

Developments in the Norwegian Model for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and the Role of NOKUT

ECA Seminar on “Changing Systems”

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Current change process in the Norwegian QA system

Evaluation of NOKUT (FEB 2008):

- NOKUT clearly meets the requirements of the ESG
- Several improvements recommended both for NOKUT's activities and the Norwegian QA system in general



Amendments legal basis:

- Act on Universities and University Colleges (AUG 09)
- Ministerial regulations on Quality Assurance (FEB 10)
- NOKUT standards and criteria and procedures (DEC 2008 / MID-LATE 2010)



Amendments at NOKUT:

- Revised mandate (AUG 09)
- New strategy plan for developing NOKUT's activities 2010-14 (NOV 09)
- New organization model (JAN 10)

Results of the change process: Short version

- Wider mandate for NOKUT
- More emphasis on development and quality enhancement
- More flexible and targeted approach to QA
- Continuity and gradual development rather than “big reforms”



Results of the change process: Contents of the long version

- Developments at NOKUT
 - Revised mandate 2009
 - New strategy plan 2010-14
 - New organization model from 2010
- Trends and developments in the Norwegian QA system
 - Institution landscape
 - Norwegian QA model
 - Institutional accreditation
 - QA of the institutions' internal quality assurance (audit)
 - Accreditation of new study programs
 - Monitoring and re-accreditation of existing programs

NOKUT:

Revised mandate - increased focus on enhancement

NOKUT's mandate covers both Norwegian and foreign education:

Norwegian education

NOKUT conducts quality assurance and **stimulates quality enhancement** in education provided by Norwegian higher education institutions and tertiary vocational colleges

Foreign education

NOKUT recognises foreign higher education qualifications in response to applications by individuals, and provides information about international education systems and the Norwegian system for recognition of foreign qualifications

NOKUT:

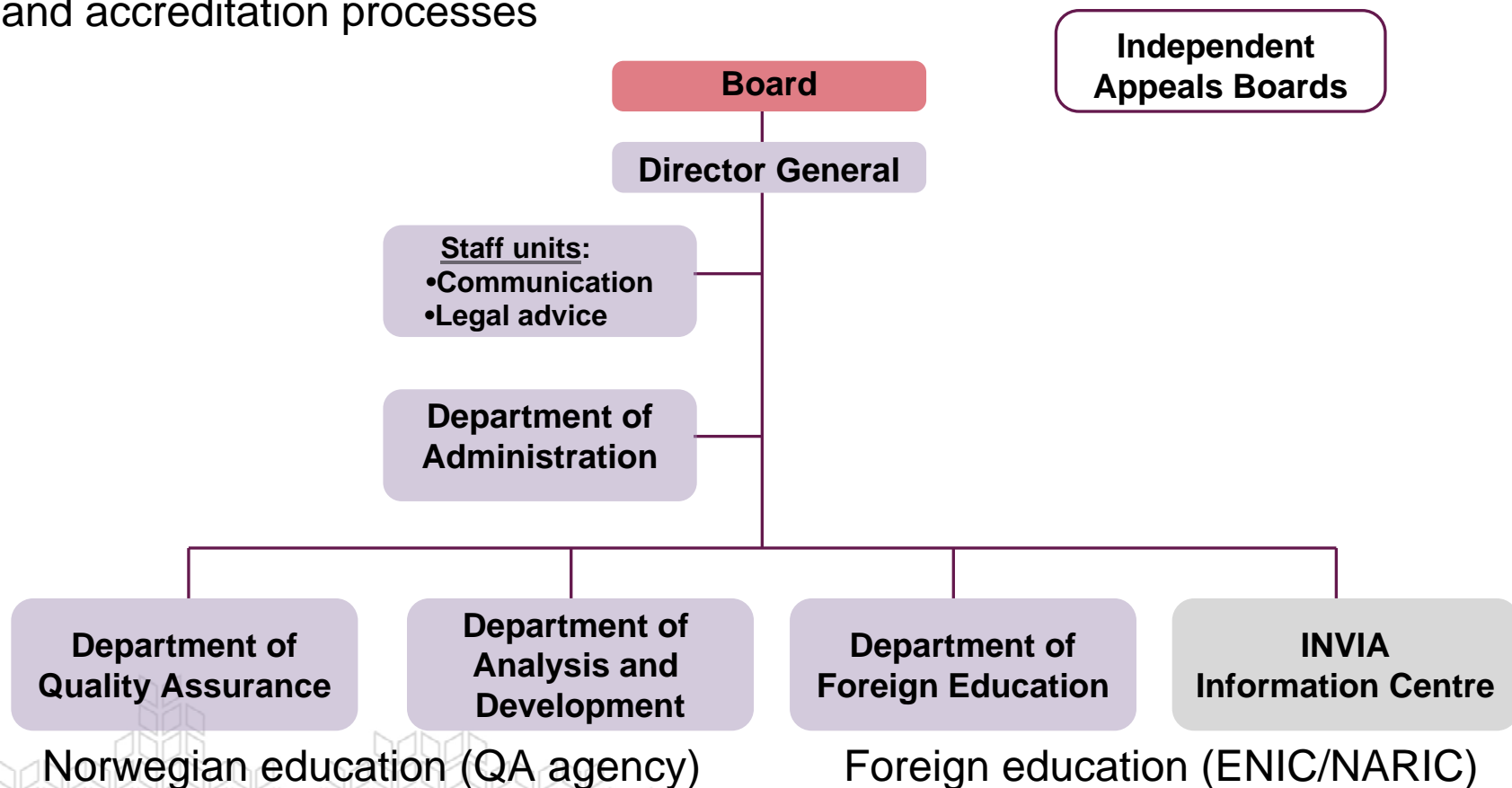
Main strategies for developing NOKUT's activities 2010-14

