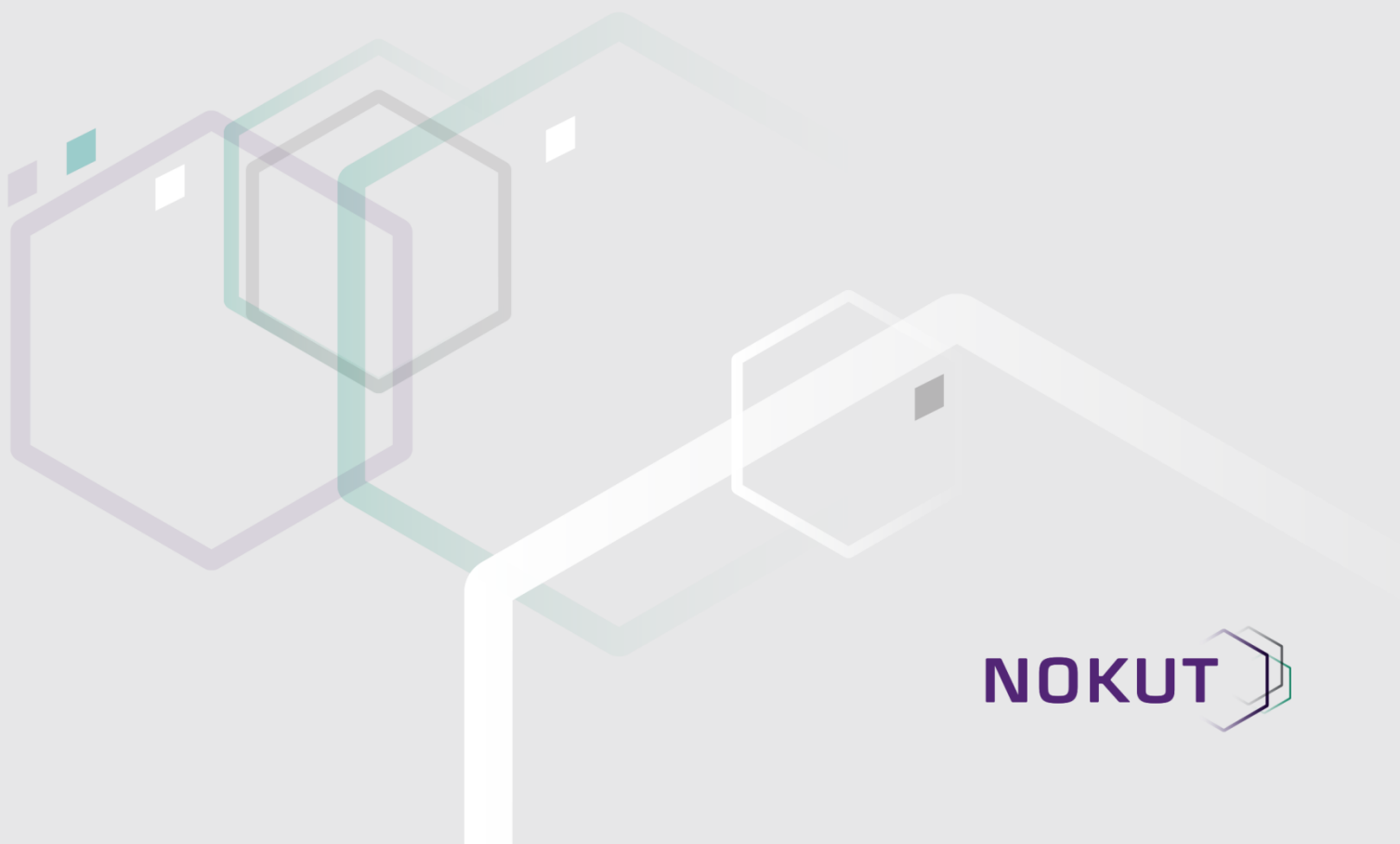


NOKUT's strategies

Development strategy for NOKUT 2015–2020

October 2014



NOKUT 

Title:	Development strategy for NOKUT 2015–2020
Date:	October 2014

Preface

NOKUT has been undergoing continuous change since its establishment in 2003. Demand for our expertise and services has increased significantly during that period. We believe that the services we provide and the tasks we carry out are important to Norwegian society. However, we still see considerable room for rationalisation and further development of our current core activities and for using our expertise in new areas.

