in the future is not only about the new skills and intrapreneurial mindset needed in the future working life, but also about well-being and opportunities of students to live a good life, to make the world a better place for everyone. This requires a global approach and multicultural understanding to education where life-long learning and sustainable development is the key in all education (Hyde-Clarke & Wikström-Grotell 2017). The various approaches to internationalisation IA, IaH and IaD all have their own function to fulfil within higher education.

By placing experiences at the heart of education philosophy and designing learning around questions, (Barnett, 2014) new thoughts and shared experiences through a host of offerings, allows learners to genuinely take control of a learning journey that prepares future professionals for a career on the world stage. (DeWit, 2011) Most importantly, recognising that there is value and purpose in imbalance during conceptual development (Barnett, 2014), points to the need for the adoption of entrepreneurial thinking. (Barringer & Ireland, 2012) Finally, by focusing on common ground, and understanding strategy (de Haan, 2014) while being willing to exercise cultural competencies born out of developing cultural awareness, those with differing backgrounds can genuinely work together to usher in a globally friendly and stimulating learning environment. (Beck, 2012; de Wit, 2011; Hill et al., 2009; Knight, 2004; Stankiewicz, 1988) If there were a take-away message in the ideas and concepts presented in this article, it would be to gift time and space, on a regular basis, to those who you have merely tolerated in the past and listen with the intent to understand their positions in order to better overall policies and practices.

In closing, Finland continues its reputation as leaders in education despite the emergence of a global knowledge economy. (de Wit, 2011) In the past, other countries have visited



Finland in the hopes of identifying and adopting their mysterious, *secret sauce* with varying success. Perhaps the secret can be found not in curriculum design or learning paths but in the hearts of communities, depicted in their love for learning and a willingness to collaborate with each other to reach a goal. Indeed, within Finland, whether formal or informal, education could be thought of as a national treasure that continues to thrive within Finnish culture. As Finnish society experiences change, becoming increasingly diverse, (Haworth, 2002) it will be interesting to explore how this culture of learning transforms, for change, like time, is a certainty. (Bedenlier et al., 2018)

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# Educating for Global Competency: Intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes

Pamela Gray<sup>4</sup>

## Abstract

Global competency is a much-needed skill in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as the world is changing fast and students of today require different skill sets than earlier generations. Intercultural competent teachers and students need to have the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to make a difference in today's interconnected world. Purposeful incorporation of intercultural dimensions for the preparation, delivery and outcome of a study process experience is required to be present in all levels of learning and teaching in order to foster intercultural competencies. The aim of this paper is to review literature on intercultural competencies found in higher education institutes; to conceptualise what intercultural competencies are, how they are assessed, as well as examine what knowledge and skills are significant and necessary to develop global competencies for both teachers and students in Higher Education.

**Keywords:** Global competency, Intercultural competencies, Higher Education

## 1. INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Today's students are highly aware that the world is rapidly changing and that entry into tomorrow's labour force requires having a set of skills and competencies suited to meet the needs of an ever-changing multicultural and diverse society. According to the OECD (2018), educating for global competence is necessary for managing and potentially solving social, political, economic and environmental challenges outlined in the United Nation's Sustainable Developmental Goals for 2030. In recent years, higher education institutes have made advances towards becoming more internationalised, and intercultural competence is identified as an essential student-learning outcome in higher education (AACU, 2011; Griffith et al., 2016).

An emerging trend is to approach internationalisation comprehensively by embedding it in the core activities (research, education and engagement) and in their support functions. It has however, been established that internationalisation in higher education institutions that claim to be international or internationalised does not always match this rhetoric and the reality is often more a variety of various activities, rather than having a comprehensive approach and process (de Wit, 2013). Comprehensive internationalisation is achieved by integrating international perspectives throughout teaching, research and service functions of higher education. This will have an impact on all campus life and shape the ethos and values of the higher education institute, as well as have an effect on institutional leadership, governance, the institution's external frame of reference, partnerships and relations, students, faculty and all academic services and support units. Comprehensive internationalisation is a necessity of higher education institutes, not just a desired possibility (Hudzik, 2011).

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## 2. CONCEPTUALISING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCIES

It is important to acknowledge that the terminology describing competencies used to facilitate global proficiency is somewhat vague and ‘global competency’ is often used as an overarching umbrella term. Global competencies, international competencies, intercultural competencies or conceptualisations of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are concepts used in both research and literature, sometimes interchangeably and sometimes with specific meaning, often depending on the discipline that is examining the concept. For the purpose of this paper, the following definition of competency is acknowledged:

A competency is more than just knowledge or skills. It involves the ability to meet complex demands by drawing on and mobilising psychosocial resources (including skills and attitudes) in a particular context. For example the ability to communicate effectively is a competence that may draw on an individual’s knowledge of language, practical IT skills and attitudes towards those with whom he or she is communicating (OECD, 2003, p.4) .

### 1. Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes Framework

An exploration of literature on intercultural competencies in higher education shows that there has been several decades of scholarly activity aimed at conceptualising global or intercultural competence. This has resulted in a multitude of definitions of intercultural competencies and the emergence of many intercultural competency models. Models used in education, training and research generally fall into the following categories: Compositional Models, Co-orientational Models, Developmental Models, Adaptational Models and Causal (Path) Models (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009; Leung, Ang & Tan, 2014; Griffith et al., 2016).

*Compositional models* identify the hypothesised components of intercultural competencies as well as describe their characteristics (knowledge, skills and attitudes) but they are deemed theoretically weak as they seldom specify conditional relations among the components, nor do they specify the precise criteria by which the subject competence is defined. For example “The Intercultural Competence Components Model” by Hamilton et al. (1998), or “The Deardorff Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence” by Deardorff (2006). *Co-orientational models* are useful in drawing attention to the foundational importance of having a base level of co-orientation towards a common referential world and they describe the components or process of successful intercultural interaction. For example “The Intercultural Competence Model” by Byram (1997), or “The Intercultural Competence Model for Strategic Human Resource Management” by Kupka (2008). *Developmental models* recognise that intercultural competencies are individual and evolve over time. For example “The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity” by Bennet (1986) or “The Intercultural Maturity Model” by King and Baxter Magolda (2005). *Adaptational models* highlight that adaptability is a foundational skill to possess in the context of intercultural interactions. For example “The Relative Acculturation Extended Model” by Nava et al. (2005). *Causal (Path) models* attempt to present intercultural competence as a theoretical linear system. This is achieved by integrating the characteristics of compositional models (knowledge, skills and attitudes) and then situating them in interaction influenced by various variables in order to predict intercultural competencies. For example, “The Process Model of Intercultural Competence” by Deardorff (2006) or “The Intercultural Communication Model of Relationship Quality” by Griffith and Harvey (2000).

Intercultural competency models have generated more than 300 terms and concepts identified as being related to interpersonal and intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2009; Leung, Ang, & Tong, 2014; Griffith et al., 2016). Today Deardorff's (2006, p. 243) definition of intercultural competence as "*the ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to visible behaviour and communication that are both effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions*" is one of the most cited definitions used when trying to decipher the core components of intercultural competency.

**Knowledge**, as well as comprehension, are important when it comes to fostering global competency and very much rely on our awareness of our attitudes, values and beliefs. This is especially important for students when they examine issues of local and global cultural significance within their own discipline. Knowledge developed through cultural self-awareness is important as this enhances our understanding of how culture shapes one's identity and world views. It is also important to have culture-specific knowledge such as history, politics, communication styles, values, beliefs etc. as the more we know about different cultures the less likely we are to react emotionally to collisions in cultural differences. Knowledge and understanding of the implications of globalisation is important, as is knowledge of how issues related to local cultures may influence global issues and trends. Linguistic proficiency is something that can be perceived as both knowledge and a skill and is worth acquiring since intercultural communication facilitates understanding and appreciating the perspectives and world views of others, as well as allowing entry into diverse cultural settings.

**Skills** can be conceived as having the ability to do something well. It is possible to have a positive attitude, cultural awareness and knowledge, yet still lack the capabilities to act appropriately in environments that require global competency. This may stem from not having learnt specific skills or having had little opportunity to practice skills. Intercultural skills can be either generic or discipline/profession specific. Generic skills include having the capability to observe cultural clues and evaluate their meaning, and being able to analyse and understand relationships and causality that stems from cultural encounters, as well as being able to exert critical reflection in viewing and interpreting the world around us. Professional skills are often developed through practical problem solving and can be either domain specific or transferable.

**Attitudes** are fundamental when it comes to global competency. It is important that both students and teachers are aware of and examine their diversity related beliefs and values that could create barriers for learning and personal development of intercultural competencies. Values and beliefs have an impact on how we are open to differing views and opinions. It is important that we ask ourselves the following: Do we have respect for others when we are seeking out other cultures' attributes? Do we cultivate openness and value diversity and cultural differences without prejudice? Are we curious of others and do we pursue intercultural interactions that we perceive as learning opportunities? Finally, are we willing to discover that moving outside our cultural comfort zone can be experienced as a positive experience?

## 1.1 Other Intercultural Competency Frameworks

Recent research has however expanded on the conceptualisation of intercultural competencies and moved beyond the focus of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Leung, Ang and Tong (2014) have reviewed theoretical and empirical developments in intercultural competency literature across various settings, identifying key psychological, behavioural, and performance outcomes, and have presented a different system of grouping intercultural competency models:

- 1) Models including *intercultural traits* (openness to experience, and tolerance for ambiguity)
- 2) Models including *intercultural attitudes and world views* (the perception and evaluation of information from outside one's own culture)
- 3) Models including *intercultural capabilities* (skills allowing one to interact successfully in an intercultural situation)
- 4) Models consisting of a mix thereof.

The psychological outcomes identified were e.g. psychological well-being, intercultural anxiety, team cohesion in multicultural teams and international aspirations. Behavioural outcomes were identified as e.g. intercultural activity and intercultural friendships. Performance outcomes were identified as e.g. exam grades of students working in culturally diverse teams, effectiveness in meeting diversity and inclusion staffing goals and leader performance in culturally diverse teams.

A study by Griffith et al. (2016), reviewed current conceptualisations of intercultural competencies in higher educational settings and found that conceptualisation of the intercultural competency construct is not clear. There are two predominant assessment methods for assessing intercultural competencies, surveys and portfolios. The surveys used to assess intercultural competency were mostly delivered online and used selected-response items. Several challenges related to intercultural competency assessment were observed. Self-report measures may be confounded with student experience levels as young individuals normally have less exposure to multicultural environments and therefore less experience on reflecting on skills and behaviours included in intercultural competence. Socially desirable responding may lead to respondents reporting, intentionally or unintentionally, faked behaviour. Assessing culture-specific versus cultural-general knowledge can be a challenge as knowledge of and skills in ICC can be context dependent. Portfolios have one advantage over surveys and that is that they can capture intercultural competence context specific skills and the development of those skills over time. There is however, no existing standard portfolio assessment method, so content, scoring and platform (digital or paper) vary across institutions and study contexts. The study also looked at simulation training as an assessment method. Simulation training is a technique used to create 'true to life' situations in a familiar, safe and controlled learning environment. Knowledge and skills are demonstrated through hands-on activities and it is thus possible to assess how theoretical knowledge can be put into practice. Simulation training is typically used to develop intercultural skills e.g. in Nursing or Business studies, but it has also been used in a few studies to evaluate cultural competence. Griffith et al. (2016) have however concluded that simulation training as an intercultural competency assessment method poses difficulties, as simulation training as an assessment measure would have to be validated.

Upon reviewing reliability and validity evidence in existing intercultural competency surveys, Griffith et al. (2016) found no major issues at the total test level. However, the quantity and quality of validity evidence varied significantly. Stronger validity evidence was evident in assessment measures developed after the year 2000. Also, due to the complexity of the concept and construct of intercultural competency, it may be difficult to find the appropriate criteria to evaluate the predictive validity of an intercultural competency assessment. It is important to acknowledge that assessment methods have been developed for various purposes and therefore not all are suitable for assessing intercultural competency as a learning outcome for higher education students. Both Deardorff (2006; 2011) and Griffith et al. (2016) have suggested that more than one methodology should be used to measure intercultural competence. Griffith et al. (2016) have also suggest that longitudinal studies may be required to establish predictive validity evidence for the assessment of intercultural competence in higher education settings.

Griffith et al. (2016) set out, based on the findings of their study, to construct an intercultural competency framework aimed specifically for assessment of intercultural competencies within the context of higher education. Their ‘Approach, Analyze and Act’ framework draws upon Early and Peterson’s (2004, p.105 in Griffith et al., 2016) definition of intercultural competency as:

A person’s capability to gather, interpret, and act upon these radically different cues to function effectively across settings or in a multicultural situation.

Furthermore, they scaffolded their model on a model of social thinking process developed by Grossman et al. (2015) that describes knowledge, skills and abilities promoting success in complex social situations. The result is a framework that focuses on developable skills and excludes components less directly related to the successful achievement of intercultural goals and that conceptualises intercultural interaction as taking place in three dimensions and stages: approach, analyse and act.

**The approach dimension** includes the subdomains of positive cultural orientation, tolerance for ambiguity, and cross-cultural self-efficacy. This is similar to the earlier mentioned concept “*attitude*”. It is however, a consolidated representation of several related concepts found in intercultural literature. Open-mindedness, curiosity and respect for other cultures is important, as is the tendency to seek out and remain engaged in intercultural interactions despite feelings of uncertainty in unfamiliar situations. **The analyse dimension** includes the subdomains of self-awareness, social monitoring, perspective taking / suspending judgement and cultural knowledge applications. This is similar to the earlier mentioned concept “*knowledge*”. Having the ability to understand that one is a product of one’s own culture and that individuals from other cultures may have different world views is important. It is therefore important to avoid stereotyped thinking and instead foster the ability to actively seek out and use culture-specific information and knowledge when needed. **The act dimension** includes the two subdomains behaviour regulation and emotion regulation. This relates to the earlier mentioned concept “*skills*”. Individuals skilled at behaviour and emotion regulation will be able to either suppress inappropriate behaviours or generate appropriate behaviours needed to act effectively in cross-cultural situations.

Griffith et al. (2016) believe that their *approach, analyse, and act framework* has the potential to expand on the comprehension of intercultural competency specifically in higher education settings as it is broad enough to cover construct domains yet specific enough

to result in clear operational definitions that can be used to guide the design of an intercultural competency assessment.

## 2. DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

As pointed out in the literature, there are several complexities of assessing intercultural competency in higher education institutes. This however does not mean that higher education institutes should not aim at developing the intercultural competencies of its students and staff. Deardorff (2011, p.74) claims that:

... there is no silver bullet regarding an assessment tool; given the complexity of this concept, it would be challenging -if not impossible- for one tool to measure an individual's intercultural competence. For example, there are numerous questions to answer: "Intercultural competence from whose perspective, and according to whom?" and "Intercultural competence to what degree?"...

She points out that intercultural development is an ongoing process requiring individuals to reflect on and assess the development of their own intercultural competence over time. In order for students to do this they need critical-thinking skills, therefore critical-thinking assessment could be considered part of intercultural competence assessment together with attitudinal assessment and assessment of culture specific knowledge.

According to Deardorff (2011), the process of intercultural competency development in higher education starts with prioritising specific aspects of intercultural competence that can be used to create an intercultural competency definition. This definition may then be used to determine which intercultural competency aspects are to be assessed and on what level (individual, programme, organisational). The overall mission, goals and purpose of the organisation will also guide this ongoing process and should involve discussions with key stakeholders, including students. It is important that the definition of intercultural competency used in the higher education institute is clear, realistic and measurable, and that measurable learning outcomes are based not on the concept of intercultural competency as a whole, but on statements derived from the goals of prioritised, focused intercultural competence aspects. In order to control the amount of time, effort and resources needed to assess intercultural competencies, it may be good to choose two or three specific aspects to assess at a given time, as priorities may change from year to year, from programme to programme, or from course to course. The exploration of existing frameworks of intercultural competence could be useful in guiding the process of determining intercultural competence learning outcomes. This can be done through investigating the collection of evidence of student learning related to intercultural competencies and by adapting data that has been previously collected, by e.g. adding a few questions to an existing survey, and relating this to desired learning outcomes. Assessment and learning are integral to student development and higher education institutes have assessed the development of intercultural competencies through a multitude of methods; e.g. self-perspective inventories, self-reflection assignments, portfolio, journaling, blogging, embedded course assignments, focus group interviews etc. Deardorff (2011) concludes that assessment data is important for educators to guide students' development of intercultural skills.

Several tools and activities are used to facilitate the development of intercultural competency in higher education students. These tools can be used in developing both formal



and informal learning; encompassing cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioural domains of learning (Deardorff, 2019). The Association of American Colleges and Universities have created an intercultural knowledge and competence value rubric that articulates criteria for learning outcomes related to intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes. The rubric contains performance descriptors showing progressive levels of attainment of intercultural competencies. It is not used for grading students but as a tool to evaluate and discuss intercultural competency related student learning in higher education. The VALUE rubric articulates a benchmark level and the core expectations of the rubric can be transformed to suit various institutions, disciplines and courses (Intercultural Knowledge and Competence VALUE Rubric, 2019). Most tools and activities used today are generated from Western paradigms, taking place in formal learning settings, facilitated by trainers who have knowledge of intercultural theories and may therefore not be contextually appropriate in non-Western settings. With this in mind, Deardorff (2019) designed a practical tool for developing and practicing intercultural competencies. This tool, *Story circles*, can be used with different groups of people, in many contexts, using little to no resources, in informal learning settings and by facilitators who do not have a strong background in intercultural knowledge and theory. The intercultural competency goals for *Story circles* include demonstrating respect for others, practicing listening for understanding-skills, developing empathy and developing relationships with culturally different others.

