Global Competence of Teachers in Higher Education Institutions. A Case Study of Novia UAS

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ABSTRACT

In university education it is important to ensure that students possess not only professional skills but also global competence to address challenges described in the UN's 2030 agenda. This is relevant for higher education institutions in Finland. Global competence is related to internationalization of higher education. Based on a Finnish Ministry of Education report on global competence, the Finnish higher education should support conditions to work in international environment and actively use opportunities for Internationalization. The purpose of this paper is to provide information on what global competence means and how teaching skills in global competence can be developed. The focus is on conditions, materials and working methods to support the teaching staff's competence development. The findings suggest that for Novia to develop the teachers' global competence, a new way of working should be developed where native students and exchange students meet regularly in multicultural groups during a joint academic semester given entirely in English. Furthermore, teacher training must be arranged. Mentorship and access to a toolbox of knowledge and best practice of global competence could facilitate teachers in their development. This paper is drawn upon findings of a small-scale research of teaching staff of Novia University of Applied Sciences. Qualitative research in this study is based on the results of working groups at Novia and by interviewing the teachers who have experience in teaching multi-cultural students.

1 INTRODUCTION

The world has become smaller, and the increase of global migration has led to diversity in schools in the world(Kerkhoff and Cloud 2020). The responsibility of teachers has shifted over the years to include preparing students for a complex, interconnected world. Teachers face increasing pressures to prepare students for today's global, multicultural, and knowledge-based society. This has made global competence become an object of interest not only by researchers but also by other interest groups such as universities, politicians, governmental bodies, public and private institutions.

Finnish higher education must provide students with conditions to work in an international environment and at the same time the universities must offer high-class teaching in foreign languages. To be competitive in the global markets, the universities must focus on their competitive areas and actively utilize opportunities for internationalization. (Ministry of Education 2009)

In recent years, Novia University of Applied Sciences has increased the proportion of educations in English. The university today is facing the reality of teaching multicultural groups. In addition to the English-language educations, Novia also has a responsibility to ensure that

Finnish students develop their global competence. It is teaching that provides students with the foundations to be global minded. This means that Novia needs to prepare all teaching staff to work with multicultural groups now and in the future.

Global education includes themes relating to human rights, sustainable development, peace and conflict prevention, and cultural competence. Global education highlights several perspectives on the world around us and opportunities to see and deconstruct stereotypes. Global Education is described in Novia's strategy 2030 as a growing area that is characterized by flexible models and educational services with relevance in the global education market (Novia University of Applied Sciences 2020). The ambition is that by 2030 Novia will have a wide range of global education services with good international references to work for a global and open society.

Sue, Rasheed, and Matthews Rasheed (2016) have discussed global competence as an approach for a client-oriented work method and this method can also be applied in higher education on a student-centered teaching to promote awareness of global challenges and commitment to sustainable lifestyles. The teaching staff becomes a role model for multiculturalism and respect for the characteristics of different cultures. Cultural competence is fundamental in global competence and for teaching in multicultural groups and for achieving the goal of global education. The cultural competence is not only necessary for teaching in international groups, but we also need cultural competence to teach Novia's native speaking groups because the native speaking groups can also be multicultural. Furthermore, Novia's strategy emphasizes the importance of bringing students, students' learning, and quality at the center, as well as responding to the needs of working life through open-minded, dynamic, and creative working methods.

Through continuous renewal and innovation, Novia guarantees that the university is an attractive and a competitive actor in global markets now and in the future. But a dynamic international teaching environment does not emerge automatically. The process requires investments in the development of structures, knowledge, working methods and attitudes. According to Xu, Hao, and Huennekens (2016), education can strengthen the development of teachers' cultural competence. The study also shows that domestic students can benefit from the cultural knowledge they gain through teachers in teaching situations in their own mother tongue.

For Novia to achieve the goal of a global education according to Novia's strategy 2030, new demands are set on the teaching staff. Global education presupposes cultural competence and cultural competence means "that all people, regardless of cultural origin, are respected and that a non-discriminatory atmosphere is built up and safeguarded in society". It also means that services are arranged, provided and available so that the different needs of people with different backgrounds are taken into account (THL 2022).

