Joint Degrees and the Nordic Countries

Nordic Master Programme – Legal and administrative obstacles

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ISBN 978-92-893-4067-0 (PRINT)
ISBN 978-92-893-4066-3 (PDF)
ISBN 978-92-893-4068-7 (EPUB)

<http://dx.doi.org/10.6027/TN2015-528>
TemaNord 2015:528
ISSN 0908-6692

© Nordic Council of Ministers 2015
Layout: Hanne Lebech
Cover photo: ImageSelect

Print: Rosendahls-Schultz Grafisk
Copies: 100

Printed in Denmark

This publication has been published with financial support by the Nordic Council of Ministers. However, the contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views, policies or recommendations of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

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Summary

The Nordic countries have in place quite detailed legislation on education and international degree co-operation. The higher education institutions themselves also have their own guidelines concerning the development and running of joint programmes. On the basis of these, the ad hoc group recommends the following principles for the Nordic Master Programme.

Recommendations

The ad hoc group on administrative and legal obstacles (*Ad hoc-grupp: Juridiska och administrativa hinder i Nordic Master*) has examined the existing Nordic legislation and relevant authorities' recommendations concerning degree co-operation.

The group recommends that a Nordic Master Programme should fulfil the following requirements:

- Three or more state-recognised Nordic higher education institutions, located in different Nordic countries, offering research-based education¹ at second-cycle level, establish an agreement with the aim of developing and running a high-quality Nordic Master Programme.
- A Nordic Master Programme should generate Nordic added value and must include an innovative perspective.
- A Nordic Master Programme must comply with current national regulations in order to ensure that the programme meets the requirements for a master's degree in the participating countries.
- The development and implementation of the programme are based on an agreement signed by a legal representative of the collaborating institutions. The agreement describes the duties of each of the collaborating universities.

¹ Research is defined as including both scientific and artistic research.

- Students registered on the programme must be assured that they can complete the programme even if the collaboration is discontinued.
- The form of the documentation for a successfully completed degree is stated in the agreement.
- The successful completion of the Nordic Master Programme must lead to the awarding of either a joint degree (i.e. one single diploma issued on behalf of at least two of the co-operating institutions and fully recognised in both countries) or multiple degrees (i.e. at least two diplomas issued by two of the co-operating institutions and fully recognised in these countries). In exceptional cases, it may be acceptable to issue a single national degree.² The diplomas must clearly indicate that the education has been provided in co-operation with other institutions.
- The parties jointly develop the programme description. Within the curriculum, the different courses provided by the parties follow the regulations for the courses for each institution. ECTS credits are allocated based on learning outcomes and student workload.
- Each party should contribute at least 30 ECTS credits to the joint curriculum.
- The same requirements for admission, including any requirement for language proficiency, apply to all applicants to the study programme.
- The overall extent of the programme is 120 ECTS credits.
- The same requirements for successful completion apply to all students registered on the programme.
- An admitted student's home institution is the institution where he/she is admitted and normally registered in the first semester of the programme. The host institution is the institution where the student spends his/her mobility period, and where he/she is registered during that study period.
- The curriculum must include a mobility period involving at least one host institution. It is recommended that (a) successfully completed mobility period(s) will account for at least 30 ECTS credits.

² Danish higher artistic education institutions are an exception, due to the Danish law concerning these institutions. If a bill presented by the Danish Minister of Culture in June 2014 is passed by the Danish Parliament in winter 2014, the higher artistic education institutions within the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture can participate in international study programme co-operation.

- The curriculum must include a master's thesis³ that accounts for at least 30 ECTS credits.
- The degree(s) is (are) awarded upon completion of the joint curriculum.

However, there remain some unresolved issues, as highlighted below. The ad hoc group suggests that the Nordic Council of Ministers discusses these with the relevant authorities.

The legal status of a joint diploma

The legal status of a joint diploma requires careful study by professionals working within Nordic legislation. The ad hoc group suggests that this issue should be sent to the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials of Legislative Affairs (EK-U). There are differences in the Nordic countries' legislation concerning joint documentation of (a) degree(s). See section 3.3 on diplomas.

Automatic mutual recognition

Given that the recommended principles are taken into account, there should not be any obstacles to the automatic mutual recognition of a joint, research-based master's degree awarded by Nordic higher education institutions. In their current form, the ad hoc group's recommendations are deemed to be in line with national requirements in all five countries, and thus the Nordic Master should be recognised nationally across the Region. A completed Nordic Master Programme should be automatically valid both for further studies and for employment in the field concerned in all of the Nordic countries.

Employability and socio-economic sustainability

It is an obvious requirement that a study programme should be of relevance to society and working life. This applies to all of the Nordic countries and is one of the criteria for approval of a programme.

The ad hoc group respects that relevance to local national labour markets must be the primary concern. However, we recommend that the countries also consider the national labour market in a broader international

³ In the case of higher artistic education, a project based on artistic research.

perspective when discussing employability and sustainability in relation to the Nordic Master Programme.

Tuition fees and other fees

The amount paid by fee-paying students for the same programme may vary from hundreds to thousands of euros, depending on the country of admission and the study pathways of third-country students.

This would naturally imply that third-country students would choose HE institutions that do not charge tuition fees as their home institution.

However, it may not seem fair that some third-country students should pay tuition fees while others on the same programme are exempt due to their Nordic country of admission and study pathway.

The ad hoc group has discussed four possible solutions:

- Eliminate the tuition fee for third-country students admitted to a Nordic Master Programme. This is the preferred solution by the experts from the HE institutions in the ad hoc group. However, the model would require legislative changes. The Danish expert did not consider it politically or legally viable to grant special treatment to particular student groups.
- Charge a programme fee for all third-country students on a programme, independently of the country of admission and registration in the first semester. Universities in countries that charge tuition fees would then invoice the university with overall responsibility for the programme for the appropriate amount for their third-country students, in order to fulfil national legal requirements.

