

## **Upper-secondary vocational programmes**

Videregåendeopplæring, yrkesfagligeutdanningsprogram

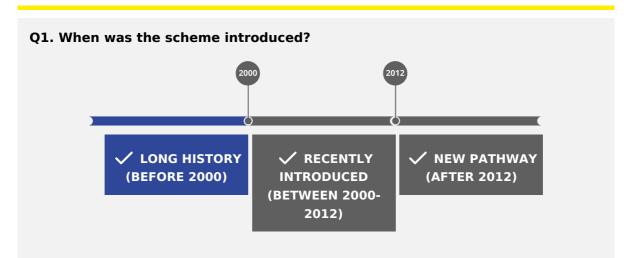


#### Reference year 2023

#### **Content updates and contributors**

Version 2023 - Drafted by Margareth Haukås, Senior adviser, HK-dir Norway - Member of Cedefop Community of apprenticeship experts for Norway

#### (1) SCHEME HISTORY



The apprenticeship model, as we know it today, was introduced with a Reform form 1994. Since then, there have been several changes. Today there are 10 vocational programmes, leading to approximately 190 different craft or journeyman's certificates. The main model is two-year school-based learning followed by a two-year work-based learning in an enterprise ('2+2 model'). (see more in Q4 of the country fiche).

#### Q2. How did the apprenticeship scheme originate?







✓ TRADITIONAL
CRAFTSMANSHIP
(MASTERAPPRENTICE
RELATION) TO
PREPARE
APPRENTICES FOR
THE OCCUPATION

✓ SCHOOL-BASED

VET TRACK BY

INCLUDING MORE

WORK-BASED

LEARNING TO

SUPPLY SKILLED

WORKFORCE TO

MATCH LABOUR

MARKET NEEDS

✓ EX-NOVO



The situation before the Reform 1994 was as follows:

The old fine-grained practice-oriented course structure in VET, organised according to the principle of a one-to one relation between trades and course structure, was costly to maintain, and courses were often technologically outdated. "The anticipated and eagerly awaited structural build-up of continuation courses in the different VET areas was grinding to a halt due to tight budgets, queues were multiplying and youth unemployment rising" (cf. Michelsen et al 2014:67).

"Policies aimed at "parity of esteem" between general and vocational education was failing.

The formal reclassification of vocational schools as an equivalent branch of the upper secondary comprehensive school had failed to make an impression. The combined effects of large birth cohorts, unemployment and relatively prolonged recession problems made capacity planning as well as transitions from school to work more difficult" (ibid).

The "Reform 94" formally integrated the apprenticeship system in upper secondary education.

#### (2) BENEFICIARIES

Q3. Does the legal basis define the minimum and maximum age limits for enrolment of the target group of this scheme?



Above 16.

#### Q4. What is the average age of learners in practice?



The 1994 reform gave everybody aged 16-19 a statutory right to three years of upper secondary education, or more if the education lasts longer.

Individuals have to make use of the right during a continuous period of five years, or six years if the training is wholly or partly provided in a company (apprenticeship scheme). The majority of learners in the school -based learning of a VET programme are in the age range of 16-18.

Therefore, the majority of apprentices start the work-based learning immediately after at the age of 18-20 (21) (2+2 model).

A student can choose to enter one of 10 Vocational Education Programmes. The programmes offer 3-, 4- or 5-year long vocational education, mainly with basic occupational education. Apprenticeship training is often included. After the first year at upper secondary level in one of the programmes, the student has to choose between several specialisations in year 2, leading to a further specialisation in year 3 when the vocation or occupation is chosen. If a student is not able to find an apprenticeship after having completed 2 years of training, a safety valve in the form of a third year of practical training in school is offered. In a formal sense, both workplace-based and school-based tracks would lead to the same vocational qualification (Michelsen et al. 2014:70).

#### Q5. How many learners are enrolled in this scheme?

In 2021, nearly 30,300 young people applied for apprenticeships, 1,600 more than in 2020. 78 per cent of applicants received an apprenticeship contract and started training in a company. This is an increase of 3 percentage points from 2020, or around 2,000 more apprenticeship contracts.

In the past 10 years, the number of apprentices has increased continuously until 2019, declined from 2019-2020 possibly due to the Coronavirus pandemic and then increased again in 2020.