This strategy document sets out a course for the development of NOKUT towards 2020. The strategy is based on the assumption that NOKUT has the potential to take a more overall responsibility as a national competence centre. To a greater extent than today, we want to document, inform and give advice based on facts about the quality status of Norwegian higher education and tertiary vocational education, and about the situation as regards recognition of qualifications achieved abroad. Our ambition is to play a more visible role in society, while continuing to strengthen cooperation and dialogue with students, educational institutions, the labour market and society at large.

The strategy has the support of NOKUT's board and management. We have also received a great deal of useful input from the dialogue with the university and university college sector, the tertiary vocational education sector and other sectors of society. Some of the input has helped us to make the strategy document clearer, while some of it will be included in the development of NOKUT's organisation and activities.

The first part of the strategy document clarifies NOKUT's social mission and sets out three overall goals that NOKUT will be governed by. The second part consists of five development strategies that will set NOKUT on the course to becoming a more proactive organisation that will make use of more measures to achieve its goals. We will contribute more to the work of ensuring that students receive a relevant education of high quality. At the same time, we see a need to raise the quality, not just of higher education, but also of tertiary vocational education. This is where we will intensify our efforts. We will also do more to help people with foreign higher education to find relevant jobs in Norway, and to help employers to find good and relevant candidates.

Through this strategy, NOKUT wishes to be perceived as:

- a clear and visible ambassador for quality in education
- a key agenda-setter with sound expertise in Norwegian and foreign higher education and Norwegian tertiary vocational education
- a competent, reliable and efficient administrative agency.

The strategy will be followed up in annual and multi-year activity plans with specific priorities and management parameters to help us to stay on course. New ICT solutions are expected to free up some resources for new tasks.

Borghild Roald
Chair of the board

Terje Mørland
Director General

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1 NOKUT's social mission

NOKUT (the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education) is an independent expert body and administrative agency with expertise in the field of Norwegian and foreign higher education and tertiary vocational education.

NOKUT:

- supervises, provides information about and contributes to developing the quality of Norwegian study programmes and institutions
- recognises and provides information about foreign educations and about the procedures for having foreign qualifications recognised in Norway.

NOKUT's work is intended to contribute to society having confidence in Norwegian higher education and tertiary vocational education as well as recognised foreign higher education.

In carrying out its mission, NOKUT emphasises dialogue and cooperation with students, educational institutions, stakeholders in society and the labour market and other agencies. NOKUT's independence means that its decisions in supervisory and recognition cases cannot be overruled at the political level. This independent role requires a high level of professional integrity, and NOKUT is to identify and communicate the quality status of education in a neutral manner. By setting out the facts, NOKUT shall contribute to wise decisions being made and to quality in education being a priority for both educational institutions and the authorities.

2 Goals and policy instruments

NOKUT's remit and tasks are defined in the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges and the Act relating to Tertiary Vocational Education with pertaining regulations issued by the Ministry of Education and Research. The following overall goals and policy instruments for NOKUT's work can be derived from the remit:

Goal 1: NOKUT shall contribute to all study programmes at Norwegian universities, university colleges and institutions at tertiary vocational level being of satisfactory quality, that as many programmes as possible are outstanding, and that society is well informed about the status in the sector.

We will do this by:

- recognising and supervising institutions and study programmes on the basis of national and international standards
- managing and developing policy instruments to stimulate quality development
- acquiring, compiling and analysing knowledge about education and quality
- spreading information about education and quality
- creating arenas for debate and putting important topics on the agenda
- advising the authorities and educational institutions.