The proposal is unlikely to be viable in countries where there are no tuition fees. At present, Norwegian HE institutions appointed as co-ordinators are not allowed to invoice fees for institutions in countries that charge tuition fees. Similarly, partner institutions cannot charge a programme fee for students enrolled at a Norwegian institution. NB: The situation in Norway may change due to a proposal made by the government based on *Budget proposals from the Government to the Parliament (Prop. 1, S Tillegg 1 (2013–2014))* and the current hearing on the introduction of tuition fees for third-country students in Norway (deadline 4th December 2014).

- Maintain payment requirements for third-country students, but the Nordic Council of Ministers grants a certain number of scholarships to third-country students enrolled on a Nordic Master Programme.

This system would benefit HE institutions that charge tuition fees, and should therefore be discussed carefully by all of the Nordic countries.

- Maintain the current payment requirement for third-country students in fee-charging countries, and offer scholarships based on a decision by the HE institution, as per the existing system, in which no special priority is given to third-country students enrolled on a Nordic Master Programme.

Information about legislation in the Nordic countries

The Nordic legislation concerning higher education is comprehensive. Several national provisions also apply to the development of a joint curriculum leading to a joint degree. However, legislation is not static, and new provisions and amendments are common. It is therefore difficult for an institution to be updated. The ad hoc group suggests that the Nordic Council of Ministers considers the options for strengthening the information and management of web pages concerning the Nordic Master Programme.

Other suggestions

In order to enhance the Nordic Master Programme – including ensuring its visibility and general relevance, and recruiting more broadly among non-Nordic and non-European students – the ad hoc group proposes that:

- the Nordic Council of Ministers, as well as the higher educational institutions, should focus more on the branding of the programme
- the Nordic Master Programme should be viewed in the context of capacity-building (broader programmes, smaller institutions, interesting study programmes for students, etc.)
- the Nordic Council of Ministers' funding area should be enlarged to include not only the planning of a programme, but also its implementation (e.g. financing of interim meetings between partner institutions, branding, summer schools, mobility support)
- the Nordic Master Programme should promote the possibilities for internships at companies, in order to enhance employability
- the allocation of student residence permits (for third-country students) should be granted for the country of admission (home institution) for the entire study period. This enables students to stay

in the home institution during the application period for a study permit at the host institution, if they are not covered by another permit for a longer or shorter period.

1. Introduction

Since 2007, the Nordic Council of Ministers has published five calls for proposals to develop Nordic Master Programmes: “The objective is for a minimum of three higher education institutions to co-operate on the development of joint, high-quality Nordic Master Programmes (NMPs) that will be attractive to both Nordic and non-Nordic students.”⁴ To date, 23 projects have been funded.

However, there is a clear need for a study on issues relating to obstacles to co-operation in the development and implementation of joint degree programmes between Nordic higher education institutions.

At its meeting on 12th June 2013, the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Education (EK-U) appointed an ad hoc group to examine legal and administrative obstacles to developing and delivering joint master’s programmes.

EK-U approved the mandate for the ad hoc group for legal and administrative obstacles to Nordic Master Programmes with the following remarks, cf. item 39/13 in the minutes, which the Secretariat for the Nordic Council of Ministers was instructed to include in the mandate:

- The reporting should be described in more detail.
- The group should look into the subject-relevant legal regulations and identify potential areas of change to the EK-U.
- The group’s work should take into account experiences from all of the Nordic countries, as well as the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland.
- EK-U asked the secretariat to put together the ad hoc group for legal and administrative obstacles to Nordic Master Programmes.

⁴ Call for proposals, Nordic Master Programme 2013.

On 12th August 2013, the mandate was made more detailed and explicit, specifying that the ad hoc group should work toward:

- making practical recommendations on how best to solve the obstacles in the short term, within the framework of existing national legislation
- analysing, identifying and, if necessary, proposing long-term actions to remove potential obstacles to joint/double degrees and recognition (e.g. changes to national legislation).

It was pointed out that there have been a number of problems concerning the definitions of joint/double degrees, which have in turn presented challenges to institutions, e.g. in connection with claims for external accreditation. It was also specifically mentioned that there is a “need for concrete recommendations and guidelines for the future Nordic Master Programme as from 2015. These recommendations will become part of the quality-assurance framework within the NMP.”

1.1 The ad hoc group

The ad hoc group comprised:⁵

- Inger Bruun, chefkonsulent, Uddannelses- og Forskningsministeriet, Styrelsen for Videregående Uddannelser (danske ENIC NARIC), Danmark.
- Etelka Tamminen Dahl, seniorrådgiver, Universitetet i Bergen, Norge, leader of the group.
- Kirsi Hiltunen, Nationella centret för utbildningsutvärdering (till 30.4.2014 Rådet för utvärdering av högskolorna), Finland.
- Þórður Kristinsson, sviðsstjóri kennslusviðs, Háskóla Íslands, Island.
- Janerik Lundquist, universitetslektor, Linköpings universitet, Sverige.
- Frank Moe, seniorrådgiver, Senter for internasjonalisering av utdanning, the secretary for the group.

⁵ The information is given in the local languages.

- Kai Koivumäki, seniorrådgivare, Nordiska Ministerrådet, participated in four meetings, while project leader Anniina Pirttimaa, Nordiska Ministerrådet participated in the first and second meeting.

The members of the group were invited as experts in the field of joint degrees, not as representatives of the institutions. In this report and the attachments, the ad hoc group presents its recommendations on best practice in relation to joint degrees and the future Nordic Master Programme. The report reflects only the points of view of the authors themselves, not their institutions.

Meetings

- Copenhagen, 19th August 2013.
- Helsinki, 9th October 2013.
- Copenhagen, 10th December 2013.
- Stockholm, 17th February 2014.
- Reykjavik, 12th–13th May 2014.
- Oslo, 15th–16th September 2014.