There is a broad consensus about the need to include global competence in teaching. Furthermore, training of global competence is needed for teachers to relate the global dimension of

their disciplines to their current teaching so that the teachers can be critical promoters of student global competence outcome (Fischer 2007). Teachers should therefore be offered training in cultural competences, which in the long run will lead to a paradigm shift. The paradigm shift begins with the teachers' competence development and is then further transformed into the classroom. Cultural competence is required regardless of whether the language of instruction is a native language or English, as today's student groups are multicultural to a greater extent than before.

Novia is a Swedish-speaking university of applied sciences in Finland. Novia has approximately 4,500 students, 300 teachers and administrative staff. Novia offers education for graduate students at bachelor and master's level, as well as research development and innovation (RDI) activities. Novia consists of four faculties: Natural Resources, Business, Health and Welfare, Technology and Seafaring. Already seventeen of all bachelor and master's degree programs are offered in English to students from all over the world (Novia 2022).

In 2021, working groups for global competence at Novia were established (see Figure 1). The working groups work with the theme of global education. The idea of the establishment of the working groups and the project of global competence at Novia came from international unit at Novia. This paper is based on the project group's work. It aims to provide information on what global competence means for Novia and to describe conditions that are needed for the teaching staff's global competence development. A globally competent staff promotes the development of globally competent students and contributes to the university being able to position itself as a significant player in global education.

Objective and research questions

The purpose of this paper is to provide information on what global competence means to Novia and to explain how the teaching competence of the teaching staff can be developed. The focus is on conditions, materials and working methods to support the staff's competence development. The following are the research questions:

What does global competence mean for the teaching staff?
How can Novia support the teaching staff in developing their global competence?

This paper is structured as follows: firstly, based on concepts of the existing literatures a brief literature review on global competence is presented. Secondly, an empirical study is conducted by using a sample of Novia University of Applied Sciences, Finland. Finally, discussion on the results and future directions will be presented.

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

The UN's 2030 agenda has mentioned the crucial role of inclusive and equitable quality in education that enables successful achievement of sustainable development goals. Sustainable development goals have been found in universities' vision and mission plans. In connecting knowledge, skills, attitudes, and cultural competences to global mindset is invaluable to global education. (United Nations General Assembly n.d.)

In the more globalized society, changes happen and are becoming a crucial force to shape the future world. The changes have important aspects for teachers' competence development and responsibilities of teachers have dramatically been shifted by preparing students for a complex and an ever-changing, interconnected world. (Oxley & Morris, 2013).

Global education is a collective concept that has a multifaceted meaning. A Finding from Sinagatullin (2019) has confirmed that teacher education must have a solid global knowledge for teachers with a tolerant attitude to diversity and involve themselves with problems faced globally. Global education means that students must be prepared to work in a global environment, but also that the teaching provided at Novia for example must be viable in a global context. Global education presupposes cultural competence and cultural competence means that all people, regardless of cultural origin, are respected and that a non-discriminatory atmosphere is built up and safeguarded in society. It also means that services are arranged, provided and available so that the different needs of people with different backgrounds are taken into account (THL 2022).

Three components of cultural competence are cultural awareness, knowledge and skills. This involves awareness of one's own prejudices and openness towards cultural differences, knowledge of other peoples' cultures, their worldview, and expectations. Cultural skills are the ability to intervene in a manner that is culturally sensitive and relevant (Sue 2001; Sue 2016).

To strengthen global competences some researchers, argue that going abroad for exchange is an ideal opportunity and it has been known as a catalyst of global competence (Moskal and Schweisfurth 2018) and some argue to integrate skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors into learning outcomes of specific modules or course activities. Furthermore, the study of (Cruickshank and Fenner 2007) suggested going beyond technical solutions focused on economy and environment and highlighting the social aspect of sustainability in global competence.