### 3. AIMING FOR GLOBAL COMPETENCY AT ARCADA

This brief review of literature on intercultural competencies in higher education shows that there is no agreed upon definition of the concept intercultural competency or its core components, neither is there a blueprint for building intercultural competencies. However, several higher education institutes have included intercultural competency programmes or projects within the curriculum or staff development programmes. For example, the University College London (UCL) has developed a framework for global citizenship that brings a global dimension to the entire student experience, including programme delivery, degree design, and content, as well as extra-curricular events, all preparing students for active participation in experiential learning (Global citizenship, 2019). In Hungary, The International Business School (IBS), based on an in-house project using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), has further developed a structured programme aimed at enhancing the intercultural skills and attitudes of faculty members (Polyák et al., 2013).

If Arcada is to assist students in acquiring global competency, we need to be critical in our reflection of how Arcada as a higher education institute can create a constructive environment facilitating intercultural competency learning possibilities for both students and staff. Eisenberg et al. (2013) suggest that intercultural competency is a malleable skill and that higher education experiences influence the development of these competencies for both educators and students. In order for higher education institutes to be able to foster global competency in students, educators will themselves need professional learning opportunities providing them with pedagogical tools to integrate intercultural competency in their teaching. Building the capacity of the teaching force means granting access to resources (time, networks, digital resources etc.) as this will provide teachers with the support they need to transform their teaching methods. Paige and Goode (2009) have

advised education professionals to learn about key intercultural theories and concepts and to become self-aware and culturally competent through participation in intercultural training. Educators play an important role in the cultural mentoring of students and it is therefore important that higher education institutes' pay attention to the design of intercultural programmes.

It is important to remember that developing global competency is a lifelong process, one that takes place both outside and inside the educational environment. Facilitating students in their development of knowledge, skills and attitudes required to gain global competency is no different from facilitating students in achieving any other set of goals in higher education. It is however important that higher education institutes take a comprehensive approach to internationalisation. It is crucial that positive values and beliefs concerning cultural and global issues are part of Arcada's internationalisation policy, articulated in all communication and conveyed to students and staff in order to foster positive attitudes. Global competencies are not add-ons to teaching, research or student service functions; instead, they are part of every aspect of higher education. Therefore, there are several questions related to the development of intercultural competency that Arcada needs to address. How will Arcada define the concept intercultural competency? How can we enhance intercultural competent pedagogy? How will we define and measure intercultural competency related learning outcomes? How can we follow the progress of intercultural competency development in students and staff? Finally, it is important to acknowledge that intercultural competence is not acquired in a short space of time, within a single study module or with one study exchange experience. It is essential for Arcada to create intercultural competence promoting knowledge and skills through developing a globally focused curriculum motivating students to look outward, one that engages them in their own learning process and gives them skills to approach unknown prospective problems with confidence, allowing them to thrive and excel in tomorrow's multi-cultural world.

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# Internationalisation as a Research Priority

Henrika Franck<sup>5</sup>

## Abstract

The university is in constant tension between the local and the global. By nature, research and science is universal, but most often the university is both funded and owned by the nation state. This has led to situations where the university is measured in economic terms and in some cases, lost its ethos to build new knowledge. We, as educators and researchers, have the privilege and responsibility to maintain the heart and soul of the university - to stay interested, curious and critical, and to remember that science by nature is universal and cannot be restricted by national boundaries.

**Keywords:** globalisation, knowledge society, universities, nation state, measurement, democracy

## 1. THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

The ideals of universities, and science, are universal and in principal, research should not be restrained by national boundaries. Research is international. But what does it mean to be international? In order to answer this we must go back to the concept of globalisation, what it does and how it affects research. The sociologist Manuel Castells (1996) has described globalisation as a process that is driven by two engines: the economic and the technological. The economic engine has its roots in the liberal doctrine in the 1980s that started the deregulation of the world economy. This led to the dismantling of national financial regulations and guidelines that had been built after World War II and today there are very few countries that have full control over their economy: money, capital, products and people travel over borders.

However, a deregulated economy does not, in and of itself, create globalisation. The world economy was in fact more deregulated and liberal before World War I, long before globalisation as we now understand it. Big changes began in the 1980s when the idea of a limitless economy was combined with a global synchrony, thanks to technology. When the stock market falls in New York or Hong Kong, it simultaneously affects families in almost every part of the world. This is a completely new economic reality and as a response, countries have started to create policies to meet the challenges of globalisation<sup>6</sup> (Kristensson Uggla, 2019). The premise of economic deregulation was a belief in the division of labour and in competitive advantage – the underlying thoughts of Adam Smith in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The idea is that when each person or country concentrates on what they know best, it leads to advantages for everyone involved. This also leads to competition between countries in the name of globalisation posing a new challenge to keep the local economy flourishing. Hence, globalisation has been and still is a huge challenge for nation states. How do states respond to this challenge? Bengt Kristensson Uggla (2019) tellingly writes that country policies can be summarised in four words: education, education, education and education. The idea behind a knowledge based economy and society is to invest in knowledge-intensive activities in order to move the country higher up in

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<sup>6</sup> I am indebted to Bengt Kristensson Uggla's work "En strävan efter sanning" regarding the connections between globalization, research and education.

the value chain in this global economy. Hence, if the challenge is globalisation, then the response is a knowledge society – a strategy with initiatives to develop competencies, top-level research and innovation. All this has placed knowledge and science in the spotlight with heavy emphasis on education, research and innovation.

### **1.1 The nation state versus global science**

The nation state, in our case the Finnish state, plays a crucial role in the possibilities for universities today. It is the state that funds, and also often owns, the academic institutions. The modern university, that saw its dawn in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was formed as an integrated part of the national project, which often made nationalism part of the cultural framing of the university. The creation of a national knowledge economy has led to a kind of cognitive nationalism. But despite the strong historical bonds and mutual dependence that binds science and state, academics in Finland as well as in other Western countries, have a complex relationship with the idea of nationalism, particularly in light of the universal ideals of universities and science.

It is not surprising that we now, after a couple of decades of globalisation, are in a situation where there are intense tensions between globalism and nationalism. Current scientific activities at universities in Finland are almost completely dependent on support from the state and the state expects a payoff for its investments. The rhetoric around education and research is nationalistic and we refer to the academic institutions as national resources despite the fact that science is held up by universal and transnational ideals and logic. Science is therefore informed by the same tensions between global and local interests as other ideals that are increasingly informing the societal debate. In this situation, we must ask ourselves if universities exist only for our own country. Universities live with a universal horizon of knowledge, which not only means competition but also requires transnational movement and cooperation over national borders. The complications connected to the cognitive nationalism that forms the expectations for research funding, become more serious in a world where the issues are global. This tension between the local and the global is likely to be the largest challenge for science in the future. The strategy that has probably prevented universities from falling apart so far, is the formula of global excellence and local participation (Nowotny, Scott & Gibbons, 2001). But the question is how can excellence and participation live together when excellence is measured locally and participation globally? For example, Appadurai (1999) asks if there can be a principled way to close the gap between, for instance, social scientists in the US, who are suspicious of any form of applied or policy driven research and social scientists from other countries, like Finland, who see themselves as profoundly involved in social transformations sweeping over the country? Can we keep the methodological rigour of modern science while restoring some of the prestige from earlier visions of universal scholarship?

## **2. NEW GLOBAL POSITIVISM**

With the knowledge that society's strategy meets the challenges of globalisation through investing in knowledge, the funds given to science and research are increasing. This has led to an incentive structure that is almost only based on economic terms. The value of science is argued in economic terms. When we combine this with the dominance of economic measuring in almost all fields of society, we run the risk of losing both the soul of science and the logic leading to new discoveries. New possibilities for information have

changed research communication at its foundation and created new kinds of rankings, measures and comparisons. This intensified flow of scientific knowledge is not only the result of researchers themselves, who can now travel from one side of the world to the other in a single day, but it is also the result of a global information system that has generated a tsunami of research publications. Beyond the specialised research institutions where knowledge is produced in a cumulative and organised manner, this dramatic increase of publications has led to a peculiar situation. The need to publish in order to get recognised in the standings, the measures of research dissemination, has grown and surpassed the need anyone may have to read these publications. For the individual researcher, the ranking of the publications is of greater importance than the substance of the publication. The state and other financing organisations are undaunted in measuring research in this way, despite the growing critique towards the volume of seemingly needless publications. The problem is serious as it leads to deteriorating quality and an impossibility to use what is already there.

What we see is a new global positivism which does not originate in epistemological considerations but from “the magic of numbers” (Kristensson Uggla, 2019). The result is an accounting system for financiers and university recruiters alike, to see results on the basis of primarily quantitative, naturalistic knowledge culture. This number-based, “flat” information that globalisation has brought, also affects the terms applied to scientific research. In this flat world, competition comes not only from other academics around the world but also from actors who do not work in scientific institutions. In the wake of the globalised, horizontal knowledge culture, universities have competitors in journalism and social media. Simultaneously, the scientific community has itself started to use these media to communicate results, build prestige and generate funding, in part, legitimising the voice of non-scientists who speak through the same platforms. When research becomes journalism there is a risk that the collegial critique (peer-review) is left out, and that journalism uses science without considering its complexity and nuances.

### **3. VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL KNOWLEDGE**

With globalisation, and its technological advancement, the good news is that science is available for everyone. Most things in our society are based on or explained through natural science – whether it is how our homes are built, our new smart phones, or our exercise programmes. Science has become an important part of society, globally. This is evident, for instance, in the question of vaccinations, and those who refuse to believe in their effect. In a way, the Age of Enlightenment, thinking for ourselves and using our reason is partly to blame for this disconnect between the science and the practice. But how can we intelligently respond to this usage of reason, that leads to scepticism towards valid scientific results? Is the resistance towards vaccinations an expression of scepticism towards scientific thinking, or is it a result of complicated, nuanced distribution of scientific results? There is a risk that scientific output is undermined in this time of polarising discourse, in which the alternatives seem to be iron-clad objectivism or arbitrary relativism. One of the ironic consequences of the triumph of global science through digital distribution, is that without the quality control that hierarchies of knowledge offer, the viewpoints become horizontal. Peer-reviewed science is reduced to one voice among others. We encounter knowledge claims everywhere – from tradition and religion to anecdotal evidence. The resistance to vaccination is only one example. but we also find it in popular health literature and politicians who refer to quasi-scientific findings as unambiguous

truth. We have politicians who, without any argument, question scientific findings and dismiss them as fake science, threaten to cut funding, and dismiss professors and researchers as annoying or irrelevant. We are in a situation where the foundations of science are questioned; the vertical knowledge, where knowledge is criticised and questioned by people who have a profound pre-knowledge in the topic, and who are cognisant of their doubts, is put in parallel with the horizontal knowledge, where Facebook posts are viewed as equivalent to an article in the journal *Nature*. The double-edged sword of science becomes very clear – science generates challenges, problems and crises, as everyone is invited to question it, while at the same time it is also the resource to manage these challenges, problems and crises. Science is both the problem and the solution.

#### **4. BUILDING AN INTERNATIONAL AND DEMOCRATIC RESEARCH COMMUNITY**

In this chapter, I have discussed the paradox of globalisation and nationalism, the increasing number-based measures used to document research results and the challenge with the horizontalisation of research communication and distribution. The question remains, how can we build a research community that is funded by national interests and competition, but still relies on universal ideals of science for the benefit of all? If we are serious about building a genuinely international and democratic community of researchers, then we have three things we must do now. The first is to take the ethic of our own research paradigm and cooperate with those who agree with us. The second is to initiate a conversation about research in which the very elements of the research ethic can be debated with those who disagree with us. Lastly, we can continue to be true to the vertical knowledge structure, but we must also recognise that we may have made our own troubles. By measuring one another through top-ranked publications, by maintaining and reinforcing the “publish or perish” mantra, we may have made ourselves seem obsolete or irrelevant. One response that we, as educators and researchers, must actively pursue is to resist efforts to direct our production of insightful research through measures that only stand to perpetuate publishers’ profitability at the expense of the government, tax-payer, students and research beneficiaries of our work. For example, choosing to publish in a “lower-level” journal so that our research is disseminated, rather than putting our research in a drawer because it is being rejected by a top-ranked journal. We also need to make efforts to educate those who finance research, so that they are able to understand cross-disciplinary research work and how to explain to their benefactors what the societal outcome is, both nationally and globally.

We as researchers and educators must have the future of the world in mind; we are in the privileged position of being a part of creating a better world, if we choose to. By reading each other’s work, instead of staring at the H-index, by tackling the big issues and daring to jump into fields with which we are not so familiar and by being honest about our doubts, we can create a truly global research for a better world. It is our responsibility to maintain the heart and soul of research - to stay interested, curious and critical, and to remember that science by nature is universal and cannot be restricted by national boundaries.

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# Improving the Share-worthiness of Research in an International Milieu

Nathalie Hyde-Clarke<sup>i</sup>

## Abstract

Bound by traditional norms of formal language, scientific jargon and 'dry' evidence, academic articles are almost the antithesis of what is most likely to be consumed in today's media world. How then should a small University of Applied Sciences in Finland capture the attention of international scholars and practitioners in the related fields? The answer lies in a strategy of attempting to seamlessly combine social media, peer-reviewed blogs, academic articles, YouTube videos, open access edited books and personnel's own professional networks to create a complex, yet infinitely accessible 'pocket' of interconnected information. Using examples from the Department of Culture and Media, this chapter presents an overview of current research on what makes information share-worthy and more visible on the international level.

**Keywords:** share-worthiness; research visibility; social media; culture

## 1. THE INTERNATIONAL MILIEU

Every sixty seconds, people around the globe send 188 million emails, conduct 3,8 million Google searches, watch 4,5 million YouTube videos (while uploading 500 hours more content) and publish more than 1 440 WordPress posts and blogs (Desjardins 2019; Allen 2017). That is every minute of every hour of every day. While most of this information is derived from personal interests and the desire to share experiences with a wider audience, more accessible content production mechanisms and university policies that encourage open access publications mean a corresponding and significant increase in the amount of scientific material or academic research disseminated each year (Siravuri & Alhoori 2017).

There is a standing joke amongst academics that one can at least guarantee that four people will read one's research published in academic journals or edited volumes: the author themselves; the two peer reviewers; and the editor. Of course, one always hopes this is not the case. With the focus on the number of citations as a means to rank social impact of studies, as well as to "characterise the authors and articles most influential in a particular field" (O'Connor, 2017 p.441), researchers are certainly interested in and encouraged to distribute their work well beyond the 'predictable four'. In a more competitive environment created by the introduction of tuition fees, Finnish academics are also challenged to promote their work more widely in order to attract foreign students and broaden international research networks (Hyde-Clarke, 2019). Many researchers already share their work with colleagues and professional networks using email, LinkedIn and ResearchGate, amongst others. Course designs and student supervision experiences include the researcher/lecturer's key texts – or research is intentionally written to fit those spaces knowing it will be cited. However, that is still only a fraction of the potential global readership.

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So what increases research share-worthiness and visibility? This paper considers lessons learned from studies around what makes articles share-worthy, noting that not all the cited research refers explicitly to academic research articles but rather a broad array of fact-based information genres. However, by understanding different approaches to distributing information in public spaces, it is possible to better plan and develop distribution strategies for academic content.

## 2. SHARE-WORTHINESS

Sharing is a widely used practice, especially in social media. However, there is less of a common understanding about how to define ‘sharing’ and ‘share-worthy’. The concept of sharing is not new. People have shared information in different ways throughout history. However, in social media, the decision to share information may be interpreted in various ways. Arielli (2018) presents several nuances in that the act of sharing may refer to: reporting; quoting; endorsing; agreeing; advocacy; and pointing. This builds on work by Weeks and Holbert (2013, as cited in Trilling et al., 2017, p.39) who state:

In theory, if people encounter a piece of news that is personally meaningful, they will look to share or talk about it with others, through either conversation or the use of communication technologies. Information sharing is especially likely in situations where people have strong social networks and when the content is interesting, helpful, or emotionally arousing.

In all cases, the aim of sharing is to attract attention to the content. At this stage, one must acknowledge that the truthfulness or factual nature of that content does not necessarily make it more or less share-worthy, as demonstrated by the rise in fake news. It is also noteworthy that sharing does also not mean that the original person to post nor those who repost the content have actually read it. As many as 59% of shared articles are never read (Gabiolkov et al., 2016, as cited in Arielli, 2018).

How then can researchers attract attention for important research content? In 1999, Fitzpatrick (as cited by Sirvaruri & Alhoori, 2017) identified three factors that would increase the chance of research being ‘newsworthy’ (which we can interpret to mean of or in public interest). These included the prestige of the journal, prepublication hype, and relevance of information to the target audience. Of course, all of this presupposes that the information is valid and trustworthy. When it comes to research, trustworthiness is directly linked to factual accuracy. ‘Who writes’ becomes increasingly noteworthy in the contemporary age of influencers, although perhaps in academic circles this latter point probably has not changed that much as seminal authors, who are usually senior researchers and professors, have always had more credence.

