Craft teacher education

Rauma Campus at University of Turku, Finland

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Finnish *craft education* shortly

Crafts is a mandatory subject for everyone in grades 1–7 of *Finnish comprehensive school* and an optional subject in grades 8–9 with the possibility to choose between *textile* or *technical crafts* or not to choose *crafts* at all. Many *upper secondary schools* have courses aiming towards a *general upper secondary school diploma* in *crafts*. In fact, *craft education* starts already in kindergartens: even the youngest children from the age of two, can work with craft tasks on their own level. (Finnish National Board of Education 2016.)

Crafts is regarded as a basic life skill and necessary to being an independent and fully functioning citizen. *Crafts* are being taught as a mandatory subject, including both textile and technical contents. *Crafts* is expected to have the ability to improve the life skills of students. *Crafts* enhance other learning, improve academic skills and innovation, improve creativity and design levels of the students, and also strength their fine-motor skills (*Finnish Heritage Agency*).

In *crafts*, learning by doing has been the distinctive feature of the implementation of *craft education* since the Finnish school system was established. The curriculum emphasizes holistic craft process, multi-materiality, co-creation and participatory learning. Aspects of critical consumerism and sustainable development has recently become a topic of focus. (Väänänen & Pöllänen 2021.) To describe the holistic process of crafts and makers role in it, Kojonkoski-Rännäli (1998) introduced the concept of the *holistic craft process*, in which all phases are conducted by the same person. The maker individually, or as an active member of a group, is responsible of the ideation, designing, making and assessment of both the product and the process (Pollänen 2009; 2019). The concept of the *holistic craft process* is quite demanding, but it has been applied with the students of different ages from kindergartens to professional studies. It is essential to adjust the craft making process to the age and skills level of the maker(s). (Yliverronen et. al. 2018.)

The expertise in *craft education* with a *university-level Masters´ degree* is concentrated in four universities in Finland: Helsinki, Turku, Eastern Finland and *Åbo Akademi* (in Swedish). Academic research on *crafts* and *craft education* has been carried out for about 40 years, and dozens of doctoral theses on the subject have been completed.

Craft teachers are being educated in Rauma

Craft teacher education in the *University of Turku* is given on *Rauma campus*. The *Rauma Campus* is home for the Rauma unit of the Department of *Teacher Education* of the *University of Turku*. The Department of *Teacher Education* with about 1.100 teacher students and 90 staff members, as well as the *Rauma Teacher Training School* (https://sites.utu.fi/rnk/en/teacher-training/), the training kindergarten *Pikkunorssi* (https://pikkunorssi.fi/en/) and the educational garden are located on the

Crafted wooden objects. Local heritage museum Rovaniemi. Photo: Lucia Schwalenberg.

< *Craft teacher education*, *University of Turku* at *Rauma campus*. Photo: Bärbel Schmidt.

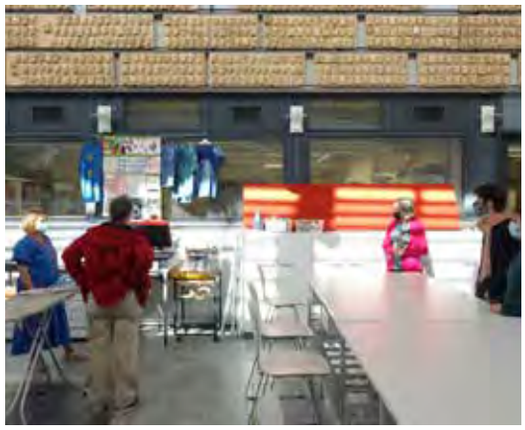
same court. All the teacher students on *Rauma campus* (kindergarten and class teacher students too), in addition to craft teacher students, have the courses of *craft* as a part of their education. These courses equally include the content of both textile and technical work based on the idea that the material or method of working is not essential in the craft. The most important thing is to learn thinking and working skills regardless of the material. (kasityokasvatus.utu.fi/en/)

Overview of the *craft teacher education*

Craft, Design and Technology Education (CDTE) is a scientific discipline which can be studied at the *University of Turku, Rauma Campus*. The degree consists of studies of the Bachelor of Arts (Education), 180 ECTS and the 120 ECTS´s studies of Master of Arts (Education). The first three years include the general studies, basic and the intermediate studies in major subject, language and communication studies, parts of the teachers´ pedagogical studies, minor subjects, and optional studies. The focus of the two-year Master studies is on research skills and thesis, but the last part of the teacher pedagogical studies and advanced studies in major subject are included, too.

Studying master's degree in *CDTE* grants the permission to work as a teacher of *CDT* in Finland, some may get employment in free adult education sector, social work, culture or business. Most of the *CDT*-teachers work in *upper schools* (some in *upper secondary schools* too), because class teachers take care of *craft teaching* on *primary school* level. After optional minor subject studies in *class teacher education*, it is possible to work on *primary school* classes 1–6. This is quite a common and popular choice.

Textile workshop at *Rauma Campus*. Photo: Lucia Schwalenberg.



Teknika building for *craft education* at *Rauma Campus*. Photo: Lucia Schwalenberg.