Global competence is a toolbox that equips students to reach their aspirations in a diverse, globalized society. Global competence in nature is a multidimensional in understanding cognitive, social-emotional, behavioral domains of learning (OECD 2018). The cognitive domain is knowledge or skills in understanding of the world and its complexities. The social-emotional is about values, attitudes, and social skills that enable individuals to live together peacefully and respectfully. Behavioral is on action, performance, or practical application.

In addition to adapting the teaching methods to meet the requirements of a heterogeneous group, the course literature must be reviewed. The review of literature must offer knowledge from other countries, and not be ethnocentric. Global education presupposes a solid knowledge of different needs and of new research findings that apply not only to a Finnish, Nordic or European context.

Ludwikowska (2019) has discussed teacher competence inventory (TCI) to identify future oriented competences required for teaching in higher education institutions. The TCI has four dimensions: 1) stimulating students for their achievement, 2) using different teaching methods to help students to improve student's learning method 3) to prepare student to be globally competent 4) creating a supportive learning environment. The study revealed the importance of the dimensions for teacher competence development because the teachers are the change agents for students in the changing learning environment. Kerkhoff (2017) has discussed Global Teaching Model (GTM).

The global teaching model consists of four dimensions: situated, integrated, critical and transactional. GTM helps teachers to implement global competence in teaching. The first dimension is practice. The situated practice means that teaching is culturally relevant for both students in the class taking into consideration students' socio-cultural background. This issue highlights the importance of understanding values, norms and beliefs of society. The teachers are also role models to reflect on their own cultures, assumptions and prejudices and guide the students in doing the same. The second dimension is integrated. The integrated dimension means that global competence learning should be incorporated in all disciplines and integrated in all courses. Teachers can facilitate students with analysis of information about authentic topics communicated or experienced and the students understand how to act or react with other people in multicultural contexts. The third dimension is critical. Global education through a critical framework considers issues of reliability and validity of learning resources. The students are taught to develop their critical literacy to raise socio-cultural awareness. The final dimension is transactional experiences involving engagement in intercultural relationships and cross-cultural collaborations. The collaboration will engage students in teaching each other and act on social justice, solidarity, and empathy for others around the world.

As the literature review shows, there is a wide variety of studies on global competence and on how the teacher's competence can be improved. There is a need to find out how it applies in practice. We will use the GTM-model of Kerkhoff (2017) to describe how the global competence of teachers at Novia can be improved. The next chapter we will focus on conditions, materials and working methods to support the teacher competence development at Novia, where the empirical study is presented and discussed.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA GATHERING

As the purpose of this paper is to provide information on what global competence means to Novia and to explain how the teaching competence of the teaching staff can be developed, a

qualitative research method is used. Case studies can be conducted on a single case, multiple cases or embedded cases (Yin 2016). This study is a single case study of Novia, and it is chosen as the most suitable design for the purpose.

According to Olsson and Sörensen (2021) different data collection methods are used in case studies, and the researchers follow or participate in the process of a certain case. The content of the report is based on literature reviews and on working groups at Novia as shown in figure 1. All members of the working groups are teachers in different disciplines and teach in multicultural groups. Each faculty chose the teachers for the working groups, based on the teachers' experience and interest of developing global competence at Novia.

The working groups began their operations in January 2021 under the leadership of a project manager. During a joint meeting with all working groups members, the members reflected together on different ways in which Novia could better support teaching in multicultural groups. Then the members were divided into four different working groups.