1.1.1 Legal and Administrative Challenges in the Nordic Master Programme, seminar in Helsinki, 9th–10th October 2014

It is important to mention that each group member discussed the issues in this report with various stakeholders. The group is very thankful for all of this support.

Meetings were held in all of the Nordic countries. The ad hoc group therefore had the opportunity to visit and meet local authorities and stakeholders:

- Denmark: representatives of the Danish Agency for Higher Education and the Technical University of Denmark.
- Finland: representatives of the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council, the Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) and the University of Helsinki.
- Sweden: representatives of the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR) and the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ).
- Iceland: representatives of Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and the University of Iceland.

- Norway: representatives of the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT).

Representatives of these institutions have presented various issues relevant to the ad hoc group's study. See also attached *Midtveisrapport* (in Norwegian).

Members of the group have followed the work of the new *ECTS Users' Guide*, which will be discussed during the Ministerial Conference and the Bologna Policy Forum in Yerevan in 2015.

Furthermore, the members are familiar with the draft report *Joint Degrees from A to Z: A Practical Guide*, of 5th September 2014, prepared by a consortium of six Erasmus Mundus National Structures,⁶ and the work of the "INTERUV – Joint Programmes – Facilitator for University Internationalisation" project, which ran from September 2012 to October 2014, by a consortium of 15 Erasmus Mundus National Structures.⁷

The work of the European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (ECA) concerning the accreditation and recognition of joint degrees⁸ has also been of great interest.

Last but not least, the group also drew inspiration from the international JOIMAN project's 2011 report *How to Manage Joint Study Programmes, Guidelines and Good Practices from the JOIMAN Network*,⁹ which was carried out by 15 European universities and financed by the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme.

1.2 The report

The aim of this report is to provide an overview of the legislation in relation to joint degrees in the Nordic countries. On the basis of this study, the ad hoc group recommends principles for the Nordic Master Programme (chapter 7). In addition, the ad hoc group has prepared separate thematic documents (overviews, suggestions for guidelines and agreements, and a template for a joint diploma, including the diploma supplement). These documents are attached as appendices to the present report.

⁶ <http://www.nuffic.nl/en/expertise/jdaz>

⁷ <http://www.interuv.eu/>

⁸ http://ecahe.eu/w/index.php/Portal:Joint_programmes

⁹ ISBN: 978-88-7395-616-7, Bononia University Press.

It should be noted that even though the ad hoc group's work is based on a wide range of materials and consultations, this report cannot be exhaustive with regard to all questions concerning joint degrees.

In order to make the report accessible to readers outside the Nordic countries, it is written in English. The ad hoc group has also chosen to use English translations of laws and regulations. However, these translations do not have official status, and are thus not authentic in a strict legal sense.

A Norwegian summary is also attached.

1.3 Educational co-operation and mutual recognition of degrees or parts of a degree

Educational co-operation between Nordic universities has existed for many years. As early as the 1960s, Nordic students in special fields of study participated in intensive summer courses that were developed for Nordic students and recognised by the co-operating universities.

However, this co-operation was previously limited to jointly developed courses, not degrees.

The free labour market, increased mobility and the increasing number of students, as well as deepening educational co-operation among the Nordic countries, necessitated discussions at the political level with regard to mutual recognition of academic degrees or parts of a degree. In 1971, the Nordic ministers signed the *Agreement on Cultural Co-operation*, which among other things, included such topics as mutual recognition of degrees, examinations and partial examinations. In 1975, the Nordic ministers signed the *Sigtuna Agreement* concerning the *Decision on the validity of examinations*. The agreement was in force until 2004, when the ministers agreed to the new *Reykjavik Declaration*. The aim of the declaration is to act as an instrument for deeper co-operation with regard to mutual recognition in higher education in the Nordic Region. It is based on the 1997 *Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region of the Council of Europe and UNESCO (the Lisbon Recognition Convention)*.

The most significant aspect of the Nordic Declaration is that the Nordic Ministers of Education and Research commit themselves to ensuring the full recognition of higher education qualifications awarded by Nordic higher education institutions.

According to the current strategy for Nordic co-operation in education and research, the Nordic countries and the autonomous areas should "Re-

move obstacles to freedom of movement for students, researchers and knowledge in the Nordic Region.”¹¹ One goal of the present report is to identify possible obstacles for structural co-operation between universities and other higher education institutions and present solutions relevant to Nordic Master Programmes.

¹¹ <http://www.norden.org/en/about-nordic-co-operation/areas-of-co-operation/research/nordic-co-operation-on-research>

2. Joint degree/joint programme

2.1 The core of a joint degree – one jointly developed programme of study

All international documents concerning co-operation on joint degrees conclude that a joint degree, regardless of how it is documented, is based on *a jointly developed programme of study*. In other words, at the core of the joint degree is *one programme*. An agreement between partners forms the basis for co-operation on the development and management of a specific joint degree programme.

2.2 Documentation of the joint degree/joint programme

The form of documentation for a completed joint degree programme is the primary factor in determining which term should be used for the degree(s). The documentation differs between programmes, depending on national legislation and institutional practices.

In 2004, the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (the Lisbon Recognition Convention) recommended the following alternatives:¹²

A joint degree may be issued as:

- a joint diploma in addition to one or more national diplomas
- a joint diploma issued by institutions offering the study programme in question, without being accompanied by any national diploma

¹² Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees adopted by the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, 9th June 2004 (prepared by ENIC/NARICs).

- one or more national diplomas issued officially as the only attestation of the joint qualification in question.

However, the recommendations concerning joint degrees in the Lisbon Recognition Convention (2004) are broad and not entirely up to date.

It is interesting to compare the definitions above with the definitions:

- in the *Erasmus+ Programme Guide*¹³ (page 93), published by the European Commission
- in the *European Area of Recognition Manual: Practical guidelines for fair recognition of qualifications*,¹⁴ Nuffic, the Netherlands, 2012.