The discipline of *CDTE studies* is productive activity by humans in the context of material space. Studies focus on pedagogic and didactic questions on learning and teaching craft process from kindergartens to the highest levels of education. Studies are conducted widely in different material fields on working methods, technologies, and educational goals. The main principal is to become an expert in teaching and learning and making crafts by focusing on the research-based teacher education and the research and inquiry attitude of future teachers. The objectives can be summarized as follows:

- To understand the ethical and scientific base of *CDT*
- Learning to be innovative and to be an inventor
- To be research oriented
- To be future-oriented
- To develop student's pedagogical security expertise

The studies include equally technical and textile work contents, and all the students complete similar studies regardless of gender identity. Over the half of the students (39 starters/year) identify as women. Several courses are guided by two teachers, whose expertise is on textile or technical work, and they work in a close cooperation with one another. Course tasks allow implementations of textile and technical materials. The aim of the method is that the future *craft teachers* can guide pupils´ craft making processes equally with textile or technical materials and working methods. Teachers´ wide range of skills give possibilities for their students to implement an idea when the teacher has the skills to support diverse processes. From the viewpoint of school principals, *craft teaches´* diverse competence may mean, that one person, instead of two persons, is able to guide all the craft lessons in a small school unit.

Bachelor of Arts (Education), Basic studies, 25 ECTS

- *Craft, Design and Technology Education as a Discipline and School Subject*
- *Product Design* in the Teaching of *Crafts*
- *Electronic and Programming*
- *Yarn Technologies and Skill Learning*
- *Sewing Technology and Circular Economy*
- *Wood Technology and Safe Working in Craft*
- *Metal Technology and Project Learning*

Bachelor of Arts (Education), Intermediate studies, 35 ETCS

- Bachelor´s Thesis
- *Handmade Product and Design*
- *Digital Modelling* and *Smart Products*
- *Clothing Technology*
- *Thread Technology*
- *Vehicle and Engine Technology*
- *Metal Technology*
- *Surfaces and Textures*
- *Promoting Environment with Craft and Design*
- Qualifying Examination BA (Ed.)

Master of Arts (Education), 80 ETCS

- Master's Thesis
- *Didactics in Craft, Design and Technology Education*
- *Peer-tutoring and Craft Making Process*
- *Crafts and Sustainable Future*
- *Mechanical Technology* and *STEAM Projects*
- *Working Life Skills* and *Diverse Work Environments of Crafts*
- *Clothing and Consumer Behaviour*
- *Pedagogical Innovation Process in Craft, Design and Technology Education*
- *Entrepreneurship, Education in Craft, Design and Technology*
- *Craft, Well-Being and Action Competence*
- *Multidimensional Learning within Robotics*
- *Various learning environments of crafts*
- *Safety Culture in Experiential Learning*

Textile contents of the examination

All the *traditional* textile-work contents are included in the *craft teacher education* in Rauma, despite the multi-material viewpoint to *crafts*. Students get familiar to felting, weaving, knitting, braiding and knotting, crocheting, embroidery, sewing, cloth making processes, as well as e-textiles and manufacture of interior textiles – not forgetting fabric printing and colouring, and even lace making (the town of Rauma has a long tradition of laces crafting). The level of the studies is enough for the craft teacher to work at a comprehensive school level, but it is clear, that the hours and the credit points do not allow very deep studies or a level of expertise in all the content. The idea is that the students get the basic skills of each technique and content, and they can deepen their skills on the areas which they are interested in, or which they need with their course tasks or in teaching practise. The university studies give readiness to find out more information and skills later. Crafting materials, techniques, tools and machines are progressing so fast that today´s students and the future teachers must have the skills to keep pace with development.

Some examples of *textile studies*

As a part of the Masters´ studies there are some textile-work oriented courses, where the aim is to deepen students´ skills in clothing and address issues related to the circular economy as well as consider the links between crafts and well-being. The course of *Clothing and Consumer Behaviour* (5 ETCS) has multilevel objectives. Firstly, the aim is to guide students to design and implement demanding user-based clothing processes, where students´ own handprint is to be seen for example on self-made

Marimekko's Unikko pattern as inspiring source for students. Photo: *Rauma Campus*.

woven or printed fabrics. Secondly, a strong emphasis on the course is towards sustainable consuming, circular economy and new textile material innovations, like new tree cellulose fibres, which are by-product of the wood processing industry.

Craft as a part of Finnish cultural heritage and everyday life is covered in the course called *Craft, Well-Being, and Action Competence* (3 ETCS). The relevant topics in todays hectic life is the importance of craft in strengthening self-esteem, increasing welfare, as well as maintaining and developing the functional ability of a personal life. Countless people have discovered the relaxing and stress-relieving effects of crafts in recent years. Issues related to mental well-being demonstrate the importance of crafts as part of society. There is, in fact, nothing new here for craft teachers, but the importance of crafts as part of society can easily be set aside if only continuous technological development is considered important. For this reason, it is important to address the topic as part of the craft teacher education.

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Evaluating wool socks with the theme *Knit UTU (University of Turku)*. The owner of the local yarn store, together with the teacher of the *adult education center*, choose the winner.

Handwoven skirt in the clothing course *in the Finnish national spirit*. Photos: *Rauma Campus*.

Workshops for *craft teacher education*, *University of Turku* at *Rauma Campus*. Photo: Lucia Schwalenberg. >