In autumn 2021, the total of new apprentices and those who have been apprentices for more than one year was 46,700.

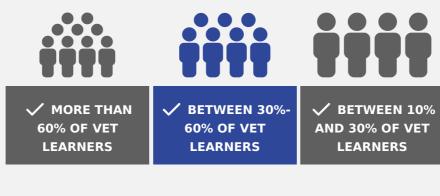
(https://www.udir.no/in-english/the-education-mirror-2022/upper-secondar...)

The table below offers an evolution of the enrolments in vocational education between 2017 and 2023.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
All programmes	208,920	207,383	206,112	205,809	206,831	204,199	204,029
General	117,031	116,281	113,947	112,960	112,670	110,911	110,528
Vocational	91,889	91,102	92,165	92,849	94,161	93,228	93,501

Source: Søkere til videregående opplæring – utdanningsprogram (udir.no)

## Q6. What is the share of apprentices enrolled in this scheme in relation to all VET students for the corresponding educational level(s)?





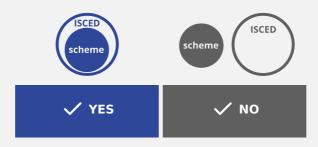
The '2+2 model' means that all the school-based part of any VET programme can be followed by two years of learning at the workplace (apprenticeship). In practice, every year approximately one third of apprentices do not get an apprenticeship placement.

## Q7. Are the qualifications included in the National Qualification Framework (NQF)?



EQF 4 / NQF 4A

#### Q8. Is the scheme included in the ISCED 2011 mapping?



ISCED level 353

#### Q9. Are the qualifications offered only through apprenticeships?



There are 10 VET programmes that provide routes to trade certificates or journeyman's certificates. In case workplace training leading to trade or journeyman's certificates is not available, school-based VET is offered and the student can obtain a leaving certificate of upper secondary vocational education.

## Q10. Which is the type of qualification obtained through the apprenticeship scheme?



Successful apprenticeship candidates are awarded a trade certificate (Fagbrev), most common in industrial and service trades, or a journeyman's certificate (Svennebrev), which prevails in traditional crafts. The two certificates have equal status based on similar sets of theoretical knowledge and practical skills (Michelsen et al. 2014:70).

#### Q11. Does the scheme provide direct access to higher education?



Should a student wish to transfer to a General Studies Programme, he/she may do so by completing a bridge year.

The scheme gives access to higher vocational education at level EQF 5.

#### Q12. What is the typical duration of the apprenticeship programme?

The main model at upper secondary level is called the '2+2-model', consisting of two years school-based training followed by two years enterprise-based training. The latter corresponds formally to one year in school. The model carries a certain degree of flexibility, depending on the VET programmes and the trade in which an apprentice wants to be trained.

After one year at school, students choose their specialisation among programme areas at Vg2 and after two years (Vg3/school or apprenticeship), the curricula are organised around the respective trades.

### (4) GOVERNANCE

## Q13. Is there any organization at the national level with roles in co-ordinating the scheme?



At upper secondary level (EQF 4), Norway has a long- standing tradition of close national and regional cooperation between education authorities and the social partners. Pursuant to the Education Act, the social partners have (most often majority) representation in all important advisory bodies for upper secondary VET at national and county level.

National cooperation is organised in the National Council for VET (Samarbeidsrådet for yrkesopplæring – SRY), ten vocational training councils (Faglige råd), one for each programme area, and national appeal boards (Klagenemnder). Regional cooperation involves county vocational training boards (Yrkesopplærignsnemnder) and examination boards (Prøvenemnder).

# Q14. What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives, sectoral councils (if existent), in shaping apprenticeship content, as per regulation?





The social partners and relevant stakeholders are involved at all levels of development of vocational education and training (see also Q18).

The tripartite cooperation aims to ensure that training provided to Norwegian VET learners meets labour market and skill needs. It informs changes in the VET structure, curriculum development, regional structure and volume of VET provision, the framework of examinations leading to trade or journeyman's certificates, and quality control at all levels.

# Q15. What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives in implementing the apprenticeship scheme, as per regulation?