That said, what has changed in the last twenty years is that the chances of an emerging scholar to be cited have improved with better online distribution practices. There is sufficient evidence to show that the chance of an article being cited in news coverage, for example, is directly related to the amount of attention it has received online (Mollett et al., 2017; Sirvaruri & Alhoori, 2017). Fortunately, for researchers in Culture and Media, “topics such as *lifestyle/culture* or *art/design* are likely to appeal to the majority of potential recipients ... when scrolling through their Facebook timelines” (Pflaeging, 2015, p.176). The reference to specifically Facebook is relevant in this quote, as this social platform assumes there is a level of relationship between members of a network, as well

as having an algorithm that filters interests based on the users preferences and consumption habits (Trilling et al., 2017). It therefore is slightly more restrictive in audience than some other alternatives, such as Twitter, and therefore the conclusion cannot be extended to all social networks.

In order to determine reader interest, and what encourages citations of articles, a recent study compared Altmetric scores to scientific impact markers (citations and journal impact factor). Altmetric scores are composite scores based on how often an article is shared or receives comments in social media and other online information sharing spaces, such as Wikipedia (O'Connor et al., 2017). Since those researchers admitted that there is a tendency for articles with sexual or comical titles to be more appealing to the public, it was not surprising to find that one of the conclusions was that “conventional and social media serve a general audience with different interests from the academic-based audience that traditional metrics measure” (O'Connor et al., 2017, p.452). Earlier studies (as cited by Pflaeging, 2015) also confirmed that a share-worthy story was more likely to have an emotionally appealing, positive, or powerful narrative. How does this affect the way research is distributed with the purpose of attracting a larger readership?

### **3. IMPROVING VISIBILITY OF RESEARCH**

Tripathy et al. (2017) recommend ten ways that research dissemination can be improved to increase visibility of the findings. I will use their suggestions to structure this discussion, and supplement their ideas with my own and other authors under each point. It is important to mention at this time that share-worthiness is largely determined by the sharing of information with a greater public, rather than with a limited and well-defined group of interested individuals (Trilling et al., 2017).

#### **3.1. Expand co-authorship base**

Publishing with a diversity of colleagues and students increases the reach of the research as the network pool is larger. Students (who are currently the much-researched generation known as Millennials) are savvy with online tools and likely to be quite connected in terms of social networks. This combined with their eagerness to share their work will certainly increase the distribution potential. Producing research with international students and networks increases the visibility further – which also has the benefit of acting as a means of attracting future students and collaborators beyond one's immediate collegial pool.

In addition, past studies show that authors are likely to cite their own work in future papers (as demonstrated in this paper), and if two or more authors have collaborated, then the number of citations increase accordingly (Bornmann & Haunschild, 2016).

#### **3.2. Use Open Access and 3.3 ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID)**

‘Free to read’ articles have greater potential to be shared and cited than paid ones. As an example, all the work cited in this paper was downloaded from files in Google Scholar. Any links that did not have free to read or download papers were passed over in favour

of those that did. Many reputable journals have open access options and for those that are too expensive to contemplate, a few give the author the right to distribute on their own pages after a moratorium period.

Since academic work is being shared in an international setting, it is also recommended that researchers use ORCID. This is a unique code to protect and promote a researcher's academic identity. It was created in the knowledge that: not all names are unique to one person; names can change; and publications may reference names differently depending on the system used. This code can therefore be used to connect one's work, profiles and grants in one place, creating a comprehensive and accurate portfolio.

Arcada research policies support both practices, and Arcada Working Papers and The Arcada Publication series are both open access by default. Available on Theseus.fi, the number of views have certainly increased in terms of two recent edited volumes based on key university strategic themes, with 393 and 290 downloads respectively (Hyde-Clarke & Wikström-Grotell, 2017, 2016).

### **3.4. Select title and keywords wisely**

Journals, search engines and databases all use keywords to identify relevant research to users. The keywords should be accurate and in dominant use in the field. Sometimes researchers may be too creative with their choices in an attempt to 'stand out' in a unique way (see Nåls & Hyde-Clarke, 2017). In this case, 'boring' and familiar are better (see Hyde-Clarke, 2017). Studies show that in order for information-seeking activities to be a positive experience, adequate and accurate keywords and titles should be provided to increase the potential for article selection (see Scacco & Muddiman, 2019).

The title should also be simple and clear. For a while, it was trendy to put a fun catch phrase in the title, and then put the academic terms in the subtitle. It was felt that more people would read the work if it was attractive and attention-grabbing. However, in a study on news values, Scacco and Muddiman (2019) found that titles influence perceptions of information adequacy and therefore if one extends the findings of their study to this case, 'curiosity' titles are not necessarily the best option for meaningful audience engagement with academic research.

### **3.5 Use multiple online social media networks**

Although most readers will find the information using search engines, one should still have a presence in social media, as those referrals are significant in terms of share-worthiness (Kumpel et al., 2015). The research should be mentioned on as many platforms as possible, linking back to the primary article or data. With built-in easy to use tools for posting and reposting content, social media offers a simplified sharing service (Kumpel et al., 2015). Depending on its share-worthiness, a piece of information could spread from one user's device to millions of others in minutes (Pflaeging, 2015). It is possible to showcase research in many formats and the podcast and blog will be discussed in more detail below – although it is always important to note that many social media platforms, such as Twitter, will not distinguish between newsworthy and “noisy tweets with no information value” (Madhawa & Atukorale, 2015, p.136). Despite that, Twitter specifically has become well-used at conferences as both an educational tool and a means of advocacy

(O'Connor et al., 2017) even though one should be aware that the saturation point of most information that is tweeted is usually reached within one day (see studies cited in Trilling et al., 2017). Elements of artistic research can be shared via Instagram and Facebook – networks better suited for visual images. In many ways, social media networks offer the most diverse and malleable research-sharing environment.

### **3.6 Create and share online videos or podcasts**

Online videos have become a popular tool to convey research findings to the public for a variety of purposes: demonstration; dissemination; education; and public talks (Luzon 2019). A number of journals encourage researchers to create videos to complement their publications – and these offer an abridged open access version of a ‘pay to download’ article. Luzon (2019) identifies a number of strategies employed to increase interest and potential share-worthiness of online academic videos. These include establishing credibility at the start by introducing the researcher’s position and affiliation or with references to previous work that identify them as an expert or informed source in the subject area. Many videos adopt a less formal tone than the academic publication and use the more inclusive ‘we’ to draw in the viewer. While some researchers prefer to speak directly to the audience, most employ a careful selection of visual material to accompany their narration. This can include slides with the key points, experiments conducted in ‘real time’ or clips of the unit of analysis in use. Little, fun video clips are also occasionally included to illustrate a point in a more comical, emotionally appealing way. Often researchers will refer to everyday activities as metaphors or illustrations of complicated concepts, theories, processes and procedures (Luzon, 2019).

A podcast is “an audio or video file in digital format for automatic download over the Internet” (Tripathy et al., 2017, p.11) that is part of an episodic series. Placing podcasts on Google Podcasts, Apple Podcasts, YouTube, Vimeo or other well-used sites, rapidly distributes references to the research. Although they can include visuals, most podcasts are kept in the audio format to allow the listener to receive key information while doing something else (such as driving or travelling in public transport).

In the Department of Culture and Media, Dr. Owen Kelly, Principle Lecturer in Online Media, is generating interest in academic research via a multi-authored podcast called ‘Meanwhile in an Abandoned Warehouse’. The current topic is “conversations around cultural democracy” presented in 26 episodes (<https://miaaw.net/category/podcast/>). At the time of writing this paper, the site had been visited 17,644 times in the last eleven months. According to Soundcloud, based on their own user statistics, there were between 60 and 100 plays per episode. This online space is being developed further to include a discussion group and online community. Arguably, the podcast is still constrained in terms of potential viewership as it is currently found within a ‘closed’ community, where the content is most likely to be heard by Soundcloud members. Regardless, contributors do include links to works cited and their own studies in the field below the podcast thumbnails, thereby increasing the shareability of their related academic research data.

### **3.7 Create an academic blog and 3.8 Share other research outputs, not just the published article**

An academic blog is a good way to share thoughts, reflections and the impact of your research with a wider audience (Zou & Hyland, 2019). The Finnish Ministry also recognises this output for research subsidy purposes. In 2017, Arrebola and Mollett conducted a study to determine whether referencing and reviewing research journal articles on a blog increased citation counts and the amount of attention a study received. While they deemed their study as exploratory, there was evidence to suggest that the blog had a positive impact on the attention a study received, although not necessarily the citation rate. Regardless, there was no doubt that at least some of the key information had reached a larger audience.

Part of the appeal of the academic blog is that the published research has had to be reconfigured and rewritten/presented in such a way that it may be understood by the greater public who are non-specialists in the field. This often requires a tone or style that is quite different to the more formal, reserved and less subjective format of the traditional research paper. Since it contains considerably less text and fewer tables or graphics, the blog must be concise and reader-friendly. To ensure that it appeals to a wider audience, authors usually adopt more hedging devices, affective commentary, first person references, and engaging techniques that address the reader directly (Zou & Hyland, 2019). This can sometimes be a challenge for academics steeped in traditional rigid discourses and conventions. It is important to remember that a blog is not an academic article, but rather the start of a conversation that may or may not result in the academic journal article being shared with others.

If one looks beyond the potential to improve visibility and increase citations, the academic blog space has also been noted as a place for the researcher to present a different perspective of academia: one that is more approachable and willing to engage with greater society than the stereotype that the ‘ivory tower’ suggests (Zou & Hyland, 2019).

Drafts, data sheets, presentations and posters are all alternative outputs from the same research that informed the publication. All outputs should be linked online to allow the reader to move between the various components of the research.

In August 2018, the Department of Culture and Media launched its peer-reviewed academic blog, designed to highlight staff and student research, trend analysis and reviews of relevant events in the field. To date, the most successful in terms of attention grabbing has been the blog written by Niclas Hallgren, Technical Operations Manager: Made in Arcada: An open-access DIY intercom system posted on January 16, 2019. At the time of writing, the blog was the second most popular entry on Arcada’s blog site, Inside, with 918 views. Notably, the average time spent on the page is 3:36 minutes suggesting that visitors are actually reading it in its entirety. The blog also includes a link to Reddit and YouTube, where it is possible to view an online video related to the project. It also includes the schema to designing the innovation itself. By combining different online media platforms with open access, this research project has not only exceeded the average rate of interest generated by similar blogs, it has also attracted international interest well beyond the borders of Finland, with the most views coming from the USA and Australia, in addition to comments emailed from Denmark, Poland and Uruguay.

### 3.9 Create policy briefs or executive summaries

In order to be share-worthy or understood by decision-makers or stakeholders outside the field of research, it is important to write a short jargon-free, easily accessible and understood version that can supplement or accompany the original research manuscript. These can be published on the researcher's website, with links to the journal article and other research output.

Dr. Mats Nylund, Principle Lecturer in Media Culture, uses this approach effectively to highlight his work in Sharing Economy. The different outputs are underlined. On 2 March 2016, based on a poster presented at a seminar at the University of Helsinki where he is a Docent, Dr. Nylund addressed the Finnish Parliamentary Future Committee about the Distribution Economy in Finland. It was a 20-minute brief on basic concepts and understandings in the field that was shared via a live webcast (<https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/Pages/Live.aspx>). He was subsequently invited to contribute to a Ministry Paper 'Sharing Economy and Platform Work' (English translation) published in 2018. This chapter cites and is therefore connected to academic papers he has written on this subject in the past.

### 3.10 Present the findings at conferences, seminars and workshops

Ongoing budget cuts to tertiary education institutions means that economic constraints are affecting the ability of researchers to travel to more than one or two conferences a year. As this is a global phenomenon, more and more international conferences offer an online participation option. Some are even designed to be completely online. Researchers should do their best to participate at the preliminary phase of their research and not only wait to present their findings. In this way, the research has two opportunities to be discussed with an international audience and this increases visibility as well.

## 2. REACHING THE INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE IN THE FUTURE

The answer to improving share-worthiness and visibility lies in a strategy of utilising a range of different platforms and tools to distribute information about the research study. This involves creating differently phrased versions of the process and key findings in order to attract and appeal to a broader international audience. Social media, peer-reviewed blogs, podcasts, online videos, open access versions and emails to the researcher's professional networks all build to create a complex, yet infinitely accessible 'pocket' of interconnected information. Arcada already offers at least six possible affiliated outlets: LinkedIn pages; Arcada Facebook and Instagram accounts; peer-reviewed academic blogs on Inside; as well as Working Papers and a Publication Series on Theseus. The researcher should attempt to distribute something related to the research across all channels – with the all-important link to the actual published article or archive of finished work. In the future, Arcada will also host individual pages for each staff member to load their research. This is in keeping with standard international practice. It will certainly improve the visibility of both the researcher and university.

It should be noted though that much of this paper has focussed on the traditional research article in the written format. Artistic research faces a greater challenge in that it is often

visually formatted or related to specific events or performances. In certain respects, the visibility and shareability of that data falls outside the current norms facilitated in the academic sphere. This is changing as more universities embrace creative work as part of the thesis and research process, and will hopefully create more avenues for this work to be shared with those outside the immediate showcase area. This limitation is especially obvious in the Department of Culture and Media where many colleagues are actively involved in productions, curating and event management. Efforts are currently underway with key Nordic partners to establish better sharing practices regarding artistic research output. For now, emphasis could be placed on the academic blog, podcast, social media networks that support a variety of audio and visual formats, and online video/webcasts.

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# Internationalisation in Technological Research and Education

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## Abstract

Environmental pollution and climate change are globally shared problems that require international attention and urgent cooperation at all levels. Approximately 1.5 Mtonnes of microplastics enter the marine environment globally every year. Microplastics released into the environment originate from consumer products, industries processes, agriculture and transportation and from the fragmentation of larger plastic debris. Research project NOWASTE at Arcada has been addressing the problem with preliminary studies in the characterisation of environmental sediment samples collected from international locations on the continents of Europe, South America and Asia. International engineering students were engaged to take part in this research for future sustainability with their thesis projects. The case described in this article supports the internationalisation strategy by Arcada, and reflects the departmental policy of involving the engineering students in projects.

**Keywords:** internationalisation, technology education, microplastics, methods of laboratory analysis

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The language of natural science and engineering extends across borders and is readily international. Mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, earth science and astronomy as sciences are based on common universal laws and principles. These laws, such as the law of gravity, have existed since long before the birth of this wonderful blue planet and its moon. More recently, different languages for computer programming have given rise to a new world of virtual reality and artificial intelligence. Shared technological language gives excellent grounds for internationalisation. The challenges in environmental research could use more help from artificial intelligence to fight climate change and other environmental problems for a better future on earth (WEF 2018). The report by IPCC (2019) states that glaciers are melting rapidly and significant rising of the sea level over the next 100 years already appears unavoidable with the current trend of carbon emissions. Climate change with its consequences now requires urgent international cooperation at all levels of society. The international academic community should be there in the forefront preparing for all the consequences we can only imagine at this moment in time.

Our previous articles described the global megatrends such as digitalisation, robotisation and sustainability, as drivers for developing engineering skills in general and for developing engineering education at Arcada (Andersson & Makkonen-Craig 2017; Andersson et al., 2018). This article focuses on the benefits of internationalisation for the recent work done on the topic of marine plastic waste connected to our ongoing research project

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Microplastics (plastic particles smaller than 5 mm) are ubiquitous and highly resistant to degradation. The influx of these persistent, complex materials is a risk to human and environmental health. Plastic represents more than 80% of waste in the oceans, and by 2050 it is estimated that there will be more plastic by weight in the oceans than fish and that 99% of seabirds will have ingested plastic waste (Rocha-Santos 2018). Approximately 1.5 Mtonnes of microplastics enter the marine environment every year. Macro- and microplastic pollution has been reported on a global scale from the poles to the equator. The major concern is that they strangulate and are ingested by aquatic biota that could lead to physical and toxicological effects on aquatic organisms and human beings as final consumers (Ogunola et al., 2018).

Because microplastics are generated principally from the weathering or breakdown of macroplastics, it is expedient to tackle their main sources. Microplastics released into the environment originate from consumer products, industries' processes, agriculture, transportation and from the fragmentation of larger plastic debris (Auta et al. 2017). Laundering of synthetic textiles and the abrasion of tyres while driving are the major primary sources of microplastics, and road runoff and wastewater treatment the main pathways to the marine environment (Boucher & Friot 2017). For example, traffic on Mechelininkatu in Helsinki generates 4-7 tonnes of rubber debris from car tyre wear annually. Some of these small rubber particles will soon be washed directly into a nearby sea bay through a storm drain system currently being constructed (Setälä et al. 2017).

An EU Commission study outlined policy options to mitigate the expected 24% increase in microplastics emissions by 2035 based on known pollutant flows and drivers (Hann et al., 2017a,b). As an emerging issue that has already generated significant evidence, they advocated that solutions are already being investigated. This parallels the EU's new plastics strategy that calls for innovative solutions to prevent microplastics from reaching the seas (EU 2018). The intentional addition of microplastics to consumer products is being phased out and a cross industry agreement for the prevention of microplastic release into the aquatic environment during the washing of synthetic textiles, is set to develop first proposals on test methods in 2018. However, there is still much research and innovation needed to make a significant difference in preventing microplastic pollution. The EU Commission highlighted innovative materials that fully biodegrade in seawater and freshwater as well as new approaches to designing for sustainability (EU 2018).

