


Admission rules for upper secondary education (vocational and general)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 NORWAY

Timeline

2022 Legislative process 2023 Completed

ID number 43653

Background

White Paper 21 (2020–21), the Completion Reform, described the following measure: 'to change the admissions regulations to upper secondary vocational education and give more weight to programme subjects compared to the common core subjects'. When students in upper secondary education apply for a study place from one year to the next, admission is based on the grades from the previous year. All subjects are weighted equally, and some education programmes have more common core subjects than programme subjects. A consequence is that a student with good grades in the subjects aimed at the desired vocational certificate, may risk being displaced by a student with a weaker vocational competence, but good grades in common core subjects. This is not considered desirable in terms of fostering vocational talent.

Objectives

One aim of the white paper is to examine the possibility of giving more weight to programme subjects than to common core subjects. It also aims to assess potential other alternatives and suggest new regulatory rules. It is also an objective that public schools have rules and frameworks as flexible as those of private schools.

Description

In the current regulation, it is possible for county municipalities to determine in their local admissions regulations that up to 50% of the students are admitted based on skills tests, instead of following the ordinary admissions rules based on grades. This only applies to admission to the education programme in music, dance and drama and the education programme in sports. Alternative rules are to be investigated, that provide greater flexibility for admission to public schools, e.g. by making admissions possible partly based on skills in several educational programmes.

2022 Legislative process

The Directorate for Education and Training is in charge of developing the proposals and highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of the solutions outlined. The deadline was 12 December 2022. It remains to see if there is any further development.

2023 Completed

The report's main findings were as follows:

- (a) greater flexibility is not the solution. The assessment showed that greater flexibility in admissions regulations to the first year of upper secondary resulted in more disadvantages than advantages. While the Directorate recognised that increased flexibility may benefit some applicants, it could also be perceived as unfair by others;
- (b) greater local flexibility. If it is still desirable to allow greater flexibility in the admissions regulations for more education programmes, the Directorate proposed amending the rules so that each county municipality could independently decide which education programmes they wish to make more flexible.

The Directorate for Education and Training recommended that any potential changes to the current admission regulation model would result in more disadvantages than advantages, making it inappropriate to alter the model now. The Directorate believed it would be beneficial to learn more about how the new curricula for upper secondary education from 2020 were functioning to establish a sufficient knowledge base for evaluating potential changes to the admission regulation model.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Research (KD)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)
Adult learners

Thematic categories

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Permeability between IVET and CVET and general and vocational pathways, academic and professional higher education

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Link to more information about the scheme](#)

Related policy developments

2024 Completed

The Completion reform

The reform will include more options for completing upper secondary education, including

for adults, along with more relevant training and a right to apprenticeship in VET.

All students in upper secondary education, including both IVET and CVET, will benefit from the policy development.

 NORWAY

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

2022 Completed

Education Act - 2021

The committee proposed a new education act, statutes, guidelines and general principles for the governing of primary and secondary education, including VET.

The committee assessed:

 NORWAY

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Admission rules for upper secondary education (vocational and general): Norway. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe (2025 update)* [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/43653>