There are apprenticeship councils at a county level. Local VET councils are ascribed an important role in quality work and quality steering but there are substantial variations in how strongly this role is followed up. The leaders of the national Council of VET consider their new mandate and position as a revitalisation of the cooperation between the stakeholders, where the Directorate of Education and Training carries out system development in cooperation with the social partners (Michelsen et al. 2014:77).

At the level of the firm, Local Training Agencies organise around 80% of all enterprise training in the Norwegian apprenticeship system. The agencies are "privately run" institutions owned by their member firms and are accountable to a board. Executive representatives from member firms dominate the agency boards. Trade union representation exists on these boards, but on a very small scale. LTAs are almost totally

dependent on state funding. Grants are paid based on the number of apprentices solicited and completion of training and certification (Olsen et al. 2014:7). County municipalities accredit apprenticeship companies and monitor the in-company training.

#### Q16. What are the main roles of key state actors?

The Directorate for Higher Education and Skills is responsible for higher vocational education and higher academic education. The Directorate for Education and Training is responsible for kindergarten, lower secondary education, and upper secondary education. The directorates are assigned by the Ministry of Education and Research to implement measures, in cooperation with the relevant sector, social partners and / or county municipalities.

The county municipality is responsible for providing upper secondary vocational education (EQF 4) and for apprenticeship training.

#### (5) TRAINING AT THE WORKPLACE

## Q17. Is it compulsory to alternate training between two learning venues (school and company)?

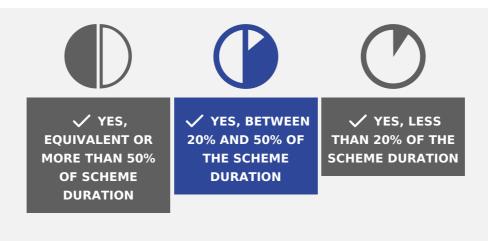


The Education Act stipulates that 'apprentices are persons who sign a contract in view of obtaining a trade certificate or a journeyman's certificate within a trade where incompany training is offered.' The apprenticeship programme is designed to have part of the training in an enterprise.

In the cases where the learner do not get an apprenticeship placement, the training will be offered as school-based.

During the first two years there is an in-depth Study Project (421 hours) where the training should preferably take place in companies. This is to allow those students who cannot find apprenticeship placements in companies to still continue the VET programme by doing the study project at the VET school.

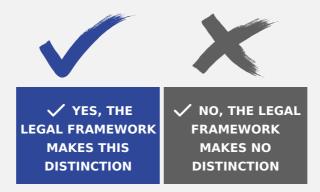
Q18. Is the in-company training defined as minimum share of the apprenticeship scheme duration?





Typically, the model in Norway is 2+2, meaning the first two years are spent in school-based training and the two following years in enterprise-based training, out of which 50% is training and 50% is work. This means that 33% of training is expected to be undertaken in company.

## Q19. Is there a distinction between the training time and working time for the period spent at workplace, as per regulation?

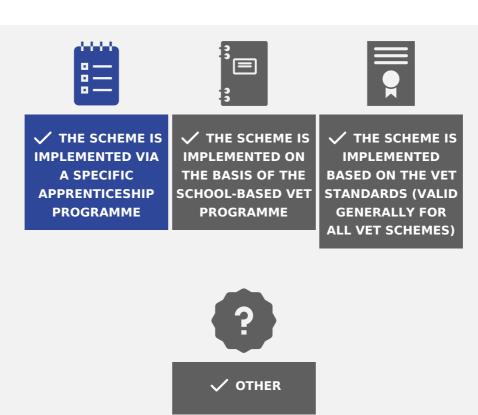


This is basically regulated through the remuneration of apprentices, which is settled in collective wage agreements that may contain a remuneration scale for apprentices (cf. question 35 below). Normally, a two-year apprenticeship period contains 50% training and 50% 'value creation', the latter considered as the foundation for calculating the salary of an apprentice.

Q20. What is the form of alternation of training between workplace (company) and school?

