

# Quality in Norwegian Early Childhood and Care, Schools and Vocational Education and training

## **Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)**

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) is for children under school age. Municipalities are responsible for the development and supervision of both private and municipal institutions and for ensuring that institutions are run according to the Framework Plan and the Kindergarden act.

## **Primary, Lower and Upper Secondary School**

The quality system gives an opportunity to investigate the quality of school learning environments and learning outcomes as preparation for participation in quality development processes.

## **Vocational Education and Training (VET)**

At the national level, the responsibility regarding quality management is set by objectives, development, and administration tools that school owners (ie counties) and schools can use in the work of developing quality.

different levels in the Education system. National and local plans and goals are the basis for systematic process to enhance quality development. The overarching goal is better well-being and learning outcome for children, students and apprentices.

## The National Quality Assessment System

The National Quality Assessment System (NQAS) was adopted by parliament in 2003 and introduced in 2004. In 2013 the name was changed to Quality Assessment System (QAS). The name change signaled that the system is primarily intended for schools and school owners. The system also contains data on vocational education and training (VET) in upper secondary schools and in training establishments. A system for quality in kindergarten has been developed and implemented since 2014.

The aim is to promote quality development throughout kindergarten, primary education, and secondary education and training. National and local plans and goals are the basis for this systematic process. The quality assessment system consists of a knowledge base, tools, procedures, and goals for key actors on different levels.

The system provides schools and school owners with relevant and reliable data on learning outcomes, learning environment, completion of upper secondary education, resources, and school facts.

Laws and regulations oblige kindergarten owners, local authorities, and county authorities to take a systematic approach to quality development in kindergartens and schools. This requires involvement and dialogue both within an organization and between different responsible bodies.

The system emphasizes the necessity of seeing the quality process as a continuous and recurrent one, involving assessment of information, analysis, target-setting, planning changes to practices, implementation, and subsequent assessment of the outcomes of the changed practices.

A consistent approach to quality assessment requires a proactive and enduring effort on the part of kindergarten owners and leaders, school owners and school leaders, and business owners employing apprentices. National and local quality assessments can provide valuable background information for each individual kindergarten, school, local authority, county authority, and business. However, the value of this information depends on there being consistency and correlation at a local level between different phases and actors in the quality process.

A quality process that comes to have a real impact on improving practices in education is distinguished by a number of key factors:

- Correlation and continuity throughout the annual cycle linking political processes on the part of the local education authorities and the schools' own quality processes with quality assessment and quality development
- Systematically linking the use of the tools in the national quality system and local quality processes

- Clearly formulated targets and for everyone to understand what they should do to help meet those targets
- Active involvement of the various professions within the organization in all phases of the local/county authority's quality processes
- An open, inquisitive, and investigative approach to the quality processes

## **Quality Assurance**

About Quality Assurance (Eurydice)