The first working group drew up a stipulative definition of the concept of global competence. The description of how the concept of global competence is operationalized at Novia was completed during the spring-winter of 2021, while the other working groups continued to work until the summer and during the autumn of 2021. The second working group focused on the content of a toolbox for teaching staff in multicultural groups, the third working group on how mentorship could be developed to meet the teaching staff's needs, and the fourth on how best practice of teaching global competence could be developed and communicated outside and within the university. As part of the work of the fourth working group for best practice of teaching global competence, open questions were sent to five teachers who have experience of teaching in multicultural groups.
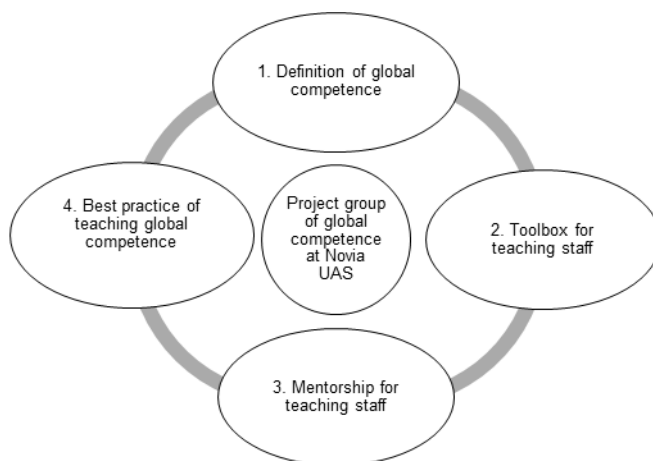

Figure 1. The working groups within the Global competence project at Novia 2021

All the four working groups have met separately and together to continuously report and discuss results and proposals with each other. Communication within the project group and between the working groups has taken place via a common channel in Microsoft Teams. Various materials have been published in the channel to support a continuous exchange of information between the groups. The team group's channel has been open to all members.

4 RESULT AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, we first present the result of the working groups within global competence at Novia and then the analysis of interviews. We use the Global Teaching Model of Kerkhoff (2017) to analyse the results (see chapter 2 in literature review).

4.1. Global competence at Novia UAS

Novia's description of global competence is based on a few national and international sources, including the OECD's PISA definition of global competence (OECD 2018) and the Finnish National Board of Education's publications on school internationalization and cultural competence. The stipulative description for Novia was prepared by the first working group:

"Global competence is the attitudes, knowledge and skills needed to interact, communicate and work constructively, creatively and ethically in environments with cultural and social diversity".

The concept of global competence is closely related to the concepts of cultural competence and cultural sensitivity. To possess global competence, someone must also be culturally competent and have a culturally sensitive attitude towards other people. According to the Institute for Health and Welfare (THL 2022) culturally competent people possess information, knowledge and skills about other cultures and can at the same time reflect or examine their own habits and values in relation to others.

Cultural sensitivity, on the other hand, is more about the ability to interact respectfully with people from other cultures to value diverse ways of communicating and expressing oneself and to be curious about other people's customs, values, and culture instead of generalizing. Services that are culturally sensitive do not mean that they are transformed into special services, but that they are instead adapted so that more people fit in (THL 2022).

For teaching staff at Novia, cultural sensitivity means that teaching in groups of native speaking students is adapted so that it also provides more space for students from other cultures. For example, by more regularly integrating teachers and exchange students or graduate students from English-language degree programs into classroom activities. In addition, one should also review the course literature, so that it offers knowledge from other countries and increases students' understanding through more globally representative literature.

By integrating the groups in the classroom activities, it contributes to internationalization at home. Internationalization at home means that all Novia's students can also develop their global competence within the walls of their own home university. Eventually, this means that even students who have never been on an exchange can enter a labor market with attitudes, knowledge, and skills to meet the global demands of working life. For the teaching staff to be able to optimally develop their global competence, appropriate methods are needed for teachers in different teaching situations where native speaking and international students meet.

4.2. Toolbox for teaching staff

The second working group was working on the development of a toolbox for teaching. The result of the working group was a mind map on global competence and materials to support the teachers who teach in multicultural groups (Figure 2).

