Nmbu

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Guideline. Requirements for degree-granting programmes of study at NMBU

DEPARTMENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS,

NMBU's programmes of study shall maintain a high academic and pedagogical level and help NMBU fulfil its social mission and its own strategic plans and goals. The programme shall fulfil all applicable Norwegian laws, regulations and frameworks and NMBU's regulations.

**About the use of this guideline:**

The requirements for degree-granting programmes of study apply to all degree-granting programmes at NMBU. Both new and existing studies. The criteria are based on NOKUT's Academic Supervision Regulations, other national laws and regulations, NMBU's education-related regulations and institutional requirements and guidelines found in strategies and plans.

1. Application for approval of new degree-granting programme of study:  
   The application must include an evaluation of all the areas listed in this document.   
   The faculty assess whether the criterion are fulfilled for all areas. If there are areas in need of further development and improvement, plans for this work shall be prepared. The application must describe these assessments and any plans for further development and improvements. The experts review the application and assess whether the programme fulfils each requirements in this guideline.
2. Annual control and review of existing programmes of study:  
   At the faculties annual control of whether the programmes meets the requirements, the checklist in the guideline (page 3-6) may be used
3. Programme evaluation:  
   The guideline should also be used as a tool during the programme evaluation (annual and periodic)

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Checklist:

**The checklist gives a short description of the requirements for degree-granting programmes at NMBU. All criteria must be fulfilled.**

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|  | **Checklist with requirements** | **Are the criteria met?  Yes/No/ Uncertain/ Does not apply** |
| ***Strategic anchoring, overarching assessments and background for the application*** | |  |
| Strategic conformity and social mission | The relevance of the programme must correspond with NMBU's social mission and the University and Faculty's strategic plans, including links to any research strategies. |  |
| Student recruitment and market assessment | The anticipated student recruitment must be sufficient to establish and maintain a satisfactory learning environment and stability in the programme. This must be assessed based on the programme’s scope and level. |  |
| Robust academic community, interdisciplinarity, synergies | The composition, size and overall competency of the academic community must be adapted and simultaneously be sufficient to ensure that the research and academic development work being carried out. Indicate here how the programme contributes to interdisciplinary collaboration and exploitation of synergies across programmes, departments and faculties. |  |
| Description of the process of initial development of the programme, quality assurance and case processing. External involvement in the development | The process shall be in accordance with the guidelines. |  |
| Cost estimate and finances | Economic sustainability of the new programme |  |
| Academic management | The new programme must have an academic management. |  |
| ***Basic conditions for the programme, programme description (PD) and study plan*** | |  |
| Name, degree, title | The name of the degree and any title shall be correctly listed in the programme description (PD) in line with the "Regulations concerning degrees and vocational training, protected titles and nominal lengths of study at universities and university colleges" and NMBU's regulations  The programme shall have a name that covers/describes its contents, scope and level. |  |
| National curriculum | The requirements in the applicable national curriculum must be met. |  |
| Suitability assessment | A suitability assessment must be made in compliance with the Regulations relating to suitability assessment in higher education and the study regulation at NMBU. |  |
| Scope of work | The scope of the work is expected to be 1500 hours a year (a full-time programme is 60 credits), and is divided into adapted forms of teaching, independent study and examination preparations. |  |
| Agreements | Satisfactory agreements that regulate significant aspects important to students shall be available when parts of the programme take place outside of NMBU. |  |
| Admission | The admission criteria for the programme of study shall be clearly described and be in line with the regulations. |  |
| Ex.phil. | In the bachelor's degree and the five-year master's degree, 10 credits shall be connected to an introductory course that includes examen philosophicum (ex.phil). |  |
| Bachelor – Specialisation | The 180 credits in the bachelor's degree programme shall include a specialisation of at least 80 credits.. |  |
| Two - year Master’s - Academic requirements that the programme is based on | The PD (two-year master's) shall stipulate which academic requirements the master's degree is based on (the disciplines, courses or groups of courses included in the educational programme the master's degree is based on) and must comply with the NMBU’s study regulations. |  |
| Two- and five- year Master’s - Independent work | Two and five-year master's degrees shall include an independent work (of a scope) of at least 30 and 60 credits at the most. |  |
| Experience-based Master - Relevant work experience | A programme description for a master’s programme based on previous professional experience must stipulate what work experience is relevant, that at least two years of work experience is required, and whether work experience of more than three years is required. |  |
| Supervised professional training | For programmes with supervised professional training, there must be adequate agreements regulating significant issues of importance for students. Any practitioners should have appropriate experience from the field of practice. |  |
| Link to R&D | The programme must have a satisfactory link to R&D, assessed in relation to the programme's level, scope and character. |  |
| Support functions and infrastructure | The premises, library services, administrative and technical services, access to ICT resources and working conditions for students shall be adapted to the number of students and the programme as described in the programme description. The list is not exhaustive. The support functions and infrastructure shall be adequate for students to be able to achieve the learning outcomes described for the programme. |  |
| Academic community affiliated with the programme | The composition, size and overall competency of the academic community shall be adapted as described in the plan for the programme and at the same time be sufficient to carry out research and academic development work.  The program shall have a broad and stable professional community consisting of sufficient number of employees with high academic competence in education, research and professional development within the field of study.  The size must be in proportion to the number of students and the programme’s distinctiveness.  The academic community must be stable over time and have relevant educational competence  The academic community should be able to demonstrate proven results with a quality and an extent that is satisfactory for the content and level of the programme  The academic community shall participate actively in national and international collaborations and networks relevant to the programme.  At least 50 per cent of full-time equivalents (FTEs) related to the programme shall be academics in primary positions at NMBU. There must be academics with competence of at least the level of Associate Professor in the central parts of the program.  Bachelor programme: at least 20% at the level of Associate Professor or higher.  Master programme: minimum 50% at the level of Associate Professor or higher. Minimum 10% of this 50% must be at the level of Professor or higher.  Any supervisors of professional training must have appropriate practical experience in the field. |  |
| Description of learning outcomes | The learning outcomes students shall have achieved on completing the programme shall be described in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework; and in terms of knowledge, skills and general competency. |  |
| Contents and structure | The content and structure of the programme shall be satisfactorily described in the programme description, in accordance with the programme description requirements in the Academic Supervision Regulations. The PD's description of the contents and structure of the programme shall include all relevant sections of the guide and clearly describe all academic requirements for achieving the degree. The contents and structure of the programme shall be adequately related to the learning outcomes, as described in the programme description. |  |
| Forms of teaching and learning | The student learning activities shall be suitable for achieving the learning outcomes described in the PD. The teaching and learning activities shall facilitate the student's active role in the learning process. |  |
| Examination and assessments | The forms of examination and assessment shall be suited for assessing the degree to which the student has achieved the learning outcomes. |  |
| Relevance | The programme must be professionally updated and be clearly relevant to the labour market, further studies and society in general.  The relevance of the programme shall correspond to NMBU's social mission and strategic plans. |  |
| Schemes for student exchanges and internationalisation | The programme shall have agreements for student exchange and arrangements for internationalisation relevant to the scope, level and character of the programme. The content of the exchange agreements must be of professional relevance |  |