The UN adopted a resolution on marine litter and microplastics in December 2017 (UN 2017). They acknowledged the challenges of addressing marine plastic pollution in the face of increasing production and consumption of plastic in products and packaging. They urged all countries to promote research and application of environmentally-sound alternatives, e.g. into resource efficiency, re-design and re-use of products, and recycling rates of plastic waste, with the emphasis on plastics and packaging producers (UN 2017). Just recently in September 2019, over 100 partners from the plastics value chain signed the declaration of the “Circular Plastics Alliance”. The aim is to promote voluntary actions for EU's internal market in recycled plastics to reach the target of 10 million tonnes of recycled plastic used to make new products every year in Europe by 2025 (EC 2019). The target was set by the EU Commission in 2018 to support the development of the recycling of plastics in Europe (EU 2018).

## 2. A DEGREE THESIS GROUP OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ADDRESSING THE TOPIC OF MARINE PLASTIC WASTE

At Arcada, a group of four graduating bachelor of engineering students was formed to work with the research topic of “microplastics and methods of laboratory analysis”. The thesis group by the students produced a literature review (Bozhko 2019) and experimental case reports (Atas 2019; Bhandari 2019; Sharma 2019). When combined, the results provide a broader view on the topic compared to a single thesis report. Moreover, working as part of a group provides a good possibility for peer-support from student colleagues sharing similar challenges of thesis research and writing process. From a supervising teacher’s point of view, the benefits of group supervision are evident as in efficient use of time for teaching and the peer-supported motivated students.

To ensure an international perspective on the extent of microplastics in the marine environment, the experimental studies attempted to utilise samples from as broad a reach as possible. The international research community, including both staff and students at Arcada, collected samples of beach sediment from 15 sites worldwide (see Table 1). Figure 1 presents the beach sediment sampling locations on the world map in different continents.

Sharma (2019) investigated the sources and experimental assessment of microplastics as well as the pathways of microplastics ending up in marine environments. In addition, the author reviewed the methods used to collect and analyse microplastic samples from a local environment and analyse these at Arcada’s chemistry laboratory using an optical microscope. Samples were collected from four different locations. After microscopic analysis, fibres and organic matter were found. Despite the uniform structure and constant diameter of the fibres that suggest coming from synthetics, it still needs advanced technology to determine their origin.

Atas (2019) studied suitable methods to collect and separate microplastics from beach sediment using bulk and selective sampling methods. Samples were collected from eight different beaches spanning three continents. Density separation was used to separate microparticles and wet peroxide oxidation and vacuum filtration were used to separate floating particles. The particles were analysed using an optical microscope and FTIR spectroscopy. HDPE and PP were found after FTIR analysis. Surprisingly, no PET was found in the samples.

*Table 1. The sediment sampling locations by beach, country and thesis report*

<b>Name of the beach</b>	<b>Town/Country</b>	<b>Thesis</b>
Aberdeen	Aberdeen/United Kingdom	Atas (2019), Sharma (2019)
Tigagi	Kos/Greece	Atas (2019), Sharma (2019)
Kardamaina	Kos/Greece	Atas (2019), Sharma (2019)

Lara	Turkey	Sharma (2019)
Southsea	Portsmouth/United Kingdom	Atas (2019)
Lauttasaari (Kasinonranta)	Finland	Atas (2019)
Miramar	Mohammedia/Morocco	Atas (2019)
Escondida	Maldonado/Uruguay	Atas (2019)
Pocitos	Montevideo/Uruguay	Atas (2019)
Lilaste	Gulf of Riga/Latvia	Bhandari (2019)
Läänemeri	Estonia	Bhandari (2019)
Barra da Tijuca	Rio de Janeiro/Brazil	Bhandari (2019)
Boa Viagem	Niterói (Brazil)	Bhandari (2019)
Balangan	Bali (Indonesia)	Bhandari (2019)
Goa Morjim	India	Bhandari (2019)

Bhandari (2019) reviewed the sources and pathways of microplastic pollution into the ocean. In addition, she investigated the effects of this debris on aquatic life and reviewed methods used to analyse the microplastics. An apparatus called Sediment Microplastic Isolation (SMI) was constructed and used to help separating plastic particles from beach sediment. Samples from six different locations were collected. After microscopic analysis, coloured fibres were found but it needs advanced laboratory techniques to determine their origin.



*Figure 1. Sampling locations on global map. Adapted from Atas (2019).*

Generating valuable results from a new research programme typically requires investigations that extend beyond the limited timeframe of a bachelor's degree thesis. The four theses described above were thus designed to form the initial groundwork for further studies on the same theme or to establish experimental methods to be utilised in related topics. Students were encouraged to appraise critically their results in the context of potential future developments and they were expected to brief the next batch of thesis students on their experimental methods. The skills infrastructure and, no less importantly, the motivations and laboratory esprit de corps were maintained. Their combined effect was to sustain momentum in a programme with a high participant turnover.

Unlike conventional research projects, the ultimate direction of our efforts had to be rather broad in order to accommodate the individual aspirations and skills of our students. This also permitted individual projects and the freedom to tackle current problems on such a dynamic theme. All students engaged actively with their predecessors through formal and informal meetings, performing laboratory experiments together or sharing resources and discussions on our digital platforms. They also brought novel perspectives from their home communities that were not reported in the established literature sources.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

The four theses described in chapter 2 on marine plastic waste, and the recent scientific literature on the sources, impacts, sampling, detection and analytical techniques of marine microplastics (e.g. Agamuthu et al., 2019; Prata et al., 2019; Shabaka et al., 2019; Kedzierski et al., 2019; Mishra et al., 2019; Stock et al., 2019) significantly highlighted the global relevance of this topic and the international composition of investigating research groups. Currently, we have thesis students investigating the remediation of marine plastic waste, with a primary focus on macroplastics. These international students are strongly motivated by highly visible macroplastic pollution in their home countries, the opportunity to utilise their engineering skills and the ready accessibility of solutions that could be implemented within the timescale of their thesis projects.

The experimental infrastructure developed by Sharma (2019), Atas (2019) and Bhandari (2019) to collect, separate and characterise microplastics from environmental matrices, came at a fortuitous time. In 2018 we began a collaboration with Helsinki Region Environmental Services Authority (HSY) on plastic waste in their industrial-scale composting

of municipal biowaste at the Ämmässuo waste treatment centre, Espoo. They are concerned by the accidental inclusion of non-biodegradable plastics in biowaste feedstock that will mechanically breakdown to small plastic particles and survive the composting process, leading to plastic contaminated compost. Such a final product is not desirable due to its detrimental effects on soil flora and fauna (e.g. Wang et al. 2019) and unappealing appearance to customers. The concern is further compounded by the demand to collect and process more biowaste that will likely contain higher fractions of plastics and the incomplete degradation of inaccurately labelled biodegradable plastic bags. Two of our students are currently characterising the macro- and microplastics extracted from samples taken at various stages of HSY's composting process. They are utilising the plastic extraction and analysis methods now established in our laboratory and combining them with further analytical techniques reported in the literature, e.g. compositional analysis by FT-IR spectroscopy (Mecozzi & Nisini, 2019).

The ongoing research project NOWASTE at Arcada has been addressing the experimental analysis of microplastics with preliminary studies by characterisation of environmental sediment samples collected from international locations on the continents of Europe, South America and Asia. International engineering students were engaged to take part in this study for future sustainability with their thesis projects. Global sample collection would not have been possible without the active engagement of students of the international engineering study programme in Materials Processing Technology, and the international personnel in the Department of Energy and Materials Technology.

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# Well-being and Mental Health at Work – an international perspective

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## Abstract

This article is mainly based on theoretical aspects and earlier research concerning mental health in working life. Problems with mental health in working life cause personal and economic consequences and is a global challenge. Earlier research shows that there are intervention models which can be used to improve mental health at work. There is also a need for educational efforts such as master joint degrees in international contexts within mental health, which are not based only on traditional views of mental health problems but an ambiguous view of the same.

**Keywords:** Mental Health, working life, dialogue, intervention

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Mental health problems are the leading cause of sickness absence and work incapacity in Europe, causing significant reductions in productivity, increased financial costs and substantial levels of human suffering for individuals and across communities (Harvey et al., 2017). It is estimated that between 20%-40% of the European workforce is living with a mental health problem at any given time (Jain, A., Leka, S., & Zwetsloot, G., 2018). There is a need to develop effective and cost-efficient psychosocial interventions for employers to promote employee mental health, reduce sickness absence, minimise presenteeism and support workplace reintegration. This is especially true for smaller enterprises and public agencies which often lack both the knowledge and resources to deal adequately with mental health issues.

We can assume that mental health problems globally are not necessarily dependent on local cultural perspectives but have also aspects which can be seen as similar apart from cultural facets. Therefore it is of great importance to generate international co-operation and research concerning mental health in the work place. When responding to the topic concerning this issue, there should be a focus on openness, transparency and trust as core contributors to healthy psychosocial environments and primary pathways to workplace mental health. There is however a need to address how multi-level interventions can be implemented effectively to create accessible, integrated solutions within a wider social and cultural context and a variety of workplace settings. In order to allow for large-scale uptake, there is a need to create a framework based on easily recognisable, iterative processes which are feasible for smaller enterprises and public agencies. Developing a community-based workplace intervention which involves local stakeholders and innovators,

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allows for the creation of solutions, which are more responsive to the needs of the individual, the enterprise and community.

## **2. MENTAL HEALTH IN THE LIGHT OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH**

The most promising interventions are multi-levelled and address a multitude of risk factors simultaneously (Montano, Hoven & Siegrist, 2014) in widely varying work contexts based on a generic approach to reducing workplace mental illness (Michie & William, 2003). However, a major barrier to the effectiveness of mental health interventions is the absence of participatory processes and the involvement of employees in the planning and implementation phases (LaMontagne & Noblet, 2006; LaMontagne et al., 2012). There is a need for a more systematic approach which can lead to long-term sustainable change with an explicit focus on authentic communication which encourages “open dialogue between managers and employees” (Davenport et al., 2016) and incorporates reciprocal feedback between colleagues (Leiter & Maslach, 2014). By focusing on organisational culture, managerial involvement and working practices as well as individual level interventions, the detrimental effects of stress such as burnout can be prevented more effectively (Public Health England, 2016). This is in line with a systematic review by Michie and Williams (2003), who found that the most successful interventions for improving employee mental health and reducing sickness absence included both individual and organisational approaches to facilitate participation in decision-making and problem solving, increase social support and feedback and improve communication.

By developing workplace mental health practices which can be coordinated and integrated with primary and community mental health services outside the workplace, smaller enterprises and public agencies can more readily support their employees with mental health issues. This implies a certain level of similarity and symmetry between the two systems. Mental health services for the general population are becoming more collaborative, network-focused and recovery-oriented while relying more on developing sustainable community-based relationships, which provide guidance and social support in times of crisis (Ness et al., 2014; Sommer et al., 2018). One such development is the Open Dialogue approach which is receiving increased attention internationally (Lakeman, 2014; Buus et al., 2017). Developed in Finland over the past 30 years, Open Dialogue (OD) is a recovery-oriented method for working with people experiencing mental distress (Seikkula & Olson, 2003; Bergström et al., 2018). An OD team works with the service user from initial crisis and beyond, organising treatment and long-term care to prevent crises recurring. In contrast to traditional mental health care, OD places a greater emphasis on working with the service user, their families and friends, and others (for example healthcare professionals, work colleagues and local community members) to form a network of support. This network, in ‘treatment meetings’, is the basis for making plans for treatment and treatment decisions which can lead to better outcomes for service users. There is some evidence from Finland to suggest that OD is an effective way to help people in experiencing mental distress, and a large RCT of OD, known as the ODDDESSI trial, is currently being carried out in the NHS in the UK (Razzaque & Stockmann, 2016).

Use of Trialogues (Amering, 2017; Dunne, et al., 2018) can also be adapted to workplace mental health in each of the participating regions as a meeting place for HR practitioners, mental health professionals, employees, employers, union representatives, insurers and other stakeholders to discuss on a regular basis, how to promote workplace mental health.

Dialogues have previously been used successfully to reduce stigma and discrimination and improve relations between stakeholders in community mental health care settings (Dunne, et al., 2018).

The use of a blended approach, i.e. combining in-person and Internet-based activities, allows employees to choose their own balance between disclosure and anonymity (Lehr, et al. 2016). By doing that, it is possible to develop an occupational e-mental health website including training materials based on previous work such as iFightDepression (Arensman, et al., 2015), ReConnect (Gammon, et al., 2017) and SMART (Williams, et al., 2018), but specifically created to support workplace mental health.

Traditionally, mental illness prevention and management initiatives have exclusively focused on one type of intervention. However, PRIMA-EF showed that successful prevention of work-related stress requires intervention strategies, which comprehensively incorporate elements from all three intervention levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention (Leka & Cox, 2016; Leka et al., 2011). There is a need to address not only workers' recovery processes (tertiary interventions), but also develop interventions which promote better mental health and wellbeing, so as to prevent mental ill-health and avoid its substantial adverse economic impact (McDaid et al., 2017). Moreover, the interventions should address individual as well as team, organisational and community resilience, and target both contextual and personal (risk) factors, especially those that are non-modifiable such as temperament (Orlak & Tylka, 2017).

Mental health problems are a global challenge. An estimated 65% of people suffering from common mental disorders do not receive care from professional services and for those that do, the primary form of treatment is psychotropic medication (McManus et al., 2016). As a result, workplace interventions addressing a wide range of psychosocial factors, represent a unique opportunity to reach those people underusing mental health services and improve public health.

Quality of Work Life is a broad concept which includes worker satisfaction, employee involvement, participative management and a positive work environment (Bora, Das & Murthy, 2015). By focusing on QoWL as a mediator of workplace mental health both employers and employees can more readily focus on the positive aspects of improving their work situation and not solely on the negative factors contributing to mental distress.

The overarching objective of the development of mental health at work intervention, is to develop, implement and evaluate an integrated, multilevel workplace mental health intervention. At the core of the model should be a novel team-based participatory mental health strategy.

Specific objectives are:

- To identify promising interventions and innovative approaches that would enable employers to support workplace mental health.
- To better understand the dynamics of workplace mental health through the analysis of the current evidence base, promising innovative interventions and recent policy initiatives.

- To develop a Common Analytical Framework including a set of indicators and measurement logic which can be used across a range of contexts.
- To engage multiple stakeholders in the development of contextualised, need-adapted interventions based on a common framework of workplace mental health
- To support stakeholders in establishing and evaluating an intervention system in such a way that they become adaptive and sustainable in a broader context of rapidly changing workplace environments and practices.
- To provide a platform for knowledge exchange between stakeholders in order to strengthen the skills needed to support workplace mental health.

International networks are crucial in addressing these demands. Therefore, Arcada UAS has been actively involved in collaboration with other universities in several projects and project applications (see <https://www.arcada.fi/en/research/department-health-welfare/research-projects>). As a result of acting in international networks, Arcada University of Applied Sciences has carried out a Nordic education study of mental health together with the Norwegian University of Science and Technology and the University of Mälardalen from Sweden which opens new perspectives for understanding mental health problems and treatment and care of the same. Education within mental health is of importance since individual's mental health problems are not unambiguous. This education was partially financed by the EU Nordplus programme. Nordic co-operation concerning education within mental health between Finland, Norway and Sweden continues when partners are co-working with an application of "Nordic Master Mental Health in Future Nordic Welfare States and Societies", an initiative of the Nordic Council of Ministers for Higher Education. The innovative novelty value of that education programme is that it is not only directed towards individuals but quite broadly and strongly also to societies, which can be regarded as being for example working places.

There is also need for national and international research concerning mental health in working life. Arcada University of Applied Sciences shall, in co-operation with the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, apply for funding for a joint research project concerning mental health at work. Provided that funding is approved, a three-year project shall start during spring 2020. Arcada aims to apply for funding from the Finnish Work Environment Fund and Norway from a Norwegian financing institution. However, the content of the project shall be the same concerning interventions and research methods. Partners aim also to actively present the projects development and results in working life conferences such as the Nordic Working Life Conference, and also others.

### **3. MENTAL HEALTH AS A GLOBAL CHALLENGE - FUTURE DEMANDS**

Creating workplaces which can consistently and continuously promote mental health represents a unique opportunity to improve the lives of EU citizens, drastically reduce health costs and increase productivity. Based on the integration of present research, innovative interventions and technological developments, it is now possible to create sustainable and resilient mental health systems which are able to reduce the burdens of emotional distress and contribute to greater wellbeing.

The ambition should be to empower employers and employees, together with the support of health care professionals and local communities, to address the sources of stress in the social environment. A multilevel approach to mental health, which encompasses the complexity of the psychosocial context of the workplace, is necessary to achieve sustainable change. There should be a willingness to provide an integrated solution to workplace mental health based on a combination of interventions supported by self-guided web-based training courses; resilience and wellbeing training for individual employees, mental health training programmes for managers, Quality-of-Work-Life Dialogue for workplace teams, Open Dialogue for health professionals, and Trialogues for stakeholders and the wider community. The individual interventions will be mutually supportive, built around the same analytical framework and conceptual model and contribute to better communication between and coordination of the various stakeholders involved in the promotion of mental health in the workplace.