The mind map presents various aspects of global competence in teaching. The green thread deals with calendar years, similarities and differences between cultures and countries. The orange thread highlights pedagogical- and working methods as these can vary between different universities in the world. The red thread is on knowledge in global competence from various sources such as literature and videos. The yellow thread deals with literature and materials as well but focuses more on the concept of culture. The concept of culture is treated based on different theories and cultural dimensions from a comparative study 's point of view. The blue thread is on some advice to teaching staff on how they can work with global competence in practice.
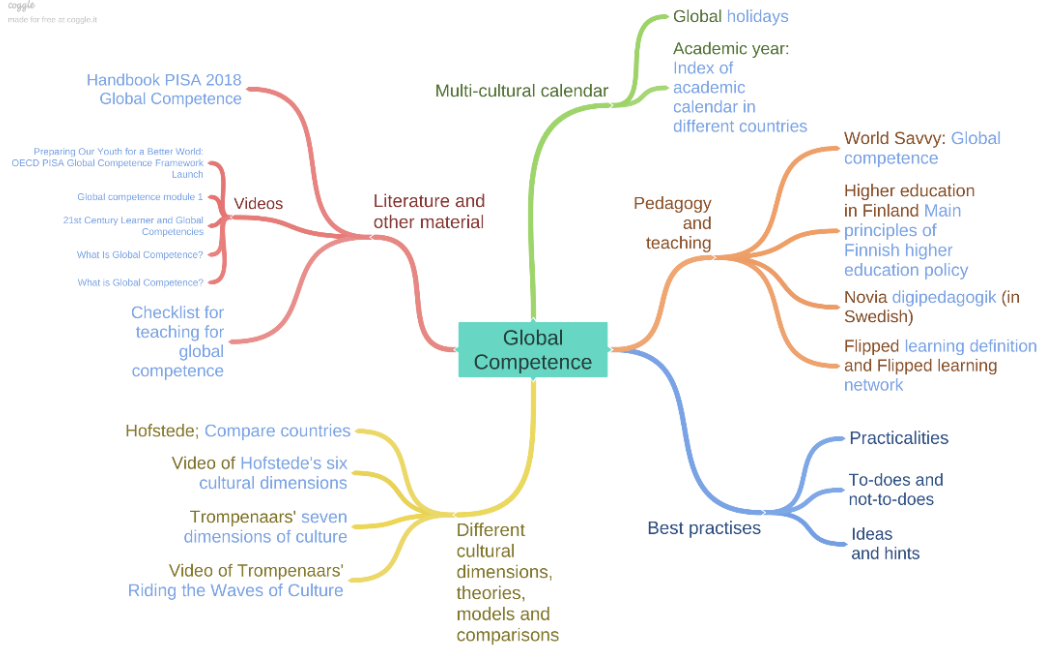
Global Competence

Literature and other material

Handbook PISA 2018 Global Competence

Videos
- Preparing Our Youth for a Better World: OECD PISA Global Competence Framework Launch
- Global competence module 1
- 21st Century Learner and Global Competencies
- What Is Global Competence?
- What is Global Competence?

Checklist for teaching for global competence

Multi-cultural calendar
- Global holidays
- Academic year: Index of academic calendar in different countries

Pedagogy and teaching
- World Savvy: Global competence
- Higher education in Finland Main principles of Finnish higher education policy
- Novia digipedagogik (in Swedish)
- Flipped learning definition and Flipped learning network

Best practises
- Practicalities
- To-does and not-to-does
- Ideas and hints

Different cultural dimensions, theories, models and comparisons
- Hofstede; Compare countries
- Video of Hofstede's six cultural dimensions
- Trompenaars' seven dimensions of culture
- Video of Trompenaars' Riding the Waves of Culture

Figure 2. Mind map to support the development of global competence at Novia

The mind map serves as an "introduction" for new teachers to prepare them for teaching in multicultural groups. It can also be used by experienced teachers who have rarely taught in foreign languages. For example, if the teachers need advice in their teaching in multicultural groups, they can easily find information in the mind map on the university intranet. To introduce the teaching staff to the toolbox, Novia needs to appoint specific persons to be responsible for taking on the task. Here, Novia could develop a mentorship to supervise and support the teaching staff's global competence development.