# Strategic anchoring, overarching assessments, background for the application and description of the process of development of the programme

This provides a short description of the application for approval, an overarching description of the programme and an assessment of the criteria listed below.

## Overarching programme description

The disciplinary area and overarching learning outcomes/goals for the programme.

## Strategic conformity and social mission

The relevance of the programme must correspond to NMBU's social mission and the University and Faculty's strategic plans, including links to any research strategies. The programme’s position to similar programmes offered by other institutions. Explain the relationship between this study program and any other related study programs at NMBU. Describe how the program differs from or are similar to other programs at NMBU or at other institutions home and abroad.

## Student recruitment and market assessment

The anticipated student recruitment must be sufficient to establish and maintain a satisfactory learning environment and stability in the programme. Assess this based on the scope and level of the programme. The faculty must make a realistic assessment of student recruitment and the market in the long term. The total number of students stipulated for the programme must also be listed here. The Ministry of Education and Research's requirement to have a minimum of 20 students for each programme of study for the creation of a new programme, must be used as a starting point

## Robust disciplinary community, academic management, interdisciplinary and synergies

The study program must have clear academic management with a defined responsibility for quality assurance and development of the program. Also provide an overall assessment of the academic community. This should be discussed more thoroughly under the assessment of the academic community (see the subject environment associated with the study later in this guideline).

Indicate how the programme contributes to interdisciplinary collaboration and utilization of synergies across programmes and faculties.

## Description of the development process, quality assurance and council/faculty board processing

Assess the development process at the faculty. Describe the consideration in various committees/councils/boards and the persons involved in the development.

## External involvement in the development

External participation in the development of the programme is required for programmes to be approved. Give a short description of how external partners (experts, collaborators, RSA) have been involved in the process.

Also include the main conclusions from the expert assessment here.

## Cost estimate and funding

Overarching assessment of the funding and economic sustainability of the new programme.

# Basic conditions for the programme, description of programmes and study plan

Provide an assessment of the basic conditions for the programmes and the requirements for the description ogfprogrammes and study plan (see the criteria below). Areas where the faculty sees a need for improvement and development should be pointed out, with a description of the work planned for the times ahead.