As defined by the European Commission (Erasmus+), the term “joint degree” includes these two options:

The successful completion of the joint master programme must lead to the awarding of either a joint degree (i.e. one single diploma issued on behalf of at least two higher education institutions from different Programme Countries and fully recognised in these countries) or multiple degrees (i.e. at least two diplomas issued by two higher education institutions from different Programme Countries and fully recognised in these countries).

The crucial difference between the recommendations of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and those of ERASMUS+ is that the latter does not accept *one* national diploma as *the only attestation of the joint qualification*, cf. the Lisbon Recognition Convention, subsection c.

The definition in the *European Area of Recognition Manual: Practical guidelines for fair recognition of qualifications* (2012) is even more strict (page 66):

A joint degree is a qualification awarded by the higher education institutions involved in the joint programme, attesting to the successful completion of the joint programme. It is a single document signed by the competent authorities (rectors, vice-chancellors) of the institutions involved in the joint programme, and it replaces the separate (institutional/national) qualifications.

¹³ http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf
Version 1 (2015): 01/10/2014.

¹⁴ http://www.eurorecognition.eu/manual/ear_manual_v_1.0.pdf

However, this definition is not included in *The Recognition Manual for Higher Education Institutions*, published in 2014, which consists of practical guidelines for credential evaluators and admission officers with regard to the fair and flexible recognition of foreign degrees and studies abroad.¹⁵ The two EAR manuals mentioned above also approve other forms of documentation of jointly developed programmes, cf. page 117 in *The Recognition Manual for Higher Education Institutions* (2014):

A joint programme is a programme offered jointly by several higher education institutions. It does not necessarily lead to a joint degree; this is only one of the possible awards. After the completion of a joint programme the graduate may be awarded: a single national qualification, a double/multiple qualification and/or a joint qualification.

The European Area of Recognition Manual: Practical guidelines for fair recognition of qualifications (2012) reserves the term “joint degree” for a jointly developed programme leading to the issuing of *one single document*, as does ECA (the European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education):¹⁶

Joint degree: A single document awarded by HEIs offering the joint programme, nationally acknowledged as the recognised award of the joint programme.

ECA defines the qualification “multiple degree” as follows:

Multiple degree: Separate degrees awarded by HEIs offering the joint programme, attesting to the successful completion of this programme.

According to ECA, a double degree is a specific type of multiple degree.¹⁷

For most countries, the term *joint degree* includes the option of documenting a completed programme by one single document or by two or more documents. The crucial point is that the programme is jointly developed based on a comprehensive agreement concerning the running of the programme.

As such, the awarding of a degree for a joint programme may either be a joint degree, multiple degrees or a national degree. However, the ad hoc

¹⁵ <http://www.eurorecognition.eu/Manual/EAR%20HEI.pdf>

¹⁶ http://ecahe.eu/w/index.php/Guidelines_for_Good_Practice_for_Awarding_Joint_Degrees#The_Joint_Degree

¹⁷ Other stakeholders often use the term *double degree(s)* in a different sense, most often with a definition similar to ECA’s definition of a *dual degree*, i.e. “Two degrees awarded by HEIs individually, attesting to successful completion of two separate curricula”.

group points to the recommendations regarding the award of degrees for the Nordic Master Programme (cf. the summary and chapter 7).

2.3 The Bologna Process and joint degrees

Joint degree collaboration has been mentioned in ministerial communiqués related to the Bologna Process since 2003.

The European Higher Education Area in 2012: Bologna Process Implementation, p. 185¹⁸ describes the existing European *joint degrees* in the following way, based on the definition in Tauch and Rauhvargers' 2002 report on European master's degrees and joint degrees.

Joint degrees are normally awarded after study programmes that correspond to all – or at least some – of the following characteristics:

- *The programmes are developed jointly by several institutions*
- *Students from each participating institution study part of the programme at other institutions*
- *The students' stays at the participating institutions are of comparable length*
- *Periods of study and exams passed at the partner institution(s) are recognised fully and automatically*
- *Professors of each participating institution also teach at the other institutions, work out the curriculum jointly and form joint commissions for admission and examinations*
- *After completion of the full programme, the student either obtains the national degrees of each participating institution or a degree (in fact, usually an unofficial "certificate" or "diploma") awarded jointly by them.*

(Tauch & Rauhvargers, 2002, p.29)

¹⁸ [http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/\(1\)/Bologna%20Process%20Implementation%20Report.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/(1)/Bologna%20Process%20Implementation%20Report.pdf)

Degree co-operation is again emphasised in the Bucharest Communiqué, 2012:¹⁹

We encourage higher education institutions to further develop joint programmes and degrees as part of a wider EHEA approach. We will examine national rules and practices relating to joint programmes and degrees as a way to dismantle obstacles to co-operation and mobility embedded in national contexts.

As far as the ad hoc group is aware, there is no ongoing study of national rules under the auspices of the Bologna process.

¹⁹ [http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/\(1\)/Bucharest%20Communique%202012\(1\).pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/(1)/Bucharest%20Communique%202012(1).pdf)

3. The right of Nordic higher education institutions to award a joint degree

With the exception of Danish higher artistic education institutions, all institutions mentioned in Appendix 3 are authorised to award degrees in co-operation with foreign institutions.

*Denmark:*²⁰ The Danish Consolidation Act on Universities no. 960 of 14th August 2014, section 3a (Bekendtgørelse af lov om universiteter):

In collaboration with one or more foreign universities, the university may offer all or parts of programmes pursuant to section 3 above. The individual parts of the programmes are taken at the university and at one or more of the foreign universities. The parts taken at the foreign universities may be optional or compulsory [...].

Finland: The Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004, section 3(2) (Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista/Statsrådets förordning om universitetsexamina), as amended by Decree 1039/2013:

Education leading to a higher education degree can be organised jointly as international co-operation. Studies leading to a higher education degree or degrees can also be organised jointly in co-operation between one or more Finnish or foreign universities.