It is of importance to aim at providing small and medium-sized enterprises with the support they need to initiate mental health promotion programmes in their organisations. SMEs are vital in generating new jobs and continued economic growth, yet workplace mental health issues limit their contribution (Cocker et al., 2013). Absenteeism and presenteeism impact SME's especially hard and lead to reductions in both profitability and productivity. Development of mental health at work should provide a single site of access for the guidance and tools necessary to develop a workplace mental health programme adapted to their unique needs.

Hopefully further research will demonstrate how effective and accessible workplace mental health promotion can be successfully implemented, identify facilitators and barriers, describe the role of public awareness and prescribe potential adaptations to various organisational, political and economic contexts.

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# The Reality of Internationalisation is Changing – consequences for education and learning

Carl-Johan Rosenbröijer<sup>i</sup>

## Abstract

The reality of internationalisation from a student perspective is radically changing (in the future). The consequences of these changes concerning internationalisation will, in this paper, be explored from an education and learning perspective. Finnish society is rapidly changing into a multicultural and multilingual society. Simultaneously, students' reality is becoming more and more digital and not physical enabling global online 24/7 communication. This challenges the reality of internationalisation in the future and creates new possibilities when integrating such issues in education and learning.

**Keywords:** internationalisation, reality, education and learning, IaH, IoC, COIL

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 1995 Finland became a member of EU and was among the first countries to adopt the Euro in 1999. As a result of this decision, Finland changed from a closed, domestically-driven political country and economic entity, to an international country. Within higher education, this was especially emphasized by the Bologna process and declaration signed in 1999. It proposed a European Higher Education Area in which students and graduates could move freely between countries, using prior qualifications in one country as acceptable entry requirements for further study in another. Although the educational system did not really focus on international issues in the 1970s and 1980s, language education developed substantially during this time both in comprehensive and upper secondary education as well as in tertiary education. Especially English skills (but also German, French and Russian language) enabled students to communicate internationally.

From a general population perspective, the increased language skills and the prosperous economic development in the 1970s and 1980s enabled families and individuals to increasingly travel first within the Nordic countries but especially in the 1980s and 1990s further in Europe and even overseas to, for example, the United States. This type of increasing leisure and business travel widened the perspective of the ever more educated Finnish population to come into contact with other cultures and communities which opened up an increasing debate about the importance of internationalisation for a small country like Finland. Education was here seen as playing a critical role due to its nature of engaging the youth, i.e. educating the next generation of the country.

This also paved the way for increased efforts in internationalisation of higher education in Finland as can be illustrated by this quote from 1999:

Thanks to decisive policy and changes in the operating environment, Finnish higher education has become internationalised rapidly. Student exchange numbers have increased sharply beginning in the 1990s, thanks particularly to major EU programmes. International R&D cooperation has also increased

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and expanded into new fields. Still, in international comparison the Finnish higher education is seen as a rather closed system. Number of foreign students is still low. (Polytechnic Education in Finland, 1999)

However, in the end of the 1990s there was still very evident challenges for Finland.

Rapid shifts in the labour market mean Finland has to compete for the availability of foreign labour along with other industrialised countries. The situation is particularly challenging for Finland in a number of respects. Although awareness of Finland has increased considerably with our membership of the EU, the country is still not very well known outside Europe. (Polytechnic Education in Finland)

The rapid development of information and communication technologies has dramatically changed the reality of internationalisation. The development of the personal computer (1980s), the mobile phone (1980s), the World Wide Web (1989), Google (1998), Skype (2003), Facebook (2004), WhatsApp (2009), Instagram (2010), Snapchat (2011), etc., has enabled students to access data, information and knowledge globally, wherever they are. They are also connected globally with more or less anybody 24/7 and can share text, audio, pictures, videos online and real time. This is a huge step in communication that has radical effects on how we should perceive the concept of internationalisation in education and learning.

## **2 HOW IS THE REALITY OF INTERNATIONALISATION CHANGING – A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE**

The development of internationalisation in education and learning has followed a fairly typical form, i.e. starting the internationalisation efforts by export and import activities. This is very typical when internationalisation is initiated in business, for example. Both students and teachers have been “exported” and “imported”, these activities have been based on student and teacher exchange to universities in other countries. With these activities, the sending and receiving university has increased their cultural diversity. This diversity has been very valuable as a generator of new ideas for students and teachers alike. But it has also developed the parties’ international competencies, i.e. increased understanding of cultural differences, increased language skills, relationship and network building, etc. Education in Finland is public and free for EU and other European countries’ students. This gives us an opportunity to attract foreign students with our high quality image of education. But this also mean that the state and politics play a critical part when the education system is developed. The education system is national and primarily developed to take care of the countries own citizens. The internationalisation efforts are therefore quite centralised and directed from a political and ministry perspective to, for example, increase Finland’s competitive position globally. These larger visions then influence how the state will finance internationalisation efforts through basic funding or project funding of universities. This dominant ministry-driven role was motivated in starting international education and learning activities but now the reality of students and universities has changed radically.

The current reality of internationalisation and how reality is changing in the future will be described with a three question framework, i.e. what, how and why.

Table 1. The current and future reality of internationalisation

	<b>CURRENT REALITY</b>	<b>FUTURE REALITY</b>
<b>WHAT</b>	Travel and study abroad – <u>focus on nations and culture</u>	Ongoing communication without any borders – <u>focus on engaging and sharing</u>
<b>HOW</b>	Exchange of students and teachers – <u>focus on the actor</u>	Exchange of ideas, values, norms and solutions – <u>focus on cooperation and co-creation irrespective of cultural background and localisation</u>
<b>WHY</b>	Finland needs to be international to succeed in the global competition of the future workforce – <u>focus on Finland, the nation</u>	The need for joint efforts and new competencies are vital to solve global sustainability challenges but also to secure the students ability to manage future professions and their wellbeing – <u>focus on creating a better future together</u>

The future reality is a result of three issues. First, the rapid development of information and communication technology. This has enabled us to communicate 24/7 in a highly cost efficient way. This infrastructure changes the physical reality in the sense that localisation is becoming less important. In relation to the decreased importance of localisation also the significance of borders and nations diminish. Social media platforms, like Facebook, have 2,5 billion users, bigger than any other country in the world with users of more or less any origin, i.e. nationality, ethnic background, religion, culture, etc. This enables our students to engage and share ideas, values, norms, solutions etc. in a multicultural context even from their “home sofa”. The second issue is the increasing immigration to Finland. Helsinki especially is gradually developing into a multicultural region where students and employees are cooperating and co-creating irrespective of their origin. Thirdly, the state of the world’s development is in a critical phase due to huge sustainability issues ranging from the environment to ethical and moral issues. The other megatrend is the digital revolution that has just started (compare industrial revolution 1760-1830). Lauro (2010) argues that there has been an era of materia 1800-2020 and a new era of immateria is taking over from 2020-2220. This indicates that the reality of the students and future employees is just beginning to radically change. Both the sustainability challenge and the immateria era will demand joint efforts and new competencies globally. The professions of the future need to be created to match the immateria world and universities need to proactively develop their ability to foster learning of future students with new competences. There are huge challenges for the societies of today to adapt and proactively change to a dramatically changing reality. The students and coming employees irrespective of origin, will in this transformation period be under significant pressure therefore Arcada needs to support the students to manage their lives, i.e. preparing them with the right competencies, attitude, empathy and confidence to jointly create a better future.

### 3 HOW CAN THE FUTURE REALITY OF INTERNATIONALISATION BE APPLIED IN EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Given the future reality of internationalisation, we see three possibilities of applying it in Arcada's education and learning space. First, regarding the ongoing communication with a focus on engaging and sharing, we see collaborative online international learning (COIL) as a fruitful education and learning method. Second, concerning how to exchange ideas, values, norms and solutions with a focus on cooperation and co-creation irrespective of cultural background and localisation, we see internationalisation at home (IaH) as a real possibility. Thirdly, the need for joint efforts and new competencies with a focus on creating a better future together, the internationalisation of the curriculum (IoC) plays an important role.

COIL is a new teaching and learning paradigm that develops competence across shared multi-cultural online learning platforms. The aim is to enhance the intercultural competences of students who might not otherwise have an opportunity to study abroad. It is a networked based learning approach. (Haug, 2019) Intercultural collaboration helps universities to develop caring, committed and curious global citizens.

The aim of internationalisation at home is to provide global skills to all students. According to Beelen and Leask (2011, p. 5) explain IaH as:

Internationalisation at Home is not an aim or a didactic concept in itself, but rather a set of instruments and activities 'at home' that aim to develop international and intercultural competences in all students.

The purposeful dimension means that the aim and focus is on clear learning outcomes. The international dimension is not separate but integrated in regular teaching and learning. It fits well with the growing trend of immigration and makes purposeful use of cultural diversity in the classroom for inclusive learning, teaching and assessment practise. It encourages the student to engage with students or other individuals from a different cultural background.

The future challenges with sustainability and the creation of future professions both desperately require new competencies. These new skills need to be developed through an understanding of the changes in society and the whole world, i.e. the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. The curriculum is the existing tool for education and learning and has to dramatically change due to the rapid transformation from a materia to an imateria context. The need for global joint efforts can be supported by applying the internationalisation of the curriculum. Leask (2015) defines IoC as:

The incorporation of international, intercultural and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods, and support services of a program of study.

The starting point is to become aware of the need for change and understand why this need is crucial. The curriculum should include new knowledge, new skills and lead to new competencies. These can then be utilised to understand what phenomena should be changed, when it should be changed and finally how it should be changed. Although there are common global challenges and need for change there is also always local or regional challenges that differ from each other. For both types of new competencies IoC can be beneficial.

In table 2 this discussion is summarised by combining the future reality with three types of internationalisation-based education and learning approaches.

Table 2. The future reality and approaches to internationalisation

	<b>COIL</b>	<b>IaH</b>	<b>IoC</b>
<b>FUTURE REALITY</b>			
Ongoing communication without any borders – <u>focus on engaging and sharing</u>	A networked based learning approach that develops intercultural competence across shared multi-cultural online learning environments		Creating learning outcomes that foster competence development in engaging and sharing data, information and knowledge in multicultural contexts and groups
Exchange of ideas, values, norms and solutions – <u>focus on cooperation and co-creation irrespective of cultural background and localisation</u>	Developing global citizens with the following characteristics: -intercultural sensitivity -knowledge and respect for others norms and values -understanding and feeling at home in the global labour market -skill in creation of students' professional network	Offers students: -global perspectives in the home university -integration in all teaching and learning -intercultural perspective though clear learning outcomes in the curriculum -a supporting informal curriculum -purposeful use of cultural diversity through inclusive learning, teaching and assessment practise -engagement with "cultural others" in the local society	Developing students' competence, i.e. ability and willingness to exchange ideas, values, norms and solutions by cooperating and co-creating.
The need for joint efforts and new competencies are vital in solving global sustainability challenges but also to secure the students ability to manage future professions and their wellbeing – <u>focus on creating a better future together</u>		New competences developed through: -Formal curriculum, assessed -Informal curriculum, non-assessed -Hidden curriculum, aspects we may fail to consider	By applying IoC the students will acquire new competencies that will enable them: - to adapt to change by adopting learning capabilities - to create change by being curious, open, cooperative, proactive and creative

In this article, a new reality of internationalisation has been presented and related to three types of internationalisation-based education and learning approaches. The need to change our views on internationalisation is important because an isolated view on the phenomena is not fruitful, instead it has to be integrated in all education and learning activities to support and connect to the future reality that our students and future employees will encounter.

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# Internationalisation at Home:

## The road to success

Sandra Slotte<sup>i</sup>, Annika Stadius<sup>ii</sup>

### Abstract

In taking a strategic approach to Internationalisation at Home (IaH) and implementing it in a comprehensive way, Arcada University of Applied Sciences could turn the challenges we face in a global reality into opportunities, and further into competitive advantages. This requires knowledge, structure, ownership, engagement and resources. In this article we will introduce the concept of IaH, explain why it is strategically important for Arcada and what the value could be for our students, staff and partners. We will also discuss how IaH lets us contribute to a sustainable and inclusive society.

**Keywords:** Internationalisation at Home, Internationalisation of the Curriculum, Student Success, Student Experience, Global Competence

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions (HEIs) around the globe are facing a wide range of profound challenges as megatrends such as globalisation, changing population structures, climate change, urbanisation etc. are affecting the way the world works and how they can operate in it. The shifts in preconditions for and purposes of the HEIs as well as the expectations of those attending or cooperating with them, will require the institutions to redefine their missions and adapt to the increasing diversity both within and outside their walls.

It is now more relevant than ever for Finnish HEIs to engage in Internationalisation at Home (IaH) both for the sake of internal development and for addressing increased national and international competition for students, staff and partners. In May 2019 the Finnish Institute for Educational Research published a report on the current status of IaH in Finland. It was commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the purpose was to investigate to what degree attention to the concept has been paid at the HEIs and what implementations have been made. The report found there to be significant differences between institutions both in terms of familiarity with the concept and with the importance placed on it. The report states that integration of IaH requires a holistic approach involving all levels from national to individual students. It also recommends actions to be taken at all the levels, such as adding measurable IaH indicators to government agreements with and funding for HEIs; incorporating IaH in HEIs' internationalisation strategies; and embedding IaH in curriculum development, teaching methods and assessment. (Weimer, Hoffman & Silvonen, 2019)

The purpose of this paper is to introduce the concepts of IaH and Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IoC) and describe how these can be used as tools for strategic internationalisation. In this article we argue that in order to be successful and at the forefront of

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higher education, Arcada needs to engage in comprehensive, sustainable, ethical and inclusive internationalisation with a specific focus on IaH. We therefore suggest actions for turning Arcada's challenges into opportunities through IaH and claim that this transformation could leverage the institution's unique traits into a competitive edge.

## 2. INTERNATIONALISATION AT HOME

The concept of Internationalisation at Home (IaH) was developed by Dr Bengt Nilsson at Malmö University in Sweden in the late 1990's as a response to the need for adapting the newly founded institution to the diversity of a city with a large immigrant population and the strategic aim of creating a truly international university in a global society. This coincided with the ERASMUS era in internationalisation of higher education in Europe, which placed focus and resources on mobility and agreements between institutions. Success was measured in numbers, but did not extend to content, quality and personal growth. (Nilsson, 2003, pp. 27-31)

As only around 5-10% of Swedish university students take part in international mobility, providing also the remaining 90% with international dimensions in their education is of immense strategic importance for any nation and higher education institution (Bergknut, 2006, pp. 8-10). The main goal of IaH is to provide everyone at the institutions with international and intercultural competencies. This can be done mainly through internationalising the curriculum and education and training for both students and staff, including foreign language training.

I would like to see all our students leaving this university with the added value that an internationalised curriculum can give: Besides a good knowledge of their subject area, they should have open minds and generosity toward other people; know how to behave in other cultures and how to communicate with people with different religions, values, and customs; and not be scared of coping with new and unfamiliar issues. (Nilsson, 2003, p. 39)

IaH does not require the presence of international students nor teaching in English but leverages the opportunities they provide. In a continuously diversifying student body, the preconditions for learning are also becoming more diverse. In order for the HEI to deliver high quality teaching and learning opportunities to all students, the methods of delivery and engagement have to mirror these changes. It is crucial to incorporate intercultural dimensions into the curriculum for domestic students in order to give them a global perspective in their studies and future careers. This requires the academics and staff to have the skills and abilities, knowledge and tools for delivering IaH. In the following sections we will introduce key concepts within IaH, such as Global Competence, IoC and co-curriculum.

### 2.1. Global Competences for All Students

IaH is increasingly relevant today, as the aim is to provide all students at an institution with intercultural dimensions and a global (in relation to the local) perspective in their fields, in order to ensure that they in addition to their professional skills have the right competencies to become global citizens and contribute to an open and inclusive society. These skills developed through international experiences or encountering any form of "otherness" are called soft skills, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, transversal skills, employability skills



or Global Competences (Jones, 2014; The Erasmus Impact Study 2014; Hidden Competences 2014; The Future of Jobs, 2016).

Providing all students with global competencies is also a goal for Finnish HEIs, according to Former Minister of Education Sanni Grahn-Laasonen:

Students graduating from Finnish higher education institutions should have the ability and willingness to be involved in international, multicultural environments and understand diversity, global challenges and the principles of a sustainable society. Mobility and international perspectives should be incorporated as natural elements of students' studies and the work of staff. (Better Together for a Better World, 2017, p. 3)

Global Citizenship has been defined by UNESCO in 2015:

Global citizenship refers to a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity. It emphasises political, economic, social and cultural interdependency and interconnectedness between the local, the national and the global. (Cotton et al., 2019, p.348)

This belonging is often seen to also include a responsibility of contribution to the community, at individual, organisational, national and global levels. This in turn requires social responsibility, global civic engagement and global competence. (Cotton et al., 2019 pp. 348-350)

In 2006 Hunter, White and Godbey defined Global Competence as:

[...] "having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one's environment." (Hunter, White & Godbey, 2006, p.277)

## **2.2. Purposeful, Integrated and For All**

Initially Internationalisation at Home was defined in a very simple way: "Any internationally related activity with the exception of outbound student and staff mobility." (Crowther et al., 2000, p. 6). As this definition describes what IaH is not, rather than what it actually is and does not explicitly mention the personal growth in terms of intercultural skills that was the purpose behind the concept originally, Jos Beelen and Elspeth Jones redefined IaH in 2015.