The program description (PD) is completed in the "Template for description of programs of study" when applying for the approval of a new programme of study. It is important to note that one should not list any arguments in PD on whether the criteria are met. The arguments for whether the PB is in accordance with the requirements must appear in the application, which is based on this document.

The PD must comply with national laws and regulations, NMBU regulations and must be in line with the National Qualification Framework (NKR).

## Name, degree and title

The programme shall have a name that covers/describes its contents, scope and level. The name of the degree and any title shall be correctly listed in the PD in line with the "Regulations concerning degrees and vocational training, protected titles and nominal lengths of study at universities and university colleges" and NMBU's regulations. If there may be doubt about the appropriateness of the name, the name choice should be explained.

The PD gives the programme name in Norwegian Nynorsk, Norwegian Bokmål and English.

## National curriculum

The national curriculum for the programmes shall be discussed in the PD and the PD shall comply with the national curriculum.

## Suitability assessment

Any suitability assessment must be made in compliance with the Regulations relating to suitability assessment in higher education and the Regulations concerning admission, programmes of study, examinations and degrees at NMBU.

This only applies to programmes that are to include suitability assessments pursuant to section 4-10 of the University and University Colleges Act. The PD shall discuss suitability assessments and how these are done.

## Admission

The admission criteria for the programme of study shall be clearly described in the PD and be in line with the regulations.

## Scope of work

The scope of the work is expected to be 1500 hours a year, and is divided into adapted forms of teaching, independent study and examination preparations. Confirm that a nominal full-time programme is 60 credits and 1500 hours of work a year. Based on the course composition the faculty has chosen for the programme, the faculty creates a rough estimate of the percentage of student work hours that are "adapted" (contact with an academic who is present) in each year of study.

## Agreements

Satisfactory agreements that regulate significant aspects that are important to students shall be available when parts of the programme take place outside of NMBU. If compulsory parts of the programme are taken outside of NMBU, the faculty shall also confirm that there are agreements covering the teaching collaboration

## Ex.phil.

In the bachelor's degree and the five-year master's degree, 10 credits shall be connected to an introductory course that includes examen philosophicum (ex.phil). The PD shall describe this requirement.

## Specialisation – bachelor's

The 180 credits in the bachelor's degree programme shall include a specialisation of at least 80 credits. The PD (bachelor) shall describe the requirement for an 80-credit specialisation and how the specialisation requirement can be fulfilled. Assess whether the requirement apply and is fulfilled.

## 2-year master. Academic requirements that the programme is based on

The PD (two-year master's) shall stipulate which academic requirements the master's degree is based on (the disciplines, courses or groups of courses included in the educational programme the master's degree is based on) and these must comply with the Regulations concerning admission, programmes of study, examinations and degrees at NMBU and supplementary provisions. Assess whether the requirement apply and is fulfilled.

## 2- and 5-year master's. Independent work –

Two and five-year master's degrees shall include independent work of a scope of at least 30 and at most 60 credits. The PD for the two-year and five-year master's degrees shall include the requirement regarding independent work. Assess whether the requirement apply and is fulfilled.

## Experience-based master's. Relevant work experience

In a master’s programme based on previous professional experience the programme description must stipulate what work experience is relevant, that at least two years of work experience is required, and whether work experience of more than three years is required. For experience-based master's degrees, the PD shall describe requirements regarding the length and type of relevant work experience. Assess whether the requirement apply and is fulfilled.

## Supervised professional training

For programmes with supervised professional training, there must be adequate agreements regulating significant issues of importance for students. Assess whether the requirement apply and is fulfilled.

## Link to R&D

The programme must have a satisfactory link to R&D, assessed in relation to the programme's level, scope and character. The PD shall describe research activities and development work in the academic community associated with the programme, and the ways in which these are integrated into the programme. Assess whether the requirement is fulfilled.

## Support functions and infrastructure

The premises, library services, administrative and technical services, access to ICT resources and working conditions for students shall be adapted to the number of students and the programme as described in the PD. The list is not exhaustive. The support functions and infrastructure shall be adequate for students to be able to achieve the learning outcomes described for the programme. The faculty considers how to facilitate support and the promotion of student learning locally. This includes academic supervision and "academic homes", or in other words activities and meeting places in the academic community. The faculty shall not assess infrastructure that is administered centrally, such as reading rooms, rooms, ICT and library services.