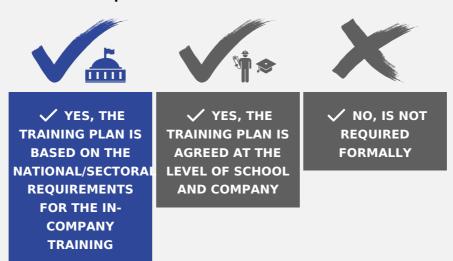


#### Q21. What is the basis for the training offered?



All vocational education and training pathways have a curriculum to follow, leading to a craft or journeyman's certificate. Within the 10 vocational programmes, approximately 190 different certificates can be awarded, which means 190 different curricula are available.

## Q22. Is the company hosting apprentices required by regulation to follow a training plan at the workplace?



According to § 4-4 in the Education Act, the training enterprise is obliged set up an internal training plan to make sure that the apprentice is being trained in compliance with the curriculum of the vocational programme that the apprentice is enrolled in. In case some parts of this training is not delivered by the training enterprise with which the apprentice has signed his/her contract, the enterprise in question should accommodate for this (for example when neighbouring enterprises join forces to train a group of

## Q23. What are the requirements on companies to provide placements, as per regulation?



A training enterprise should appoint a qualified training supervisor (faglig leder) with responsibility for the apprenticeship training, while ensuring that legal obligations are respected. Each such enterprise should have one or several trainers (instructors) who are directly involved in the training of the apprentices. These trainers are vocationally skilled employees, often with a formal vocational qualification.

## Q24. What are the formal requirements regarding workplace trainers/mentors/tutors? What is their profile?

Training supervisors (faglige ledere) are reflected in the Education Act. Training supervisors in enterprises or other workplaces with apprentices must ensure that the training meets the requirements stipulated in the Education Act and must be professionally qualified. They must have one of the following qualifications:

- a trade or journeyman's certificate in the relevant trade or craft;
- · a master craftsman's certificate in the relevant craft;
- · relevant higher education in the trade or craft;
- adequate educational background in the parts of the trade which, according to the curriculum, will be taught in the enterprise; or
- six years' experience in the trade or craft.

These requirements are specified in the Education Act and are therefore national qualification requirements.

Trainers (instruktører) in training enterprises are vocationally skilled, often with a formal vocational qualification. They are not required to have a teaching qualification. Some trainers do not have formal qualifications in their vocational skills but have instead developed them through work experience. Formal regulations simply state that the management of the training enterprise must ensure that trainers have 'the necessary qualifications' (Education Act).

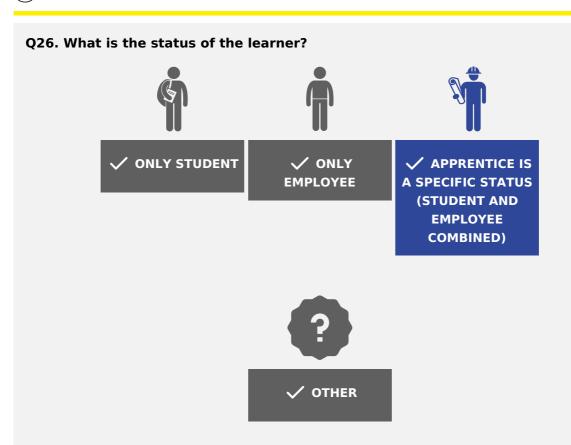
Source: Act relating to Primary and Secondary Education and Training (the Education Act) Section 4-3 (In Norwegian only)

Q25. Are there any sanctions on companies that do not provide training to apprentices at the workplace?



More than a judicial question about sanctions and fines, the apprentice contract defines rights and obligations that apply both to the apprentice and to the training enterprise. Subject to approval by the county educational authorities, a contract can be annulled if one of the parties: a) neglects to follow their obligations, b) for some reason cannot continue the contract till its end; or c) if the apprentice by writing informs that the act of complying with the contract till its end represents a unreasonable disadvantage for him or her.

#### (6) CONTRACT AND COMPENSATION



The duality of the apprenticeship training defines a dual status of apprentice and student.

As an apprentice the learner is employed in the company, with the status that follows an employed person.

Q27. Is there any written arrangement between the learner and company,

# required as per regulation? YES NO

An apprenticeship contract is issued to learners who follow routes to trade certificates (mostly in industry and services) or journeyman's certificates (mostly in handicraft). The apprenticeship contract evolved from a dyadic labour contract form into a triadic agreement signed by the apprentice, the enterprise and the county municipality (Michelsen et al. 2014:69).