The green, yellow and orange threads in the toolbox on theories of cultural dimensions, knowledge of culture and perspectives of teaching in multicultural groups, can be connected to the first dimension of the GTM-model (Kerkhoff 2017). By using the toolbox, the teaching staff develop their understanding of values, norms and beliefs of a global society and can be transformed into students. The red and orange threads in the toolbox can be connected to dimension two. They provide material that can be useful for teachers in different teaching situations. By using these threads, teachers can help students to understand how to interact in multicultural groups. Dimension three is about how students are taught to develop their critical literacy and global mindset. This can be connected to the red thread in the toolbox, since the thread focuses on materials that support students' learning awareness for global societies. The blue and

orange threads are connected to dimension four, focusing on pedagogy and best practice for cross-cultural collaborations.

4.3 Mentorship for teaching staff

A central idea within the Global Competence project at Novia University of Applied Sciences is to investigate how a mentorship as support for teaching in multicultural groups could be designed. A professional mentorship gives credibility and can have a profile-raising effect at the university both internally and externally.

During the project period, a survey was therefore sent out to the teaching staff at the beginning of autumn term 2021. The purpose of the survey was to obtain information about the staff's experiences, to investigate the needs of support and to find out whether current teachers have the skills and interest to support other teachers who teach in multicultural groups. In the survey that was sent out to all teachers at Novia, it emerged that there is a need for mentorship and an interest among some teachers to act as mentors themselves.

The support could be offered through mentors, who should be familiar with Novia's strategic goals and with Novia's investment in global education. The mentors are thus part of Novia's development towards global education. They can initiate discussions about teaching in multicultural groups and supervise teachers so that everyone has a basic cultural awareness and feels competent to teach in multicultural groups. For this to work, the mentors must be prepared to supervise groups of teachers and have set aside resources to be able to function as support and help for colleagues.

After this project, the goal is to have access to six mentors. These mentors are responsible for supporting colleagues at Novias in different campuses which are spread all over Finland. The mentors could form a team to support and share with each other examples of best practice which are then used in the supervision of the teaching staff in their work in multicultural groups. The team was also able to arrange staff workshops on Novia's campus to further develop global competence.

Mentorship includes supporting the teaching staff to be role models in cross-cultural issues (values, norms, beliefs), which fits into the first dimension of the GTM-model of Kerkhoff (2017). Mentorship also facilitates knowledge and supports teachers in integrating global competence in courses and curricula (dimension 2). It supports critical learning and thinking to raise cross-cultural awareness (dimension 3) and encourages working in multicultural groups (dimension 4).

4.4 Analysis of experiences of best teaching practice at Novia

Based on the result of the working groups and in order to validate the acquired empirical results, interviews with experienced teachers in teaching multicultural groups were conducted. Altogether, five teachers were interviewed by e-mail and each one was from a different discipline. The questions were addressed to the selected teachers with many years of experience of teaching in multicultural groups. The questions were designed as open questions on experiences and challenges. The respondents were also asked to give advice and discuss ideas of designing a whole academic semester when all courses are taught in English. The first step was to deduce discussions into several preliminary meaning categories after which the categories were compared and further revised. The second step, they were integrated into four main dimensions: practice, integrated, critical and transactional. We now present the findings and analysis from the interviews.

We have used selected statements from the interviews (see table 1) to facilitate the analysis. This is because we believe that they best reflect the phenomenon under investigation. We use the GTM-model of (Kerkhoff 2017) in order to be able to describe how the teaching competence and best practice of the teaching staff at Novia is practised and can be developed.

Dimension 1: Practice	Dimension 2: Integrated
Don't take things for granted, as others may understand them in a different way.	Let students describe the most distinctive features of their culture (study techniques, study habits and ways of collaborating).
Be sensitive and read about students' different cultures in advance.	Be specific in advance so that an academic semester in English does not come as a surprise to native speaking students and teachers.
Note that there are variations in terms of education, working life, work community and leadership.	Native students must take curriculum-based courses in English together with the exchange students in multicultural groups.