Iceland: Higher Education Institutions Act no. 63/2006, chapter III, article 9 (Lög um háskóla nr. 63/2006):

Higher Education Institutions are authorised to grant degrees according to Article 7 in co-operation with other Higher Education Institutions on a national and international basis.

²⁰ For the regulation in Denmark concerning the non-university sector and the higher artistic education institutions, consult Appendix 1 of the report. If a bill presented by the Danish Minister of Culture in June 2014 is passed by the Danish Parliament in winter 2014, the higher artistic education institutions within the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture can participate in international study programme co-operation.

Norway: Regulations concerning quality assurance and quality development in higher education and tertiary vocational education, chapter 4, § 4-1,1 (Forskrift om kvalitetssikring og kvalitetsutvikling i høyere utdanning og fagskoleutdanning, FOR-2010-02-01-96):

Universities and university colleges may award degrees and professional diplomas in collaboration with other Norwegian or foreign institutions (joint degrees).

Sweden: The Higher Education Act 1992:1434, chapter 1, section 17 (Högskolelag 1992:1434, kapitel 1, paragraf 17):

A higher education institution listed in the appendix to this Act may award a joint degree together with [...] a higher education institution outside Sweden that is not a physical individual.

3.1 Definition of a joint degree in Nordic legislation

The Swedish Higher Education Act 1992:1434, chapter 1, section 17 (Högskolelag 1992:1434, kapitel 1, paragraf 17) sets out a definition of a joint degree:

The term joint degree refers to a qualification that may be awarded by the higher education institution that have jointly organised courses and programmes that can lead to the award of the qualification.

In the Danish Ministerial Order on the International Education Activities of Universities no. 1389 of 15th December 2011, section 27, subsection 1 (Bekendtgørelse om universiteternes internationale uddannelsesforløb), a joint degree is defined in legal terms:

A diploma issued by one or more co-operating universities may be endorsed, signed or the like by the university, making it appear as a joint document ("fællesgrad"/joint degree), if the document is also made enforceable under foreign law.

The other Nordic countries do not define this term in their formal legislation, but definitions can be found in other documents from authorities and agencies, and in the institutions' internal regulations.

In Finland, the National Board of Education (ENIC/NARIC), in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture, has prepared for Finnish higher education institutions and CIMO the memo *Design and implementation of joint/double degrees*. According to this memo, the Min-

istry of Education and Culture's 2004 recommendations include the following definition:

a "joint degree" refers to a degree programme jointly developed and provided by more than one higher education institution, which confers one or more degree certificates.

The point that the programme is jointly developed and founded on a comprehensive agreement between the co-operating partners applies in all of the Nordic countries.

3.2 The right to award a degree

The right to award a degree differs slightly between the Nordic countries. In all of the Nordic countries, universities have the power to award degrees up to the highest level – the doctoral degree. The length of the programme and the number of ECTS credits per programme is regulated by the legislation of each country. Other provisions apply to other higher education institutions. The following is a short presentation of how the systems differ with regard to the right to award a degree.

The *Danish* Ministry of Higher Education and Science prequalifies all new programmes offered by Danish universities and other higher education institutions, including higher artistic education institutions under the Ministry. A prequalification is an assessment of whether the new programme meets the criteria laid down in the socio-economic and education policies, and otherwise meets the legal requirements. This prequalification process applies also to new joint programmes. The assessment of applications for prequalification is carried out by the Council on Prequalification, appointed by the Minister of Higher Education and Science. The minister approves new programmes based on an assessment of the prequalification.

Some higher artistic educational institutions are regulated by the Ministry of Culture, others by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science.

The Consolidation Act on Higher Artistic Education Institutions from 2013 (*Lov om videregående kunstneriske uddannelsesinstitutioner*)²¹ empowers ministers to decide which programmes the institutions may

²¹ If a bill presented by the Danish Minister of Culture in June 2014 is passed by the Danish Parliament in winter 2014, higher artistic education institutions within the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture will be regulated by their own act.

offer. All new programmes under the regulation of higher artistic education institutions also have to be prequalified.

In *Finland*, the Ministry of Education and Culture is involved in distributing educational responsibilities among the universities in the following way: provisions pertaining to the status of university degrees in the system of higher education degrees shall be enacted by government decree. Provisions pertaining to a more explicit distribution of educational responsibilities among the universities, to the fields and programmes of specialisation offered at each university, shall be enacted by the Ministry of Education and Culture in co-operation with the university.

Universities in *Iceland* award degrees within fields or sub-categories within a field accredited by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

According to the Higher Education Institution Act no. 63/2006, chapter III, article 8/Lög um háskóla nr. 63/2006, higher education institutions shall, in connection with preparing and organising new study programmes, publish information on how the study programmes meet the requirements and demands stated in the qualification framework for higher education and degrees.

The *Norwegian Universities and Colleges Act* (2005) defines three categories of institutions: *universities*, *specialised institutions* and *university colleges*. Universities are self-accrediting at all levels. Specialised institutions and university colleges are also self-accrediting at all levels in fields in which they are legally entitled to award doctoral degrees (i.e. their fields of specialisation). In fields in which these institutions do not have the right to award doctorates, they must apply to the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) for programme accreditation. However, even if a specialised institution or a university college intends to offer parts of a programme that have already been accredited by NOKUT, the courses in the programme leading to a joint degree must be reaccruited. The reason for this is that the descriptions of learning outcomes at programme level are new, and all parts must be in line with the programme description level.

In *Sweden*, the universities have a general degree-awarding power, but otherwise the system differs from the Norwegian one. The state university colleges, the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet) and the Swedish National Defence College (Försvarshögskolan) must all apply to the Swedish Higher Education Authority for permission to award a master's degree within a specified main field of study. Having received this permission, they do not need to apply for accreditation for each individual study programme.