## Academic community affiliated with the programme

The requirement for the academic community has been intensified in the last change in the national regulations from the ministry of education and NOKUT. The faculty must give a good description of the academic environment and justify its assessments of the academic community in accordance with the requirements below:

* The composition, size and overall competency of the academic community shall be adapted to the study as described in the study plan. The academic community should cover subjects and courses that the programme consists of
* The program shall have a broad and stable professional community consisting of sufficient number of employees with high academic competence in education, research and professional development within the field of study.
* At least 50 per cent of FTEs related to the programme shall be academics in primary positions at NMBU. Of these, there must be persons with competence at least at the level of Associate Professor in the central parts of the program.  
  In addition:
  + bachelor programmes: at least 20% at the level of Associate Professor or higher.
  + Master programmes:

minimum 50% at the level of Associate Professor or higher  
minimum 10% of this 50% must be at the level of Professor or higher

* The faculty shall confirm that the "central aspects" of the programme are covered by persons with primary positions at NMBU. If there is doubt about that at least 50 per cent of FTEs related to the central aspects of the programme being covered by staff in primary positions at NMBU, the situation must be described.
* The academic community should be able to demonstrate proven results with a quality and an extent that is satisfactory for the content and level of the programme.
* The size of the academic community must be in proportion to the number of students and the programme’s distinctiveness.
* The academic community must be stable over time and have relevant educational competence.
* The academic community shall participate actively in national and international collaborations and networks relevant to the programme The PD's section about the research community shall describe binding or active participation in academic national and/or international networks relevant to the programme.
* Any supervisors of professional training must have appropriate practical experience in the field. Competency requirements for supervisors of practical training must be described and the faculty must confirm that the competency requirements ensure that the supervisors have the appropriate experience.

## Description of learning outcomes

The learning outcomes students shall have achieved on completing the programme shall be described in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and in terms of knowledge, skills and general competency.

The PD shall provide a clear description of learning outcomes students in the programme are expected to. The plan shall be for all students to gain all learning outcomes on completing the programme.

The faculty must assess whether the PD's description of learning outcomes is in accordance with the NQF.

## Contents and structure

The content and structure of the programme shall be satisfactorily described in the programme description, in accordance with the programme description requirements in the Academic Supervision Regulations.

The PD's description of the contents and structure of the programme shall include all relevant sections of the PBs template (see template for the complete list) and clearly describe all academic requirements for achieving the degree. The study plan should list an overview of courses in the study program, and which courses are compulsory and optional. It should also show the progression and any progression requirements. Any programme options (profiles) and requirements for specializations must be described.

The contents and structure of the programme shall be adequately related to the learning outcomes, as described in the programme description. The faculty must assess whether the description of contents and structure relates to the learning outcomes students are to gain. A more detailed assessment, shall confirm that individual courses, and especially compulsory courses, correspond to and support the PD. It should be possible to "trace" learning outcomes, learning activities and forms of assessment back to the courses.

## Forms of teaching and learning

The PD shall describe the learning activities and work forms for the programme as a whole.

The learning activities shall be suitable to achieve the learning outcomes described in the PD. They should facilitate the student's active role in the learning process. The faculty must assess how well suited the learning activities are to achieving the learning outcomes for the programme.

## Examination and assessments

The PD shall describe the type and scope of examination and assessment used in the programme.

The forms of assessment shall be suited to assess the degree to which the student has achieved the learning outcomes. The faculty assesses how suitable the examination and assessment forms are to assessing student achievement of the learning outcomes for the programme.

## Relevance

The relevance of the programme for the labour market, further studies and society in general shall be clearly described and this shall be described in the PD. The relevance of the programme shall correspond to NMBU's social mission and strategic plans.

The facultys are encouraged to ensure that there is a link between the PD text about "relevance" and NMBU's social mission and strategies.

## Agreements for student exchanges and internationalisation

The programme shall have agreements for student exchange and arrangements for internationalisation relevant to the scope, level and character of the programme. All programmes, leading to a degree, should have arrangements for international student exchanges, where the content of the exchange is professionally relevant. The faculty assesses if these requirements are fulfilled.

Clarify how internationalisation and globalisation challenges are addressed as part of the program (i.e. Use of international guest researchers, curriculum developed with international partners, use of languages other than Norwegian etc.) and how the program has an international curriculum that gives international and intercultural knowledge and abilities that prepare the students to perform in an international and multicultural context. You may also clarify how many students are expected to go on exchange and how many international students are expected in parts of or in the entire program and how this will contribute to increase the internationalisation throughout the program.

The PD shall describe arrangements for student exchanges related to the programme and note appropriate/recommended schemes. The programme's international contents is described in the PD sections on learning outcomes and/or contents and structure.

# Conclusion

The conclusions are based on the quality assurance and the assessments made above, and includes the faculty's recommendation of approval of the programme.