

# Regulation on NQF

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 NORWAY

## Timeline



ID number 28780

## Background

A seven-level learning-outcomes-based Norwegian qualifications framework (Nasjonalt kvalifikasjonsrammeverk for livslang læring – NKR) was adopted in December 2011. It was referenced to the European qualifications framework (EQF) and self-certified against the qualifications frameworks in the European higher education area (QF-EHEA) in June 2014. The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) was appointed as the national coordination point (NCP). The NKR covers only qualifications awarded by publicly recognised and accredited education and training institutions. A working group was set up in 2013 to open up the framework to private and non-formal education, and a proposal was submitted to the Ministry of Education and Research in 2014.

## Objectives

The objectives are to facilitate lifelong learning and mobility across borders.

## Description

The Ministry of Education and Research adopted, in November 2017, a regulation formalising the overall position and status of the NKR. A range of stakeholders were involved (including the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT), the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions and the National Union of Students in Norway). A reference group was established with representatives from higher education, upper secondary schools, vocational schools, social partners, Competence Norway, the Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, the Norwegian Association for Adult Learning, the Norwegian Directorate of Health, the Norwegian Association of Researchers, the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education and the Norwegian Ministry of Trade and Industry.

2017 Approved/Agreed

2018 Implementation

### 2019 Implementation

The evaluation of the NKR has been delayed.

### 2020 Implementation

The evaluation process of the NKR started. In 2020, the preliminary work looked into two issues:

- (a) investigating the possibility of parallel sets of learning outcome descriptions for level 5 and above, and a possible change in the placement of higher vocational education in the national qualifications framework;
- (b) suggestions for how to conduct a major review of the national qualifications framework.

The results of the work were published in November 2020. The report described two possible structures: one had two parallel pillars within the national qualifications framework, one for higher academic education and one for higher vocational education; the other had all types of education united under one common set of level descriptions, regardless of the type of institution in which the learning takes place. NOKUT invited stakeholders to an open input meeting in connection with the start of the evaluation of the national qualifications framework for lifelong learning. The meeting took place on 19 March 2020.

### 2021 Implementation

No progress to report in this period.

### 2022 Implementation

The evaluation, expected by the end of the year, was delayed.

### 2023 Completed

The evaluation, conducted by the public body NOKUT, was published on 24 May. The evaluation defines three recommendations, relevant for this priority:

- (a) ensuring that all relevant educational qualifications are at the appropriate level;
- (b) allowing higher academic education at level 5 and higher vocational education at levels above level 5;
- (c) considering including education not currently part of NQF and allowing various forms of continuing education and non-formal training.

The Ministry of Education and Research took the evaluation results into account while designing the White Paper on higher vocational education, expected by spring 2025 at the latest. This document intends to cover the next steps in relation to the national qualifications framework for lifelong learning.

## Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Research (KD)
- Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT)

## Target group

### Other

Higher vocational education students

## Thematic categories

### Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET  
Further developing national quality assurance systems

### Modernising VET offer and delivery

Using learning-outcome-based approaches and modularisation

### Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Comprehensive national qualification frameworks

## European priorities in VET

### Osnabrück Declaration

Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible  
VET

## Subsystem

IVET CVET

## Further reading

[Link to evaluation assignment](#)

[National qualification framework for lifelong learning](#)

[Link to final evaluation](#)

## Related policy developments

2025 **Legislative process**

### Strategy for higher vocational education

The strategy was proposed by the Ministry of Education and Research for further improving and strengthening higher vocational education. It is aimed at higher vocational education and all actors in the field.

 NORWAY

#### Type of development

Strategy/Action  
plan

#### Subsystem

CVET

“ ... ” **Cite as**

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Regulation on NQF: 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/28780>