Dimension 3: Critical	Dimension 4: Transactional
Show respect by having English as a common language in the classroom.	Let students from different cultures describe the most distinctive features of their culture.
Prepare and arrange discussions and exercises in the multicultural groups regarding ethics in scientific reading and writing.	Allow students to participate in various group discussions, assignments and projects and be prepared to change the group constellation and to intervene in the group dynamics.
Continuity in learning together (native and foreign students) can contribute to both knowledge of global societies and cultural sensitivity.	An academic semester in English becomes a natural arena for intercultural collaboration. As the academic semester progresses, students learn to work together and the teachers' role in guiding the group work decreases.
Review the course literature, so that it offers knowledge from other countries to increase students' understanding through more globally representative literature.	Cooperation in multicultural groups for an entire semester means that friendships can also arise outside the classroom.

Table 1. Analyses of the interviews connected to the GTM-Model of Kerkhoff (2017)

According to Kerkhoff (2017) practice means understanding values, norms and beliefs of society when interacting in the classroom. This is in line with what the respondents highlight regarding preparation of oneself to increase culture understanding and knowledge on how different societies function. Integrated means that global competence should be incorporated in all disciplines and all courses, and that teachers supervise students in how to interact in multicultural contexts. Respondents bring out the importance of self-knowledge, information and preparation when designing an academic semester in English. Critical considers reliability and validity of learning resources and critical literacy to raise socio-cultural awareness. Respondents address the importance of a common language in the classroom and fostering students in ethical themes regarding learning in academic contexts specifically as well as in a global society context generally. Transactional means involvement in cross-cultural collaborations. Respondents point out the importance of letting students present relevant features of their culture. This will contribute positively to the group dynamics and by time students are less dependent on the teachers.

5 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this report has been to shed light on what global competence means for Novia UAS and to explain how the global competence of the teaching staff can be developed. Novia needs to develop global competence at various levels to establish itself as an actor in global education. In line with Kjellgren and Richter (2021) integrating the global competence in vision

or mission of the university is important. Novia should have plans and solutions for how global competence is applied in teaching.

According to Novia strategy 2030, Novia aims at strengthening cultural understanding, communication skills and global competence in the curricula of all degree programs. This fits well with the working groups' work to develop a mentorship and a toolbox for teaching staff. When teachers see cultural and social diversity as a natural part of every student group, global competence will also be seen more clearly in the curricula. Students need to meet people with different social and cultural backgrounds regularly and in several different courses so that their attitudes, knowledge, and skills respond to the needs of global working life. (Novia 2020).

Kjellgren and Richter (2021) have stressed the importance of teacher training in global competence. This is also confirmed in our case, for teachers to be able to easily guide students towards a higher global competence, teacher training is necessary. Teacher training can include mentorship and a toolbox which are pedagogically anchored and fact-based around the theme of global competence. To introduce the teaching staff to the knowledge and material, responsible mentors are needed to take on the task. Novia should take a position on how the mentors should be trained and by whom.

Going abroad is considered being the best catalyst of global competence (Moskal and Schweisfurth 2018), but global competence can also be developed through internationalization at the home university. In teaching, Novia should structure its courses offered in English so that the university is attractive also for shorter student exchanges from abroad. The courses offered to exchange students could be marketed and presented as a "smorgasbord" or buffet, with both interdisciplinary and more area-specific courses. In this way, the different degree programs support each other regarding the range of courses offered in English. When exchange students participate in curricula-based courses from the smorgasbord, local students and teachers interact with the exchange students in multicultural classrooms. When multicultural groups become an everyday concept at the university, students who never go abroad on exchange can develop their global competence and after graduation feel ready to interact in diverse societies and meet the global demands of working life.

Some courses in English already exist in the native speaking degree programs' curricula, so for Novia it is more about highlighting them and packaging them so that they can be marketed more widely to Novia's partner universities abroad. Coordination and packaging of an internationally interesting course offering needs to take place through collaboration between heads of department, education directors, international contact teachers and international coordinators. The courses of the smorgasbord must be planned and fitted into students' and teachers' working schedules. In practice this could be done by creating a whole academic semester when native students and exchange students have all the same courses together in English. To achieve the measures mentioned in the Novia strategy 2030 and to adjust into this new way of working and thinking, mentorship and the toolbox can support teaching staff's global competence development.

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