1. Increase the emphasis on enhancement of educational quality
 - More analysis, R&D and evaluation activities specifically designed to generate information that can stimulate quality enhancement
 - Further developing the advisory element in our QA instruments
2. Improve the consistency, fitness-for-purpose and effectiveness of our quality assurance activities
 - More integrated QA model with more interaction between various QA instruments
 - QA activities more targeted at areas where particular need has been identified
3. Increase the emphasis on user-friendliness in all activities
4. More dialogue with the sector and the wider society
5. Further develop a professional and integrated organisation

NOKUT:

New organization chart from 01-01-2010

NOKUT is a professionally independent government agency. The Board has ultimate responsibility for its decisions. NOKUT has a permanent staff of about 60 people, and each year contracts around 300 experts for various evaluation and accreditation processes



NOKUT:

New organization model – Details QA agency part

Control and development

Department of Quality Assurance

Main activities:

- Institutional accreditation
- Audit of institutions' internal QAS
- Accreditation of new programs
- Monitoring and re-accreditation of existing programs

Head of Department:

- Tove Blytt Holmen

Department substructure:

- Higher education – Institutional level
- Higher education – Program level
- Tertiary vocational education

Development

Department of Analysis and Development

Main activities:

- Collating and analyzing information from QA activities and other sources
- Program and thematic evaluations
- Relevant R&D projects
- Seminars and contributions to public debate

Head of Department:

- Ole-Jacob Skodvin (from april 2010) (Until then Jon Haakstad)

Norwegian QA system: Norwegian education system

About 90 institutions
NOKUT: 1300 accr.

Vocational tertiary
education (1/2 - 2 yrs)

Vocational secondary
education (3 or 2+2 yrs)

Primary School
(10yrs)

Higher education

PhD (+ 3 yrs)
Master (+ 2 yrs)
Bachelor (3 yrs)

Theoretical secondary
education (3 yrs)