**EMPLOYMENT** 

**CONTRACT** 

The contractualisation of apprenticeships rests on the Education Act and the Working Environment Act. The presence of a collective wage agreement in the enterprise where the apprentice is trained can also regulate the rights and obligations to which the apprentice and the employer have to comply. The county authorities (alongside a Local Training Agency that may be involved in the training arrangements) are monitoring the quality of the in-company training offered to the apprentice.

**TYPE OF CONTRACT** 

AGREEMENT, NOT A
CONTRACT





The registration is an issue between the training institution and the county authorities to which the government has devolved the responsibility for all education and training at upper secondary level. The process is in general the following: 1. A work agreement is signed by the apprentice and the company; the work agreement and the apprenticeship contract are sent to the apprenticeship training agency. The agency registered the documents at the county municipality.

#### Q30. Do apprentices receive a wage or allowance?



✓ YES, ALL
APPRENTICES
RECEIVE A WAGE
(TAXABLE INCOME)



✓ YES, ALL
APPRENTICES
RECEIVE AN
ALLOWANCE (NOT
A FORM OF
TAXABLE INCOME)



✓ APPRENTICES
RECEIVE A
REIMBURSEMENT
OF EXPENSES



There are multiple remuneration forms and the salary varies a lot according to the wage agreements concluded between social partners in the sector that an apprentice is engaged. If the apprentice works in an enterprise covered by a wage agreement and provided that the apprentice is member of a trade union, the national wage agreement for the trade in question may define an increasing pay scale according to the length of the apprenticeship period.

All workplace-training hours during the two first years are paid with an apprenticeship salary. For the two last years, all school and work hours are paid as apprentices (Olsen et al. 2015:13). Normally, a two-year apprenticeship period contains 50% training and

50% 'value creation', the latter considered as the foundation for calculating the salary of an apprentice.

Most companies follow this salary development during the apprenticeship:

- First six months: 30 % of the start salary of a craftsperson
- Second six months: 40 % of the start salary of a craftsperson
- Third six months: 50 % of the start salary of a craftsperson
- Fourth six months: 80 % of the start salary of a craftsperson

#### Q31. How is the apprentice wage (taxable income) set?



By law for the minimum wage example. Regulated by a national agreement (Riksavtalen | Fellesforbundet)

Some companies offer a higher salary.

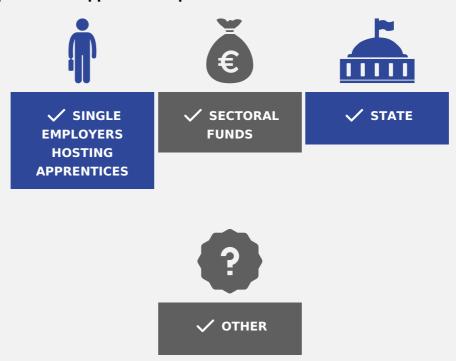
#### 7) FINANCING AND INCENTIVES

Q32. Who covers the cost of the wage or allowance of the apprentice?



Employers pay apprentices a wage.

## Q33. What are the sources of financing of the direct costs for the in-company training part of the apprenticeship scheme?



Employers pay apprentices a wage. The most common understanding is that the apprentice contributes to the value creatin of the company and is therefore a good investment for the company's ability to earn money.

The state subsidises the salary paid to an apprentice. The subsidy amounts to about EUR 690 per month per apprentice (Satser lærlinger, praksisbrevkandidater, lærekandidater og kandidater for fagbrev på jobb 2023 (udir.no)

## Q34. Are there any financial incentives for companies that offer apprenticeship places?





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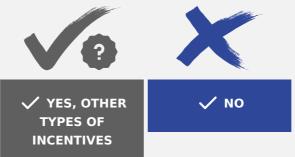
## Q35. Does the wage or allowance of the apprentice cover both the time spent at school and in the company?



The apprentice spent some time learning theory during the apprenticeship period (at a VET provider). These hours are covered by the wage.

#### Q36. Are there any incentives for learners?





The salary is seen as an incentive. The apprentices are paid for doing an education. Those without an apprenticeship placement have to attend school-based learning without salary.