Goal 2: NOKUT shall help to enable people with a foreign education to make effective use of their qualifications in Norway and ensure that employers and educational institutions are well informed about what Norwegian qualifications the foreign qualifications are equivalent to.

We will do this by:

- recognising and assessing individuals' foreign higher education
- providing information about foreign education and the Norwegian recognition system
- performing national coordination and contact point functions
- acquiring, compiling and analysing knowledge about recognition of foreign qualifications
- creating arenas for debate and putting important topics on the agenda
- advising the authorities, employers and educational institutions.

Goal 3: NOKUT shall manage its activities, expertise and resources in an efficient manner in accordance with its social mission and international standards in the field.

In order to ensure this, we will emphasise the following in our running and development of the organisation:

- the quality, usefulness and impact of our work
- good and appropriate expertise adapted to our goals and tasks
- a good working environment and organisational culture characterised by knowledge-sharing, learning and cooperation to achieve common goals
- efficient work processes and flexible work methods
- good relations with the sector and with society, as well as with national and international partners.

3 Development strategy for NOKUT towards 2020

In the period towards 2020, NOKUT will strengthen and develop its activities in line with the five strategies listed below.

Strategy 1: NOKUT shall intensify its efforts to acquire and disseminate knowledge about the situation in higher education, tertiary vocational education and the system for recognition of foreign qualifications, among other things by:

- helping to develop indicators for quality in education
- developing evaluations where education and research are assessed in the same process
- gathering information about the quality of education at programme and institutional level from national registers, questionnaire surveys, supervisory activities and evaluations
- gathering information and statistics about recognition and authorisation of foreign qualifications
- conducting analyses and actively communicating findings on user-adapted web portals, in status reports and at various events.

Strategy 2: NOKUT shall be more active in stimulating the development and improvement of higher education, tertiary vocational education and the system for recognition of foreign qualifications, among other things by:

- being a visible ambassador for quality in education and creating arenas for debate
- communicating good practice and advice to educational institutions
- contributing to the further development of the Centres of Excellence in Higher Education scheme
- contributing to developing new policy instruments to stimulate quality in education, both under the auspices of NOKUT and externally
- contributing to developing the system for recognition of foreign education and qualifications
- advising the authorities on policy matters in our area of responsibility.

Strategy 3: NOKUT shall develop more effective and targeted supervision of higher education and tertiary vocational education, among other things by:

- giving higher priority to the supervision of existing activities at all types of institutions
- contributing to simplifying the accreditation and recognition process for institutions and study programmes
- making active use of the knowledge base in the planning and implementation of more targeted supervision of whole institutions as well as individual study programmes
- focusing more on the quality and academic level of study programmes in an international context, and on the relevance of learning outcomes
- focusing more on how institutions use quality as the basis for the development of their programme portfolios.

Strategy 4: NOKUT shall develop services relating to the recognition of foreign education and qualifications to ensure that they are better adapted to the needs of their users and society as a whole, among other things by:

- offering more efficient recognition and making information more easily available by means of new technology
- making active use of the knowledge base and international trends to further develop NOKUT's recognition practice
- developing new and further developing existing recognition, assessment and information services aimed at individuals, employers, educational institutions and other recognition bodies
- strengthening the national contact point functions and the coordinator and advisor role in relation to educational institutions and other recognition bodies.

Strategy 5: NOKUT shall further develop its efficient, competent and user-oriented organisation, among other things by:

- introducing digital tools to rationalise and improve the quality of case processing and free up resources for other tasks
- further developing its expertise, work processes and organisational culture
- contributing to a more efficient division of labour and cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research and other administrative agencies in the field of education and research
- further developing external relations, with particular emphasis on the labour market, the support system (the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration NAV etc.) and the institutions' management and lecturer level
- further developing international cooperation, with particular emphasis on concrete cooperation projects with sister organisations.