**75 institutions in
4 categories with different
self-accrediting powers:**

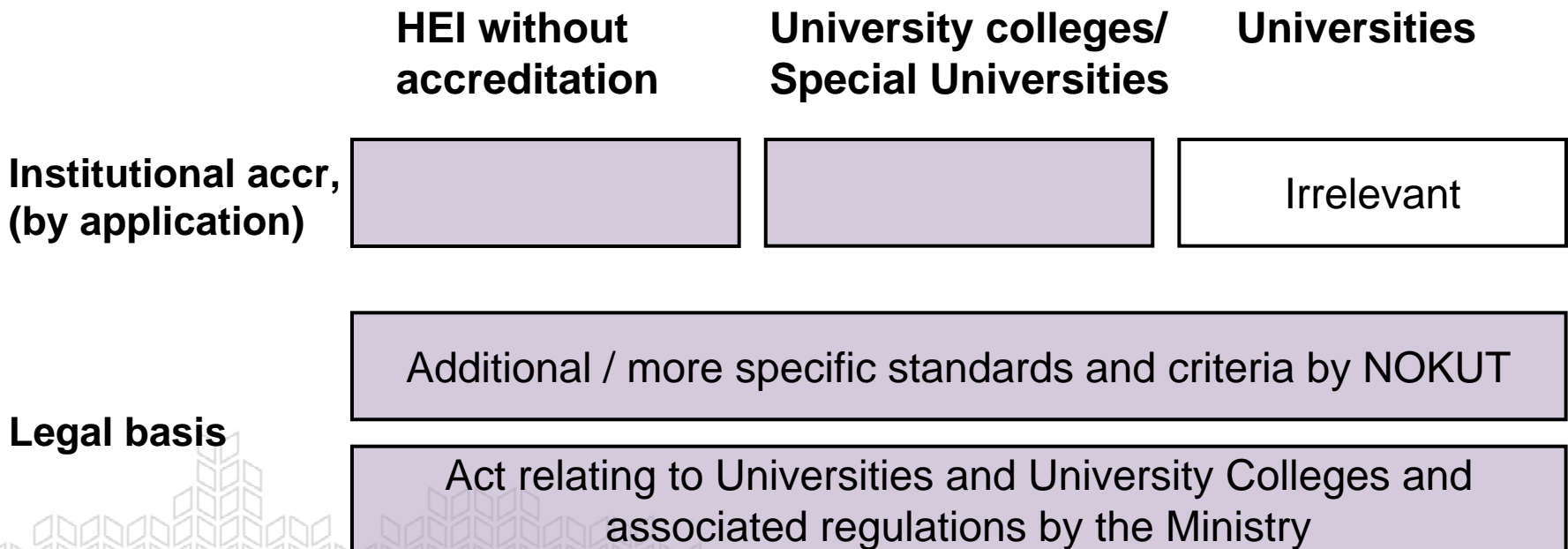
- Universities (7)
- Specialised Universities (8)
- University Colleges (36)
- HEI without accreditation (24)

Trends:

- Increasing academic drift
- Mergers and formal collaboration

Norwegian QA system:

Norwegian QA model for higher education – legal basis



Norwegian QA system:

Norwegian QA model for higher education

- External QA of the institutions' provision of education carried out through:**
- Audits to check whether the internal QA systems are satisfactory
 - Accreditations to check whether programs meet national standards

	HEI without accreditation	University colleges/ Special Universities	Universities
Institutional accr, (by application)			Irrelevant
Legal basis	Additional / more specific standards and criteria by NOKUT		
	Act relating to Universities and University Colleges and associated regulations by the Ministry		

Norwegian QA system:

Norwegian QA model for higher education

	HEI without accreditation	University colleges/ Special Universities	Universities
Monitoring and re-accreditation			
Program accr. (by application)		Partial self - accrediting powers	Full self - accrediting powers
Audit of internal QAS every 6 yrs			
Institutional accr. (by application)			Irrelevant
Legal basis	Additional / more specific standards and criteria by NOKUT		
	Act relating to Universities and University Colleges and associated regulations by the Ministry		

Norwegian QA system: Overview of trends and developments in the QA instruments

- Institutional accreditation
 - Only small changes in the regulations
 - Increasing number of applications
(due to i.a. maturing institutions and academic drift)
- Audit
 - Second cycle started in 2009
 - New set of evaluation criteria and audit procedure:
 - Increased focus on the system in operation and its benefits
 - More dialogue with the institution
 - Possibility to look deeper into special parts of the system



Norwegian QA system:

Overview of trends and developments in the QA instruments

- Accreditation of new programs
 - Revision of standards and criteria in 2010
 - Probably decreasing number of applications
(except at PhD-level, closely linked to institutional accreditation)
- Monitoring and re-accreditation of existing programs
 - We will probably do more re-accreditations in the future
 - Develop a new approach in three steps:
 1. Annual overall analysis and risk evaluation
(Leads to decision on which programs to be examined)
 2. Obtain statements from the institutions responsible for these programs
(Could be the end of the process if situation is ok or corrected)
 3. Re-accreditation
(Based on the full set of standards and criteria or a subset only)



Results of the change process: Summary

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