3.3 The diploma(s)

The higher education institutions listed in Appendix 3 are entitled to issue a joint diploma, i.e. documentation in a single document, with one exception – the Danish higher artistic education institutions (see Appendix 1).²²

A joint degree may be documented by a single document (a joint diploma) awarded by the HEIs offering the joint programme, which is nationally acknowledged as documentation for the joint programme – in other words, the document has legal status in the diploma-issuing countries.

However, the legal status of a joint diploma should be carefully studied by professionals within Nordic legislation. The ad hoc group recommends that this should be sent to the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Legislative Affairs (EK-A) for review.

Note that in Finland, the Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004, section 26 (Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista/ Statsrådets förordning om universitetsexamina), as amended by Decree 1039/2013, prescribes the following:

For a degree completed in a language other than Finnish or Swedish in accordance with the Government Decree on University Degrees, section 11(2), a Finnish- or Swedish-language degree certificate shall also be awarded, accompanied by a Finnish or Swedish degree title included in the appendix thereto, as well as by the English degree title mentioned therein.

The Norwegian legislation does not refer to documentation except in the Act relating to universities and university colleges, chapter 3, sections 3–11 (Lov om universiteter og høyskoler (universitets- og høyskoleloven), LOV–2005–04–01–15):

(1) The institution shall issue a diploma for a completed course. At the same time, a diploma supplement shall be issued. NOKUT may issue guidelines for the content of the diploma supplement. [...]

(4) It shall be indicated on the diploma if the education has been provided in co-operation with other institutions, cf. section 3–2, first paragraph [...].

²² If a bill presented by the Danish Minister of Culture in June 2014 is passed by the Danish Parliament in winter 2014, the higher artistic education institutions within the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture can participate in study programme co-operation.

The ad hoc group has prepared and agreed on a *template* for a joint diploma and diploma supplement (Appendix 8), which are recommended for use by partners within Nordic Master Programmes. The content of the suggested template for a joint diploma is based on the requirements stipulated in the Nordic countries' legislation, and includes additional information on the Nordic Master Programme. The diploma supplement follows the international template. Examples of how to fill in the international template are as per the national recommendations.

In order to be in line with the new ERASMUS+ programme, the ad hoc group recommends that multiple degree (two or more) diplomas might be issued instead of a joint diploma. The content of the diploma is discussed in chapter 7.

In exceptional cases, one national degree diploma may be accepted as documentation for a joint programme.²³

3.4 Name of the programme and name(s) of the qualification

Usually, partners agree on the name of the programme during the initial phase of the co-operation. The partners are free to choose the name of the programme, but some institutions may have in place rules regarding the naming of programmes. However, the higher education institutions should be aware that the joint programme name must be the same at all participating institutions.

It would be very confusing both for higher education institutions and for students if the programme name varied from institution to institution. The name normally indicates the subject of the study programme. It is important that the jointly chosen programme name is exactly the same in the partners' course catalogues and in other sources of information about the programme.

However, *the name(s) of the degree(s)* that will be awarded when the student has fulfilled the requirements are subject to the relevant regulations and rules in each country/institution. The first part of the degree name may, even in English, differ in the Nordic countries (*Master of Phi-*

²³ This applies to Danish artistic higher education institutions. If a bill presented by the Danish Minister of culture in June 2014 is passed by the Danish Parliament in winter 2014, the higher artistic education institutions within the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture can participate in international study programme co-operation.

losophy in/Master of Arts in...). In other words, a joint diploma must clearly show both the name of the programme and the name(s) of the degree(s).

If the partners decide to document the successfully completed programme on two (or more) diplomas, it is crucial that the awarding institutions make clear on the documents which other diplomas are issued for the same programme.

Finland: Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004, section 26 (Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista/Statsrådets förordning om universitetsexamina), as amended by Decree 1039/2013, section 26(4) of the same decree:

If the studies leading to the degree have been organised in accordance with section 3(2) as leading to one or more university degrees, organised jointly by one or more Finnish or foreign universities, the degree certificate shall contain information on all the degrees awarded on the basis of the same studies, the degree certificates awarded with reference to the degrees completed and the universities awarding the degrees.

Norway: Act relating to universities and university colleges, chapter 3, sections 3–11, 4 (Lov universiteter og høyskoler (universitets- og høyskoleloven), LOV-2005-04-01-15):

It shall be indicated on the diploma if the education has been provided in co-operation with other institutions, cf. section 3–2, first paragraph.

Sweden: The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), chapter 6, section 10 (Högskoleförordning (1933:100), kapitel 6, paragraf 10):

In the certificate the higher education institution shall indicate [...]

3. if the qualification forms part of a joint degree as laid down in Section 17 of Chapter 1 of the Higher Education Act (1992:1434).

4. Common principles for higher education in Europe – the Bologna Process

All five countries have implemented the action lines within the Bologna Process.²⁴ The degree structure is divided into three cycles (levels). The first cycle corresponds to the lower degree, the second cycle corresponds to a higher degree, and the third cycle corresponds to the doctoral degree. Most second-cycle studies in all five countries are in English called master's programmes, and the degree confers the title Master – however, under Danish legislation, the titles are normally specified as “Master of Arts (MA)” or “Master of Science (MSc)”,²⁵ in order to distinguish them from the Danish master's programme in adult higher education. In Norway, the English term is also used in the Norwegian language, and the title *Master* is protected by law.

All five countries use the ECTS credit system as a measure of student workload: one successfully completed academic year is worth 60 ECTS credits (see chapter 7). Two years' full-time study (120 ECTS credits) is by far the most common form of master's programme in the European countries, although other varieties exist.²⁶ Two-year master's programmes are the most common at Nordic universities and at other higher education institutions offering master's degrees.

In all five countries, the issuing of a diploma supplement is mandated by law. The legislation stipulates that the studies offered must be quality-assured.

²⁴ The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999, Joint declaration of the European Ministers of Education, 1999: http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/about/BOLOGNA_DECLARATION1.pdf

²⁵ Except Master of Theology and Master of Laws.