Internationalisation at Home is the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments. (Beelen & Jones, 2015, p. 69)

This definition is now widely used and emphasises the intentional inclusion of international and intercultural dimensions into curricula in a purposeful way and that this should be done for all students in all degree programmes. By using the term domestic learning environments, the authors wanted to emphasise that learning does not only take place at the home campus or in the classroom (formal curriculum), but that the surrounding society, leisure activities and members of the community also provide learning opportunities. However, it is essential to articulate and measure the achievement of learning outcomes, also in the informal curriculum, in order to leverage them. (Beelen & Jones, 2015, p. 69)

### **2.3. Internationalisation of the Curriculum**

International modules added to an existing curriculum do not constitute IaH. Nor do separate individual international activities without a clear aim. IaH needs to be implemented as a transformational process where international and intercultural dimensions are defined and purposefully integrated into all curricula and focus on intended learning outcomes (Huerta-Jimenez & Sanchez, 2018, p. 8). IaH pursues the same aims as Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IoC). IoC was developed by the Australian educational researcher Betty Leask who highlighted the importance of the co-curriculum which includes support services and learning outside the classroom.

Internationalisation of the curriculum is the incorporation of international, intercultural and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods and support services of a programme of study. (Leask, 2015, p. 9)

The formal curriculum is generally the teaching and learning activities that can be planned, scheduled and assessed, while the co-curriculum (or informal curriculum) consists of other learning activities that take place on or off campus, support services and social interactions which constitute learning experiences but are not a part of the formal curriculum and are not assessed. (Beelen & Jones, 2015, p. 61)

### **2.4. Ecosystem with Society**

IaH fosters interaction between the HEI and its surrounding society by involving employers, NGO's and other actors in the community in the teaching and learning at an HEI. Simultaneously it fosters integration and inclusion as students with various backgrounds and skills are introduced to and interact with the society. It enhances employability and the quality of teaching and learning. By placing emphasis on (assessed or measured) learning outcomes instead of input in the curriculum, it does not matter where the learning experience takes place, as long as it is transformative and enhances the knowledge and skills of the student.

### **2.5. Key Stakeholders**

Academics and educational developers are at the centre of IaH, as they are the ones facilitating the development of skills and design curricula (Huerta-Jimenez & Sanchez, 2018, pp. 9-12). But IaH is also about equal opportunity for international learning experiences for all students and enhancing the quality of education. Therefore, quality assurance officers have a responsibility to ensure equal access to IaH activities.

IaH should be explained explicitly so that the students understand it and can commit to it. This is crucial, as although international students can enhance IaH, it is the local students who need to understand the benefits they can gain by opening up to new experiences and changing their views and mindsets in a truly transformative way. They are also key to the integration and inclusion of the international students, and have to understand why they should engage.

Although students and academics are at the very heart of IaH, it is often the administrative staff in the international offices at HEIs who are the drivers of IaH as it is usually they

who bring the awareness of the concept into the institution and promote it internally by advising managers, training staff and connecting different stakeholders (Huerta-Jimenez & Sanchez, 2018, pp. 9-12). Human Resources are commonly responsible for the professional development of academics and staff and therefore also have a role in enabling IaH practices.

In order for IaH to be successful, it needs to be a strategic and integrated process throughout the institution and therefore requires the support of all management and staff. As the skills being developed should match the needs of work life and society, these too are stakeholders in IaH, as are alumni, partners and accrediting bodies (Huerta-Jimenez & Sanchez, 2018, pp. 9-12; Weimer, Hoffman & Silvonen, 2019, p. 49).

Professor Jos Beelen has developed a model for visualising these various stakeholders, both within and outside the HEI, in implementing IaH.

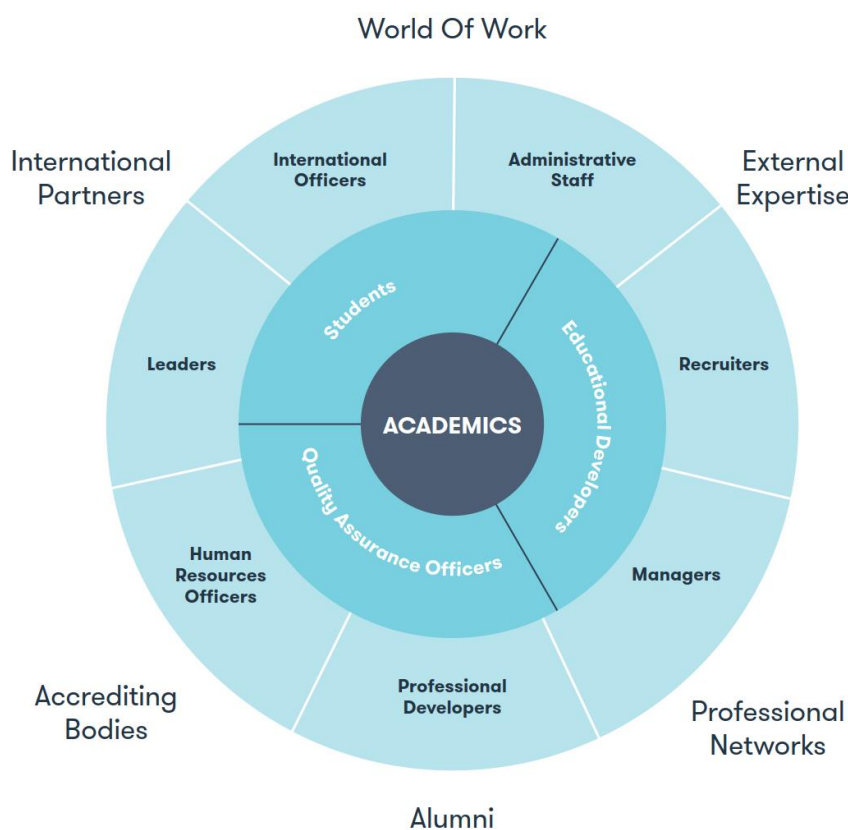


Figure 1. Stakeholders in the implementation of Internationalisation at Home (Beelen 2015)

### 3. IAH AS A TOOL FOR STRATEGIC INTERNATIONALISATION

Although IaH has now received much attention, it is yet a relatively untapped resource and Arcada has an opportunity to become a top performing HEI in IaH not despite, but because of our small size and our understanding of minorities striving to integrate and adapt in a remote country with a difficult language. As a Swedish speaking multidisciplinary university of applied sciences (UAS) with an abundance of diversity not only in nationalities among students and staff, but in e.g. age, discipline, academic levels and

connection to work life, we have wonderful opportunities to leverage these traits through IaH and to stand out as a unique resource for Finland and for our partners.

We have fantastic preconditions for IaH available to us as we offer degree programmes in English, have a significant diversity among students (60+ nationalities) and staff members and around 20% of our students take part in international mobility during their studies. However, these factors in themselves do not ensure that international or intercultural learning actually takes place, they merely set the scene for it. In order to turn our challenges into opportunities and to leverage the opportunities we already possess into competitive advantages, we need comprehensive, sustainable, ethical and inclusive internationalisation with a specific focus on IaH.

Comprehensive Internationalisation is a commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education. It shapes institutional ethos and values and touches the entire higher education enterprise. It is essential that it be embraced by institutional leadership, governance, faculty, students, and all academic service and support units. It is an institutional imperative, not just a desirable possibility. (Hudzik, 2011, p. 6)

#### 4. STUDENT SUCCESS IS KEY

Arcada strives to grow by providing high quality education and research for a sustainable world. We propose that this provision should be extended to also include support and services to students, as it essentially is too costly not to. In the global competition today that affects not only the recruitment and retention of international students, but also national students who are just as mobile (if not more), offering education and research is no longer enough for any HEI. (Bateson, 2008; Kelo, 2008)

In the increasing global competition for the best students, the quality and attractiveness of an institution no longer depends only on its academic, teaching and research standards. Services to students have come to play an important role in the quality assessment – and thus competitiveness – of institutions. They play a central role both in ensuring recruitment of international students and in supporting the internationalisation efforts ‘at home’. (Kelo, 2008, p. 1)

In order to stay relevant, be attractive and preferably even advance to the forefront of higher education, we need to place strategic importance on Student Success and broaden our mission to become more student centred and include providing the (not only national) community with **healthy and globally competent graduates**. This means an increased focus on student well-being and global competencies through support, services and IaH. This new approach broadens the provision of education and research to a holistic and high-quality Student Experience, including global competencies for all students. This not only increases the employability of our students, but also their overall Student Satisfaction, which in turn increases student recruitment, retention and well-being.

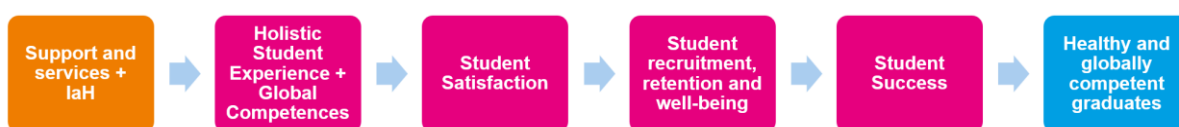


Figure 2. Increased focus on support, services and IaH for healthy and globally competent graduates

Arcada has the opportunity to excel in precisely these issues by embracing being different, small and diverse to foster global competences like openness, acceptance, curiosity and inclusion and by being a welcoming, safe and supporting environment for all our students and staff. Leveraging this opportunity lets us create a strong, ethical and sustainable competitive edge.

#### **4.1. Student Success**

Student Success is a term that has long been used in higher education to indicate successful student retention and graduation rates. However, the term is currently being debated and reshaped in the field and shifting towards a major focus on student well-being, advising and support services as critical factors for such success. Student Success is providing a high level of Student Satisfaction throughout the Student Experience. This in turn increases student recruitment, retention and well-being, institution reputation, employability, and alumni engagement (Brzycki, 2016). All of these have direct or indirect effects also on the government public funding scheme for Finnish HEIs as well as funding by tuition fees. It is also ethically sustainable to provide equity, rather than equality, in access to high quality education, support and well-being.

#### **4.2. Student Experience**

Student Experience in short is everything a student experiences at an HEI. This is not limited to education and research, but includes support, services, integration and inclusion, well-being, friends and social activities, work, interaction with the community and leisure during the years the student is attending the HEI. For the student it is about the whole package of choosing an institution where the holistic experience will provide the individual with as much value as possible for their future careers and often even for the futures of their families. Students look for return on investment (time, money, effort) and this is not limited only to tuition fee paying students, but to all students as they could just as well choose another HEI.

IaH emphasises a holistic view of the student and his/her experience throughout the student lifecycle (from potential applicant to alumnus). It fosters integration and inclusion and promotes the use of co-curriculum and informal learning experiences on and off campus. IaH thus not only can make learning more transformative and may increase retention, but also can enhance the Student Experience as a whole, which in turn has positive effects on e.g. branding, alumni engagement and student recruitment. If we want Arcada to be truly student-centred, we need to step into their shoes in order to understand how to help them become healthy, innovative, driven and skilled members of an inclusive and sustainable society.

### 4.3. Student Satisfaction

#### 4.3.1. A Major Influence on Funding

The government funding scheme for Finnish HEIs has recently changed and now significantly highlights Student Satisfaction. Recruitment and retention have always been important for HEIs, but lack of retention has now become increasingly expensive for Finnish HEIs and therefore needs to be further explored and addressed as low Student Satisfaction results in poor student recruitment, dropouts and prolonged study times. Student recruitment can no longer be considered only to involve attracting applications and admitting students, but needs to be extended to the entire student lifecycle, from individuals interested in the institutions to satisfied students on campus who graduate and continue to engage with the HEI as alumni.

Employability of students after graduation has become a significant indicator for funding and requires the HEI to stay in touch with their alumni several years after graduation. This places an unprecedented emphasis on Student Satisfaction as well as on the employability skills and networks (integration) of our students. Student Satisfaction is also in itself explicitly connected to the funding scheme through the annual national barometer sent out to all graduating students (AVOP).

#### 4.3.2. Arcada's Three Main Areas of Development

In the autumn of 2017 Arcada conducted an internal survey using the global instrument for measuring international student satisfaction, International Student Barometer (ISB). The ISB not only measures student satisfaction at the institution in question, but also offers the possibility to benchmark the results with national, European and global benchmarks. The ISB is the largest instrument of its kind and is commonly used in international research. The results of the ISB 2017 at Arcada pointed towards three main areas of development: **1) employability, 2) quality of teaching and learning and 3) integration and inclusion**. IaH can address all of these challenges and shows us how to turn them into opportunities.

According to the ISB 2017, employability of our students is of the utmost importance for Arcada, not only as it is the main goal for our education but also as it is the main decision factor for students thinking of applying, especially for our international Bachelor's degree students. Providing all our students with the capability to work and thrive in an ever increasingly international setting and global reality should be the highest priority for Arcada and IaH is a tool for accomplishing that.

The ISB 2017 showed us that there are great variations in opinion of quality in teaching and learning at Arcada between student groups, especially among our international students. It is essential that Arcada looks more closely at why that is and takes measures to ensure a high quality education for all students. This requires adapting both input (e.g. teaching methods, tasks and assessment) and output (learning outcomes) to the reality of a diverse student body with different preconditions for learning. As retention of students has become a crucial factor in the public funding scheme, Arcada cannot afford to lose students who drop out because of frustration, stress and lack of understanding on how to study. Neither can we afford to lose them because the quality of teaching and learning

might not be up to par in the global competition where students in a heartbeat, can transfer to any other institution, in Finland or abroad.

IaH focuses on learning outcomes for the individual student and by thoroughly internationalising the curriculum Arcada can provide more diverse learning situations and outcomes for all students. This enhances the quality of teaching and learning not only for the international students who will have a better chance of understanding and contributing in class but will also provide the national students with a much broader perspective and truly transformational learning. The professional development needed for the academic staff to provide an international curriculum will in turn increase the quality of the teaching.

The third main challenge at Arcada reported in the ISB 2017 was integration and inclusion. Some of our international students feel isolated and lonely, which in turn creates stress and risk of dropping out. Arcada's operational idea has focused mainly on education and research while support services have been seen as separate add-ons, not as central and integrated elements. Arcada has been striving for equality, not equity in providing the same level of service to all students. But all students do not have the same needs or preconditions, and so the service results in inequality despite its original intention. A more holistic and integrated approach to the Student Experience, with emphasis on support and services as well as IaH, could significantly enhance the integration and inclusion of all our students.

A trend that can be seen in almost any HEI in the world, is the difficulty to involve local students in the integration of international students. Exchange students reportedly mostly meet students from other countries while degree students mostly meet students from their home country. None of them know students from the host country to any greater extent. This is unfortunate also from an employability perspective, as contacts and networks are essential for international students in gaining employment in the host country. The national ISB 2017 showed that half of the international degree students would like to remain in Finland after completing their degree, and yet Arcada provides little support in bridging the gap between graduation and employment (FACTS.express., 2018).

IaH brings different student groups together in a natural way both through the formal curriculum and by utilising the co-curriculum. It is essential to commit the local students to the IaH process and make them see the vast benefits they have to gain by taking active part in a genuinely transformational student experience at Arcada.

## **5. SUGGESTED ACTIONS**

The challenges Arcada faces in implementing IaH are broadly the same as for any other HEI. However, there are a few factors which we have tended to view as challenges that through comprehensive implementation of IaH could be turned into opportunities and further into competitive advantages. In order to do so, IaH should be articulated as a strategic means of implementing comprehensive, sustainable, ethical and inclusive internationalisation throughout the institution.

## **5.1. Broaden our Mission**

The world is changing, faster than ever, and Arcada needs to change with it. We need to review our values, how we perceive our mission as an HEI and rearrange the way we do things. Higher education is not a right, but a privilege. Many students are still young, at a loss and struggle to understand what it means to study at tertiary level or might not be familiar with Western education methods. We can no longer limit our task to provide the national community with a Swedish-speaking workforce, but we have to broaden our mission to provide healthy students with global competencies who can operate anywhere in the world and contribute to a sustainable future. Arcada has to take responsibility for the quality not only of education and research, but for the quality of service, support and well-being of our students. It is an ethical and sustainable way of offering higher education in a global world where the changes are so immense and so fast that we can no longer keep up without continuous learning, support and tools for managing stress and discomfort.

## **5.2. Create a Structure**

The lack of structure for IaH usually results in fragmented implementation by enthusiasts only. If we, with the help of strategic focus and commitment to comprehensive implementation, can create internationalised curricula for all degree programmes as well as a training structure and network for peer support and learning, we can create a solid model for initiating, implementing and assessing IaH and IoC throughout the institution. This forms an essential part of our quality assurance and provides all students with equal opportunity to acquire essential global competencies. It also significantly enhances the overall internationalisation of Arcada. IaH should be explicitly mentioned in strategic documents and tools for measuring implementation should be set up, used and evaluated continuously.

## **5.3. Involve the Co-Curriculum**

In both the previous quality audits of Arcada, it has been noted that we lack a connection with other stakeholders in society. Some Finnish HEIs have become truly engaged with their local community and stakeholders and have even created ecosystems and brands around them, such as e.g. Study in Turku. Helsinki as a city does not particularly promote itself as a student city, which is remarkable considering the amount of HEIs in the city. There is no concept for ecosystem including industry, NGOs, HEIs and other actors in the area, which could be beneficial for all involved. This constitutes a significant obstacle to IaH which places a lot of emphasis on cooperation with actors in the local and national communities. Arcada could leverage the vast existing networks among students, alumni and staff to initiate new forms of cooperation with other actors in society both to enhance the quality of the education and to increase the social impact of the HEI.