²⁶ The stocktaking report: The European Higher Education Area in 2012, Bologna Process Implementation Report: [http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/\(1\)/Bologna%20Process%20Implementation%20Report.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/(1)/Bologna%20Process%20Implementation%20Report.pdf)

5. Nordic higher education institutions not participating in the Nordic Master Programme

In 2007, the Nordic Council of Ministers decided that the Nordic Master Programme should be a two-year, high-quality study, comprising 120 ECTS credits. There is no reason to propose any change to this, given that most academic second-cycle programmes in the Nordic countries are two-year programmes. In addition, one of the crucial requirements is that the education is research-based and includes a research project (a master's thesis).

Based on these fundamental requirements, there are some programmes and institutions that fall outside the scope of the Nordic Master Programme.

Even though the degree structure with three cycles is the same in all of the Nordic countries, the normative duration of studies may vary within the same academic field and within the same cycle. The Finnish *Master of Art in Music/musiikin maisterin tutkinto/musikmagisterexamen*, *Master of Science in Psychology/psykologian maisterin tutkinto/psykologie magisterexamen* and *Licentiate of Dentistry/hammaslääketieteen lisensiaatti/odontologie licentiatexamen* each comprise 150 ECTS credits and 2½ years of full-time study (Government Decree on University Degrees, 794/2004, section 13 (Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista/Statsrådets förordning om universitetsexamina), as amended by Decree 1039/2013).²⁷

The Danish *Master of Fine Arts* at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts comprises 180 ECTS credits and three years of full-time study (Gov-

²⁷ The degrees *Licentiate of Veterinary Medicine* and *Licentiate of Medicine* comprise 180 ECTS credits, and thus fall outside of the scope of this study.

ernment Decree on programmes at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, 10/06/2014).

The Finnish polytechnics/Ammattikorkeakoulu/Yrkeshögskola offer research-based education, but the extent of polytechnic bachelor degree is generally 210–240 ECTS credits (3.5–4 years of full-time study), while the extent of a polytechnic master's degree is 60–90 ECTS credits (1.5–2 years of full-time study).

The Finnish Polytechnics Act 351/2003 (Ammattikorkeakoululaki/Yrkeshögskolelag), as amended by 411/2005, states that:

[...] The degree programmes leading to second-cycle polytechnic degrees and their syllabi shall have an extent of no less than one academic year and no more than one-and-a-half years of full-time study.

These structures make co-operation on a master's degree with other Nordic countries impossible, due to the basic requirement that admission criteria and curricula should be the same for all students registered on the same programme. It is also important to underline that the Finnish polytechnics are not entitled to award second-cycle degrees that require studies with an extent of 120 ECTS credits. Two or more diplomas (multiple degrees) for the same programme should not indicate a different programme length.

The Icelandic system includes, in addition to the academic research-based master's degree of 120 ECTS credits, a non-research-based master's degree worth 90 ECTS credits. The requirement for an independent thesis determines the nature of the degree.

All five countries offer professional programmes within health, engineering and architecture.²⁸ These studies are often not split into lower and higher degrees, but have a nominal length of five years or more, and as such fall outside the purview of the Nordic Master Programmes.

²⁸ Often called long-term studies or integrated studies.

6. Expectations for Nordic education to be at a high international level

The aim of the Nordic Master Programme has been to fund the development of high-quality programmes.

Most of the university acts in the Nordic countries include one or more provisions stating that education and research must be conducted at the highest international level.

Denmark: The Danish (Consolidation) Act on Universities no. 960 of 14 August 2014, section 2 (Lov om universiteter):

The university is to conduct research and offer research-based education at the highest international level within its academic fields.

The Danish Consolidation Act on Higher Artistic Educational Institutions no. 1673 of 11th December 2013 (Lov om kunstneriske videregående uddannelsesinstitutioner) stipulates that the different higher education institutions have to conduct (artistic) research and offer education based on research, artistic research and practice, depending on the degrees offered.²⁹

Finland: Universities Act 558/2009, section 2(2) (Yliopistolaki/Universitetslag):

The universities must arrange their activities so as to assure a high international standard in research, education and teaching in conformity with ethical principles and good scientific practices.

²⁹ If a bill presented by the Danish Minister of Culture in June 2014 is passed by the Danish Parliament in winter 2014, the higher artistic education institutions within the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture will be regulated by their own act.

Norway: Act relating to universities and university colleges, part 1, chapter 1, section 1–1 (Lov om universiteter og høyskoler (universitets- og høyskoleloven), LOV–2005–04–01–15):

The purpose of this Act is to make provisions for universities and university colleges to provide higher education at a high international level [...].

Iceland and Sweden describe the international perspective differently.

Iceland: Higher Education Institution Act no. 63, 2006, chapter I, article 2 (Lög um háskóla nr 63.2006):

The Higher Education Institution shall aim at strengthening the infrastructure of Icelandic society and its position in an international context for the benefit of future generations. The Higher Education Institution is a centre of knowledge and a part of the international education and science community.

And chapter IV, article 11 on quality control of teaching and research:

The objectives of quality control of teaching and research in Higher Education Institutions are: [...]

e. To ensure the competitiveness of Higher Education Institutions at international level.

Sweden: The Higher Education Act (1992:1434), chapter 1, sections 4 and 5 (Högskolelag (1992:1434) kapitel 1, paragraph 4 och 5):

The operations of higher education institutions shall be arranged to ensure that high standards are attained in courses and study programmes and in research.

Furthermore, in their operations higher education institutions should promote understanding of other countries and of international circumstances.

7. Principles for the Nordic Master Programme

On the basis of the study of the legislation and good practice, the ad hoc group has agreed on a set of recommendations for a Nordic Master Programme.

The group recommends the following principles

The ad hoc group on administrative and legal obstacles (Ad hoc-grupp: Juridiska och administrativa hinder i Nordic Master) has examined the Nordic legislation and recommendations made by competent authorities concerning degree collaboration.