All the informal learning that occurs on and off campus, after hours and during vacations, that happens in the workplace rather than during class constitute invaluable learning experience for the students but are seldom recognised, harnessed, shared or rewarded, as they cannot necessarily be formally assessed. Still, they are building blocks in creating global competencies and developing valuable skills that contribute to the professional



development and careers of our students. Therefore, we need to develop methods for formally recognising these skills and competencies.

#### **5.4. Resources and Training**

One main obstacle to IaH can be the lack of knowledge among academic staff on how to internationalise the curricula and learning outcomes, especially in disciplines that are not by default international in their outlook. Other obstacles might be lack of resources, training and commitment. Academics, management and students are not familiar with the concept of IaH. They need to become aware of it, understand it and commit to it. By arranging targeted in-house trainings to different staff and student groups with the help of professionals in the field, e.g. through virtual or in-person sessions, awareness, knowledge and best practices could be spread across the institution without any major costs. There are tools and training courses available, as well as benchmarking opportunities with other HEIs.

#### **5.5. Connect Stakeholders**

A common obstacle to IaH is the lack of connection between stakeholders. When internationalisation in HEIs was still about mobility, the international office would be in charge of international matters. With the implementation of IaH, there are many new key stakeholders for internationalisation, such as academics, educational developers and quality assurance officers. It requires targeted action by management to involve these new stakeholders in the overall internationalisation process and the role of the international officers usually becomes a coordinating one. Another key role is to link and benchmark IaH practices and knowledge within their networks (Beelen, 2018, p.74). (Huerta-Jimenez & Sanchez, 2018, p.12)

Since IaH is all about the students and Arcada promotes student-centred learning, the students need to be involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of IaH and IoC, as well as in the development of a holistic Student Experience including services and support. The students therefore need to have access to all central documents, be invited to relevant meetings and heard for decision making. It is imperative that the students are well and accurately represented, reflecting the diversity among the whole student body.

#### **5.6. Promote Employability**

Since employability is the main reason for our international degree students to choose Arcada as a place of study, we cannot afford not to support them in this area. It not only affects student recruitment, but also retention, graduation rates, student satisfaction, institution reputation and alumni engagement, which all in turn are of significant economic value to Arcada. Even with limited resources Arcada could improve the international degree students' employability significantly by providing them with the right competences (global, transversal, generic), social networks (integration) and language skills (language courses in English, Swedish and Finnish targeted at employability through terminology, culture and job seeking strategies). All of these measures fall under the concept of IaH if conducted together with local students and staff.

## **5.7. Recognise Diversity in Teaching and Learning**

There is increasing diversity not only among our international students, but among our domestic ones as well. We perceive equality in teaching and learning to offer every student the same teaching and learning opportunities, but we need to look at equity instead and guarantee equal preconditions to learn, regardless of personal history and background of the student (Jones, 2017). This is the only way to secure student retention.

At Arcada we have long assumed that most international students come from abroad and that our national students speak Swedish or Finnish. However, in the 2018 intake to our Bachelor's degrees in English, 50% of the students who had a non-Finnish nationality already lived in Finland and 50% of the students with Finnish nationality did not have Finnish or Swedish as their mother tongue. When looking at our Swedish Bachelor's degree programmes, we found that the number of students who did not have Swedish or Finnish as their mother tongue, had also significantly increased annually over the past three years. The student groups are therefore becoming more diverse, and we need to adapt our teaching to this diversity to ensure equity in quality of learning.

## **5.8. Focus on Inclusion**

Arcada is structurally international. We offer education in English and we have international students and staff represented on campus. But we have no formalised structure or policy for integration and inclusion of our international students and staff, nor for the heterogenous domestic student body. They are literally an untapped resource. We should explore, share and value their expertise and experiences and actively encourage them to share their thoughts, opinions or views on organisational matters. We should offer language courses and cultural training as well as provide active, academic and social support when for those who feel lost in a new environment, have trouble getting familiar with study/work practices or have difficulties connecting with peers (Puttonen, 2018).

## **5.9. English as Language of Service**

In Finland, English is not an official language legislatively which has negative implications for service to immigrants, including documentation, communication and integration. The city of Espoo has recognised that these legal frames constitute a threat to the prosperity of the city both in terms of economy and social aspects. Therefore, they (as the first city in Finland) have decided to stipulate that English is a formal language of service, in addition to Finnish and Swedish. (Ovaska, 2019)

Likewise, Arcada could still be a Swedish speaking institution but have a lot to gain from stipulating that English (and why not also Finnish to some degree) is a formal language of service at the institution. Highlighting our already existing services and extending them to include e.g. all formal documentation, would have several benefits such as equity and access for international students and staff, visualise our efforts towards inclusion and respect and increase possibilities for diversity in advocacy.

## 6. ARCADA'S COMPETITIVE EDGE – POSITIVELY UNIQUE

Arcada is a small, Swedish-speaking, multidisciplinary UAS, offering tuition in English and Swedish in a remote country with a different majority language. We have close ties to the Nordic and Baltic regions and enjoy a large diversity among our students and staff. Too often, we view some of these traits as threats rather than opportunities. If we can turn our challenges into competitive advantages and leverage the opportunities available to us, we can create a powerful competitive edge in embracing being different. IaH invites us to do so.

Being a small institution is not only about having limited resources and struggling for visibility. We can benefit from our smallness by being inclusive, accessible and welcoming. We can leverage the fact that we operate in only one building, on one campus and that everyone knows everyone. Being an Arcada alumni means that there is an instant recognition and bond wherever you meet a fellow alumnus globally – because so few are. Instead of thinking Arcada is small, we should think of it as unique.

As a Swedish-speaking HEI in Finland, offering education in Swedish and English, we often talk about how that is an obstacle to student recruitment and employability of our students. Instead, we could use this fact to our advantage through IaH where we openly embrace differences and focus on integration and inclusion. As minority representatives ourselves, we have a very special ability to understand others finding themselves a bit lost in an unfamiliar environment. We can use this compassion to increase the quality of service to and understanding of minorities within our own student and staff populations, as well as further into society. We can also become better at communicating our valuable ability to understand minorities finding their way in Finland and the Nordics. This could significantly enhance the Student Experience and Student Success at Arcada.

Arcada is the most international UAS in Finland, in relation to size. We can leverage that through IaH by creating structures for international curricula, embracing diversity and use it to our advantage by opening up the teaching and learning to become more diverse and inclusive. Diversity in teams fosters innovation, resilience and respect and we have the luxury of an abundance of diversity not only in terms of nationality, but of language, age and discipline. Arcada wants to co-create relevant solutions for a sustainable society and it goes without saying that the more perspectives, the more solutions.

Change is altering what we do, transformation is altering what we are. Structural changes are no longer sufficient as the requirements for successful HEIs have become utterly demanding. What we need is a genuine transformation. We need to lean into the discomfort of new and unsettling expectations, demands and situations and be willing to meet these with eagerness, ownership and accountability. We need to commit to constant transformation. The driver for success is being different in a desirable way. By placing strategic focus on IaH, support and services to increase Student Success, Arcada can gain a competitive edge in being positively unique.

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# From International Week to Summer School in Fachhochschule Potsdam– experiences from an international collaboration

Maria Bäck<sup>i</sup>,

## Abstract

International collaboration is not a new phenomenon amongst universities but has lately become more important and is considered strategically important for the success of higher education. Graduates are more likely to work across borders and thus internationalisation can also be a major factor in recruiting students. This article is a practical examination on a collaboration with Arcada UAS and Potsdam UAS and their degree programmes in Cultural Management. The paper describes the path from members in the same network to close partners in content creation in a Summer School. The students who participated in the programme are also being heard via a survey.

**Keywords:** Summer School, Potsdam UAS, Cultural Management, international collaboration

## 1. INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

International partnerships between universities are beneficial to all, from the staff and students to the world as a whole (QS Quacquarelli Symonds, 2019)

According to the legislation in Finland, a University of Applied Sciences is supposed to collaborate with both industry and working life especially in the region where the university is, but also with other universities both regionally, nationally and internationally (Yrkeshögskolelagen, 2014)

International collaboration is not a new phenomenon among universities, but as massification and marketisation of higher education have become major factors, internationalisation has become more important and is strategically vital for the success of universities. International university cooperation is no longer a choice but a necessary development in the global market. Graduates will probably work across national boundaries and therefore international cooperation is of great importance for the universities and also a factor for recruitment of students. (Chan, W., 2004)

Internationalisation is also to some extent a response to globalisation. When talking about internationalisation it also recognises national boundaries and individual societies and cultures. Being able to work in global surroundings, international understanding and cooperation is needed. (Chan, W., 2004)

### 1.1. Concept and model

This article is a practical examination of a collaboration with Arcada UAS in Finland and Potsdam UAS in Germany. I am using my own experience - as lecturer in Cultural management and also part of the network ENCATC described later in this article, I have

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participated four (4) times in the Summer School/International Week and also initiated the collaboration with Arcada. Some of the material used in this article is based on email conversations and also discussions and meetings during my visits in Potsdam. I have also submitted a survey to the students that have been part of the programme and asked them for their opinions about the collaboration.

I will also in this article reflect on the future and steps needed for a collaboration like this. Forming a network might be quite easy (Chan, W., 2004), but maintaining it needs both effort and steps which are also something I am going to elaborate on in my conclusions.

## **2. INTERNATIONAL WEEK TO SUMMER SCHOOL**

As mentioned in the previous section, forming a network might be easy, but it also takes time. Understanding the background to the Summer School in Potsdam for the last five years, one has to go further into history. The European Network on Cultural Management and Policy (ENCATC) was founded in 1992 as an answer to the need for cultural dialogue. The iron curtain had just fallen and a demand for a joint platform for discussions about a common European culture was substantial. (ENCATC, 2017) The degree for Cultural Management (then a part of Sydväst Polytechnic) joined the network early in the process.

Being a network for educators and researchers in the field of cultural management and cultural policy, the need for meetings and knowledge creation for students soon rose and the Summer School Synaxis Baltica was born (ENCATC, 2017; ENCATC activity report, 2003) The Summer School was a joint venture with the universities around the Baltic Sea and was active from 2002 until 2010. The last Summer School 2010 was held in Klaipeda in Lithuania. It was not meant to be the last one but there were problems with funding for the future and after a couple of years Synaxis Baltica was forgotten, only mentioned occasionally in the boardroom of ENCATC and warmly remembered by former participants.

In August 2009 the Synaxis Baltica Summer School was hosted by Potsdam UAS, and this was my first encounter with our future partner. And from this time, and via annual meetings because of ENCATC congresses, the collaboration started. I will shortly describe both background and themes of the different years Arcada participated in the International Week/Summer School. In the descriptions of the different years you can also see the development of the event from being planned and co-created by lecturers to being planned and co-created by the students. The students' thoughts will be presented at the end of this chapter.

### **2.1. The first International week for Arcada 2013**

The degree programme for Cultural Management was moved to Arcada UAS in January 2013 from Novia UAS as part of reorganising higher education in Finland. Rector Örjan Andersson of Novia UAS stated that the degree programme for Cultural Management should remain in Helsinki, close to policy makers for the cultural and creative industry (Yle, 2012; Åbo Underrättelser, 2012). Within this context, the lecturers instantly began to build new networks both inside the university and outside, in addition to sustaining and

deepening the partnerships we had from before. Experience with the international collaboration via Synaxis Balitca Summer Schools and the ENCATC congresses where we also had students present, we recognised the importance of international collaboration both as a benefit for the students, future professionals in the cultural field, but also for lecturers gaining deeper insights in the industry on an international level.

In 2008 we had an exchange student from Potsdam who at this point worked as an international coordinator at Potsdam UAS (Norbert Schmidt) and because of the personal connection the first invitation came, and read as follows:

As a close partner of ours we would like to welcome you to participate both with lecturers and students to further our cooperation and develop sustainable frameworks for ongoing and future student and staff exchanges.

In order to create a better understanding for the existence of our partnership among our students and to outline what each of us is offering, we have not set a common topic but instead invite you to present a topic of your own choice which you think represents your university and degree programme best. The participating students should thus get an idea of what your degree programme stands for and which approaches you use methodically in your teaching.

This was the second time they arranged the International Week and it was financed by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and had therefore sufficient resources for both planning and execution of the programme. Many universities joined the week, almost all of them also members of ENCATC. From Finland there were four universities of applied science (Arcada UAS, HUMAK UAS, Seinäjoki UAS and Mikkeli UAS). Approximately 50 students participated but we did not have any from Arcada at this point because funding for them was not quite clear at that time. The decision to take part in the International Week in 2013 was to learn and reflect on how to bring in international networks into the degree programme, and also as written in the invitation, share with our partner universities about what we are doing at Arcada.



*Figure 1. Study visit in Potsdam with former exchange student Norbert Schmidt, Academic Employee Uwe Hanf from Potsdam, Senior Lecturer Jaakko Pitkänen from Mikkeli UAS and Senior Lecturer Jussi Kareinen from Seinäjoki UAS. Photograph Maria Bäck 2013*



## 2.2. Second and last International Week 2014

After settling down at the university we were able to plan better for the International Week in Potsdam in 2014. The financing the university got from DAAD was for three years, so this was also the last International Week in Potsdam. There were trials among other partners to arrange similar events, but the problem was always funding. The teachers used Erasmus mobility grants to join, but for the students it was more difficult to be able to participate.

In year 2014 the International Week had a topic: Creative city, urban space and the republic of pedestrians.

Do you believe that we are citizens of Europe and of the cyberspace? Are we going forward to build together a Republic of the Pedestrian and the User? The eighteenth century was characterized more or less by the question of freedom. This includes the right to move freely. So, the idea of a republic of the pedestrians developed during the French Revolution. The nineteenth century was dominated by the social question. The pavement became a space of citizens. The twentieth century was under the banner of the technics and motorization. The pavement was instrumentalized, as well as the independence of citizens. The twenty-first century is a question of old and new borders and the crossing of boundaries: First, the pavement is again a domain of all citizens. It could be the old and new urban nerve centre. And more: What does it mean for our understanding of the public space? Is the internet a part of the public space? How can we transform the idea of the pavement into the internet? Each pedestrian is both a user and a pedestrian and each user is a pedestrian, in every situation. Therefore, it is our main concern to question during the International Week what could be a republic of the pedestrian and the user. (Concept for the international week 2013)

The topic was a collaboration with the head of the degree programme Cultural Management in Potsdam Professor Hermann Voegen and a local artist. Professor Voegen's research interest is urban development and thus the topic was set.

This time we had 7 students participating from Arcada who also had the opportunity to use the week as part of their extension studies. I also had the pleasure of having my colleague, Senior Lecturer Elisabeth Öhman with me who also was involved in the programme with a workshop of her own involving both drama and the topic for the week. One significant outcome from this week was that one of the students from Arcada went back one year later for an exchange (and is actually still living in Berlin) and that one of the students from Potsdam joined our degree programme as an exchange the following academic semester.



Figure 2. Students from Arcada UAS outside Campus in Potsdam. Photograph Maria Bäck 2014

### 2.3. The transition from International Week to Summer School 2017

The funding from DAAD for the International Week finished in 2014 but Potsdam UAS got a short-term funding scheme to arrange a Summer School in 2017. Arcada was on board again. DAAD actually funded the five students participating from Finland and I got a grant from the Swedish Cultural Fund (Kulturfonden) so I could join the students for a short while. I did not spend the whole week in Potsdam this time. The students had again the possibility to use the week as part of their extension studies.

The title for this year was:” *Common Ground, how to create cities together*”. The topics used to research the theme was City Cooperation, Green Cities – humanity, nature and city and Culture and Urban transformation. The background for the theme this year was based on criticism in Potsdam by the population about development of the city. There was also the lack of housing for students, artists and creators which was an issue in the city (Summer School, 2017) One difference from the earlier International Weeks was that students from Potsdam were in charge of planning the content for the different workshops, Visionary Labs as they were called. The students participating from abroad were to be nominated by the partner universities and they were also required to send a motivational letter to Potsdam UAS.

My own experience of this week was limited because I only stayed for two days, but the keynote speakers were good, and the workshops started nicely. At the end of the week, the different teams presented their findings with a Pecha Kucha, and the students from Arcada wrote reflections which were assessed by me.



Figure 3. Getting to know each other in Potsdam UAS. Photograph Maria Bäck 2017

## 2.4. Summer School before the election of the European Parliament 2019

The last Summer School event/week was held just before the European election in a world with more and more right-wing movements gaining traction. Hence, the title for this year was “*European Identity and Nationalist Movements*”, an important topic for cultural workers all around the world. Potsdam UAS had also this year applied for funds from DAAD but was denied the grant. This meant that the students from Arcada had to fund their own participation in the Summer School. The invitation arrived in good time, however, and because we communicated to the students that they might have to pay for themselves, there was no problem. If you book your flight in time, it is not very expensive to travel to Berlin.

One other thing that was different from previous times was the deepening of collaboration. We had participated three times already and were in that sense a trustworthy partner. Staff from Potsdam UAS visited Arcada in spring 2018 and we already then started to draw up both guidelines and ideas for a future Summer School. The degree programme in Potsdam also had a new director, Dr Julia Glesner, whom I met during ENCATC’s annual congress in September 2018. We continued the planning process and developed routines on how to involve the students. The students in Potsdam had a course in inter-cultural collaboration and were in charge of the content for the Summer School. The students from Arcada were invited at an early stage to take part in the course and could visit the learning platform they used, Incom. We decided though to develop our own material and the students wanted to create a workshop about Swedish Speaking Identity, “Swedish Speaking Finn – What is this thing?”



*Figure 4. Students from Arcada (from left:Adriana Knsipel, Carolina Råman, Frida Lassus, Ronja Forsström, Lilli Dahlberg and Michelle Paakki) presenting “Swedish Speaking Finn – What is this thing?” Photograph Maria Bäck 2019*

There were four different workshops (Visionary Labs) examining the topic of the Summer School. The different labs were:

- “We have to talk” European Identity
- Linkages of rightwing populist parties in Europe
- Mass Media in Critique? The (new) role of media in European comparison
- “how to create dialogue”

At the end of the week, the groups presented their findings with a Pecha Kucha. The students from Arcada also shared their experiences during a knowledge sharing session for other students in the department of Culture and Media in Arcada.

## **2.5. Outcome from the student survey**

All together 17 Cultural Management students have participated in one International Week and two Summer Schools in Potsdam. In 2019 there was also one Media Analysis student participating, but since the programmes collaborating are degrees in Cultural Management, I chose to send the survey to these students (and alumni). The survey was short and only contained questions about why they enrolled, what they learned, if there have been any benefits from the course and if they would recommend the Summer School to other students. I also had a question about the collaboration with Potsdam UAS.

12 participants answered the questionnaire in July 2019 which means that it had been five years since the International Week in 2014. Memories had somewhat faded and the respondents did comment that they didn't remember very much from the actual content and programme. But the overall feeling was very positive from all the participants. They would all recommend the Summer School and participation to current students.

The reason the students registered to go to Potsdam was in all cases an interest in international collaboration, getting to know another Cultural Management education degree in another university and also a possibility to visit Berlin which neighbours Potsdam.

The content has been different every year and has been co-created by either the lecturers or in recent years, the students. The students felt that the programme sometimes was a little confusing and some of the workshops could have been better planned, but initially the topics and the programme were interesting enough to join the International Week/Summer School. On the other hand, this was also a lesson about the importance of good planning which also was commented on by the students from Arcada.

The lessons learned was that international collaboration takes more time than working in a national context. The participants felt they got more confident working internationally and got useful contacts during Summer School. Here are some quotes from the students (translated by the author of the article):

I learned patience, meeting people without prejudice, and to slow down the pace. I learned to know myself better and to handle conflicts in a more constructive way.

I learned a lot about the topic my lab dealt with (right-wing extremist parties in different countries). I learned a lot about the different countries that participated and about Potsdam UAS. I also learned about European identity and what it is about, I had not previously reflected on it. It was interesting to collaborate with students from other countries on a topic that affected us all and to hear different viewpoints on the theme. I think it helps me in my future cultural work to be aware of a larger entity.

I also learned a lot about my classmates I travelled with because we were both before and during the trip, solving different problems and socialised more than usual.

Learned that it is important to have a basic grasp of people's background when socialising and working together

One interesting thing that was stated in the survey was that the students from Arcada felt it was useful to meet other Finnish Cultural Management students, as the opportunity had not been presented at home in Finland.

For the future, the students feel that international collaboration is of great importance and that the Summer School (or International Week) also could be arranged in different places, for instance at Arcada.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS AND MY OWN REFLECTIONS**

The collaboration with Potsdam UAS has been both inspiring and rewarding. As stated by the students, they learned a lot about international collaboration and more importantly about themselves. Personally, I have had the same experience. I have learned a lot about the field of Cultural Management meeting colleagues from different countries. It has

given me an opportunity to develop my courses at Arcada with relevant theory and interesting examples. The international collaboration also broadens the mind and gives new perspectives on things.

At the last Summer School, three universities were present: Potsdam UAS, Amsterdam UAS and Arcada UAS. At the end of the week we had a meeting to figure out the future for collaboration and how to broaden it. There have been problems with funding for several universities around Europe (i.e. in Finland) and therefore the participants were only three this year. There is a will to continue the collaboration but at the moment there is not a sustainable, economic foundation to stand on. As Dr. Glesner stated, “the international collaboration has to be a strategic goal for the university to be able to continue”. I agree. The time invested personally is not insignificant and it has taken both time and effort to build up the partnership we currently have with Potsdam UAS. I refer back to the beginning of this paper that it is easy to form networks and partnerships but to maintain them and also deepen them, resources are needed. I will list some success factors suggested by Chan (2004) from her findings in research and add some observations of my own

- *Mission and objectives* – there should be a clear sense of partnership and a shared identity. This was clearly achieved in 2019 because of both meetings and planning together
- *Partners* – selection should be in accordance with the mission and objectives and numbers of partners should be kept on a manageable level. There was a little confusion in 2019 because the students from Amsterdam had a different understanding about the Summer School but this was cleared up after the first days.
- *People* – many networks fail because of the lack of commitment and continuity. This is a very important factor and this was discussed during the meetings we had during Summer School 2019. How to commit people and to get a continuance for the programme.
- *Projects* – it is unrealistic that a network involves an entire institution and should not satisfy too many customers. It has been successful to narrow the Summer School to the field of Cultural Management. It has been meaningful to co-create the content with the students.
- *Time and resources* – investment in both time and moneys are necessary to realise a project. The time and money both students and staff have invested in the collaboration is not insignificant and have broadened it.
- *Communication* – key players should be involved in as frequent contact as possible. This has been challenging in the partnership because of the different partners and also because their roles have changed every year.

Therefore, the partnership with Potsdam UAS has been a successful one for Arcada and Cultural Management students but it requires both commitment and resources according to the list suggested above.

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# International Degrees and Employability

Linn Hongell

## Abstract

Internationalisation and integration of international students is currently a topic that has been prioritised at the moment by both the Finnish Ministry of Education as well as business society. Finnish society needs competent workers, especially in certain fields such as business and IT, and by integrating international students into working life in Finland we can gain competent workers in those sectors. At Arcada UAS, international business students have been enrolled for a long time but many of them have not had the ability to integrate into Finnish society. By developing an internship model, part of the problem could be addressed and a greater integration could be achieved. This paper presents an alternative model for consideration.

**Keywords:** integration, internship, international students, business

## 1. INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS STUDENTS

According to the *Elinkeino-, liikenne- ja ympäristökeskus* (Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment) as well as Elina Nurmi, representative of the city of Helsinki, there is a great need for international talent in Finland. During the Ministry of Education's seminar on August 29<sup>th</sup> 2019 in Helsinki, Birgitta Vuorinen (Education ministry's higher education policy director) emphasised the need for international students to stay in Finland after graduation as part of the Finnish workforce. According to her, we need to make it easier for international students to find work here in Finland after graduation. Birgitta Vuorinen claims that since international students have made the decision to study in Finland they are already open to the idea of living here. Because Finland, together with most EU countries, have an ageing population, we need international talent to help build our GNP and balance the workforce in light of the needs created by such a population. The Mayor of Helsinki, Jan Vapaavuori, also stated at the Accelerate Helsinki event on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2017 that the Helsinki area, as well as the whole of Finland, needs talented foreign workers. One way of ensuring this is by admitting international students into the educational system in Finland. Arcada has, for the past eleven years had international degree students recruited from outside of Finland and thereby can be seen as a possible future workforce provider. Through their studies, this group of students should be able to integrate better into the society and as their degrees offer courses in Finnish and Swedish, building important language skills, they should be in a stronger position in terms of eligibility for employment in Finland.

During the last eleven years, Finnish universities of applied sciences have recruited non-Finnish students into their English-speaking International Business degrees through internationally located entrance exams. The recruitment started through the Asia network in 2008, and the then called Finnibs network organised the first international entrance exams in 2008-2010. From 2010, the original network changed its name to Finnips and it still organises entrance exams in twelve countries today (Finnips 2019) Arcada was part



of the Finnibs/Finnips network from 2008-2016 and recruited international business students for the International Business programme and a degree as Bachelor of Business Administration. Since 2016, however, Arcada has accepted SAT scores for international applicants as well as introducing nationally arranged entrance exams in Finland.

Since 2013, the study plans at Arcada for the international business students and the Swedish *företagsekonomi* students have been the same. The study plans are not only identical but also strongly integrated. One of the first ideas here was to integrate international students, whilst at the same time internationalising national students. This has worked successfully and the two student groups' integration has been fairly easy. The latest study plan change in 2019 emphasising integration even more.

However, one of the challenges for the international students is related to internship possibilities in Finland and a full integration into Finnish business life after graduation. According to my colleagues at other universities of applied sciences that educate international business students, the situation is the same across the national level. This phenomenon was also highlighted at the Ministry of Culture and Education's seminar 14.5.2019 in Paasitorni, Helsinki. This chapter therefore addresses this challenge by suggesting a new model of the internship experience that would better facilitate integration into the Finnish workplace. The question is; what can be done to integrate international students more effectively so that they can stay in Finland and help develop our society, or at least stay connected to Finnish business life and through that contribute to our national economy. The model's building blocks are to gain language skills and multicultural skills through the educational module. These are some of the future competencies raised by for example Sitra (The Finnish Innovation Fund). But first and foremost the idea of this model is to integrate business students into business life in Finland in order to gain the needed door opener to the first Finnish work experience.

## **1. Integration of international students**

Challenges concerning integration of international students is well known in the educational field. During the Ministry of Education's seminar in May 2019 in Helsinki, one of the major concerns was integration after education. My view is that there are two good options for Finland regarding such students. One is that international students study in Finland and later move to their home country or third country but work within export/import with Finland, and possibly even for a Finnish company. This way the Finnish nation would gain from these students' knowledge of Finnish business life, laws and manners. The other option is that the international student is integrated into business life in Finland and through that, develops and contributes to Finnish business life and Finnish society. This model explained below opens up for this possibility but also fosters the first option.

As Head of the Department of Business Management and Analytics, and with many years of experience as Degree Programme Director for Arcada's business programmes on a BA level, I have come into contact with recruiters at many Finnish companies. The interesting notion is that for employment, as well as internships, in business positions in Finland you need to be fluent in Finnish. In discussions with other universities of applied sciences in Finland the same difficulty has been noted. Some universities of applied science have

tried something called ‘tandem internships’ where the company has received two students, one international and one national in an attempt to address this issue but this has not been successful. Educators often find this lack of willingness to recruit non-Finnish speakers confusing, as internal language within many companies today is English. Many of our international students are high performing scholars with excellent grades, and do have a basic knowledge of Finnish and Swedish as well as being fluent in English and their native language. It therefore is difficult to understand (and indeed, explain to those students) why internships and long-term positions are often denied to them.

My question is; what can be done to integrate international students more effectively so that they can stay in Finland and help develop our society, or at least stay connected to Finnish business life and through that contribute to our national economy?

## **2. POSSIBLE SOLUTION FOR INTERNSHIPS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

The objective of this model is to enhance integration for ambitious international students and thereby create a new talented workforce for Finland. The first thing we have to start addressing is the need for good language courses and, as we have done at Arcada, the importance of integrating international and national students by combining classes. By integrating the student groups, the international students learn Finnish cultural manners and become more accustomed to Finnish business rules. The integration also helps them communicate with Finnish people in a natural way and teaches them many culturally bound aspects, such as the time concept, concept of personal space and communication models.

The Finnish student also benefits as in Finland, being a very homogeneous nation, we often feel that non-Finnish customs and manners are odd and this is partly due to cultural differences. For the Finnish students who are integrated with international students, this opens up the possibilities that multiculturalism gives, and builds greater tolerance of, and respect for, diversity.

Cultural differences can vary in intensity. According to cultural researchers (e.g. Hall, 1990; Shein, 1985), as a general rule one can assume that the further away two countries are geographically, the greater the cultural difference. No matter where in the world a person is born, she or he will be surrounded by a specific culture and these cultural settings will affect the person’s way of behaving and thinking. A person will unconsciously adapt to the culture around him or her. The cultural norms can be, as mentioned earlier, manners and norms, language, the way of doing things or anything else that is typical for that culture. In every culture in the world, there are concepts such as friendship, responsibility, authority, bureaucracy and verification. There is, however, a difference in how these concepts are understood. Problems can arise in interactions between different cultures as we use the same concepts but we interpret them in different ways, furthermore we are not always aware of the differences. We always have to remember that we are influenced by our cultural heritage and that people from other cultures may have a different view or way of doing things.

The integration of national and international students should give a greater cultural understanding for all, if the integration is planned and managed. This should help the national students to understand and embrace different views and to be more tolerant of international colleagues in their future business careers. To the best of my knowledge, at the time of this writing, Arcada's International Business degree is the only international business programme in Finland that is integrated to a very high extent with the national business degree programme.

The one area that still has to be improved is the range of language courses available to international students. International students should be able to study practical everyday Swedish and Finnish, as well as business Swedish and Finnish to a much higher extent than today. This can be partly offered as courses at the University, but could also partly be included in the internship. Using Swedish and Finnish in the workplace is a natural way of improving theoretical language skills.

## **2.1. Internship model**

As mentioned earlier, international students have difficulties in finding an internship in Finland, as well as employment after graduation. One thing that according to Ahmad's (2019) research affects international applicants, is the applicant's international name. The idea behind my model is that this can be overcome through the trainee programme as the trainee process is supervised by the UAS. Since finding work after graduation is directly related to finding an internship in Finland, by helping international students get an internship in Finland, there is a greater possibility for further employment. A successful internship in a company in Finland holds the potential for a good reference for further job-hunting and also a possible boost for the student's own perception of working in Finland. One could also argue that the internship in Finland would possibly be a key factor for further employment as we know many national students get their first job after graduation in the same company where they did their internship during their studies (Viljamaa, 2018).

My recommendation would be an internship model that Arcada could develop with companies in the greater Helsinki area. The aim is to create a continuous system where a company accepts the responsibility of three internships each year. The internships initial cost would be to train the first intern but thereafter the interns would train each other and thus the organisation's training cost would be minimal. For many international students, an internship in Finland can be non-paid as it gives study credits and work experience, as well as allow them to make more intangible (tangible?) contacts, while obtaining references for their cv and boosting their self-esteem.

The model is demonstrated in figure 1 below.

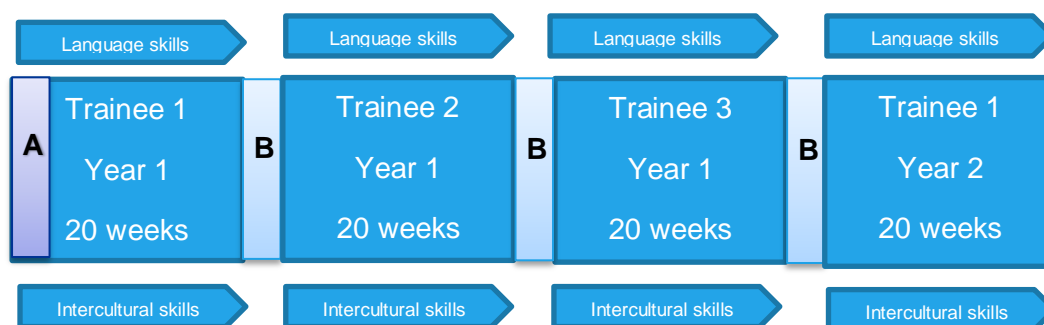


Figure 1. The Continuous Internship model

At the university level, Arcada builds a continuous relationship with a Finnish employer in a relevant industry. The employer commits to accepting three internships a year on a continuous and consecutive basis. The initial trainee (1), marked with red, will be trained by one of the company's employees for two weeks, shown as A in the figure above, which will amount to a certain initial cost as work time will be used for the trainer. After this, the trainee will work independently for sixteen weeks and during his or her two last weeks, he or she will train the new intern. The new intern (trainee 2 in figure above) will have a two week training session with the old trainee (trainee 1 in figure above), and this is marked with light blue and B in the figure above. This B training will not cost the company anything as the earlier intern is training the new intern. Thus a continuous system will offer 3 trainees a year a possibility to incorporate themselves into Finnish business life, get study credits from the internship, get practical knowledge of working Finnish or Swedish as well as business manners and customs in Finland. This will also help the international student to show further employers that he or she has the potential of being a good employee and also the possibility to build a professional network. From the companies point of view this is a possibility to have a continuous flow of interns without more than the initial training cost. In the long run, this model will show Finnish companies that international students have the same capabilities as national students and furthermore, a greater international cultural understanding that can help the companies in the international market and broaden their market share both in terms of sourcing products and materials, as well as selling and internationalising the company further.

### 3. SUMMARY

The next step for us at Arcada is to gather funding for this model. My aim for the next academic year is to have one company committed to this programme, and then increase the number of companies each year until we can offer all our international students an internship in a Finnish company. With today's numbers, that would mean approximately seven companies, but if we can attract even more international students in the future, the need could increase to fourteen. Administrating this and selling the concept to companies will not be an easy task but a positive challenge that could be handled collectively with other universities of applied science.

By better integrating international students that have chosen to study in Finland, we can gain more internationally successful companies that can help Finland stay at the top of

the economic spectrum. By offering international students the chance to get work, would mean that their desire to stay in Finland is much greater. This integration can lead to a growing population of well-educated individuals that keep building a Finland for the future.

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