The group recommends that a Nordic Master Programme should fulfil the following requirements:

1. Three or more state-recognised Nordic higher education institutions, located in different Nordic countries, offering research-based education³⁰ at second-cycle level, establish an agreement with the aim of developing and running a high-quality Nordic Master Programme.
2. A Nordic Master Programme should generate Nordic added value and must include an innovative perspective.
3. A Nordic Master Programme must comply with current national regulations in order to ensure that the programme meets the requirements for a master's degree in the participating countries.
4. The development and implementation of the programme are based on an agreement signed by the legal representative of the co-operating institutions. The agreement describes the duties of each of the co-operating universities.
5. Students registered on the programme must be assured that they can complete the programme even if the co-operation is discontinued.

³⁰ Research is defined as including both scientific and artistic research.

6. The form of the documentation for a successfully completed degree is stated in the agreement.
7. The successful completion of the Nordic Master Programme must lead to the award of either a joint degree (i.e. one single diploma issued on behalf of at least two of the co-operating institutions and fully recognised in both countries) or multiple degrees (i.e. at least two diplomas issued by two of the co-operating institutions and fully recognised in these countries). In exceptional cases, it may be acceptable to issue a single national degree.³¹ The diplomas must clearly indicate that the education has been provided in co-operation with other institutions.
8. The parties jointly develop the programme description. Within the curriculum, the different courses provided by the parties follow the regulations for the courses given by each institution. ECTS credits are allocated based on learning outcomes and student workload.
9. Each party should contribute at least 30 ECTS credits to the joint curriculum.
10. The same requirements for admission, including any requirements for language proficiency, apply to all applicants to each study programme.
11. The extent of the study programme is 120 ECTS credits.
12. The same requirements for successful completion apply to all students registered on the programme.
13. An admitted student's home institution is the institution where he/she is admitted and normally registered in the first semester of the programme. The host institution is the institution where the student spends his/her mobility period, and where he/she is registered during that study period.
14. The curriculum must include a physical mobility period involving at least one host institution. It is recommended that successfully completed mobility period(s) will account for a total of at least 30 ECTS credits.

³¹ Danish higher artistic education institutions are an exception due to the Danish law concerning these institutions. If a bill presented by the Danish minister of culture in June 2014 is passed by the Danish Parliament in winter 2014, the higher artistic education institutions within the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture can participate in international study programme co-operation.

15. The curriculum must include a master's thesis³² of at least 30 ECTS credits.
16. The degree(s) is (are) awarded upon completion of the joint curriculum.

7.1 The recommendations and the legislation in each country

7.1.1 Recommendation 1

Three or more state-recognised Nordic higher education institutions, located in different Nordic countries, offering research-based education³³ at second-cycle level, establish an agreement with the aim of developing and running a Nordic Master Programme.

Since the Nordic Master Programme began, one of its funding criteria has been that the programme must be delivered *by a consortium consisting of at least three institutions from the Nordic countries (including autonomous areas)*. The ad hoc group has not found any reason to recommend changing this requirement.

Appendix 3 lists the names of the institutions currently able to participate in the establishment of a Nordic Master Programme.³⁴

The university legislation in all five countries requires that the education should be research-based.

Denmark: The Danish Consolidation Act on Universities no. 960 of 14 August 2014, section 2 (Lov om universiteter):

The university is to conduct research and offer research-based education at the highest international level within its academic fields.

The Danish Consolidation Act on Higher Artistic Education Institutions no. 1673 of 11th December 2013 (Lov om kunstneriske videregående uddannelsesinstitutioner) stipulates that the different higher education institutions have to conduct (artistic) research and offer education

³² Or, in the case of higher artistic education, a project based on artistic research.

³³ Research is defined as including both scientific and artistic research.

³⁴ The appendix to the Swedish Higher Education Act lists the institutions that may award a joint degree.

based on research, artistic research and practice, depending on the degrees offered.³⁵

Finland: The Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004, section 12(2) (Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista/ Statrådets förordning om universitetsexamina):

The education shall be based on scientific research or artistic activity and professional practices in the field.

Iceland: The Icelandic National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education no. 530/2011 (Viðmið um æðri menntun og prófgráður, nr. 530/2011) specifies a research-based master's degree:

Master's degree is defined as:

Qualification obtained at a higher education institution where the holder has completed 90–120 ECTS credits of an organised study programme at the second cycle of higher education. A master's degree includes a research project of at least 30 ECTS credits.

Norway: The Act relating to universities and university colleges, part 1, chapter 1, sections 1–3 (Lov om universiteter og høyskoler (universitets- og høyskoleloven)), LOV–2005–04–01–15):

Universities and university colleges shall promote the purpose of the Act by: providing higher education on the basis of the foremost within research, academic and artistic development work and empirical knowledge.

Sweden: The Higher Education Act (1992:1434), chapter 1, section 2 (Högskolelag (1992:1434) kapitel 1, paragraf 2):

As the accountable authority, the Government shall establish higher education institutions for the provision of:

1. courses and study programmes based on scholarship or artistic practice and on proven experience, and
2. research and artistic research as well as development work.

³⁵ If a bill presented by the Danish Minister of Culture in June 2014 is passed by the Danish Parliament in winter 2014, the higher artistic education institutions within the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture will be regulated by their own act.

7.1.2 Recommendation 2

A Nordic Master Programme should generate Nordic added value and must include an innovative perspective.

The Nordic Master Programme should strengthen the Nordic Higher Education Area. By offering high-quality joint master's programmes, Nordic institutions should be able to attract students from elsewhere in the world. Using each other's complementary strengths, co-operating institutions should be able to offer innovative and coherent programmes at a high level. It is of paramount importance to stress the expectation that a jointly developed Nordic Master Programme represents renewal and innovation, and is not just a programme with a curriculum consisting of separate, loosely related modules. It should be ensured that the joint programme provides a value greater than the sum of its parts.

It is also a requirement of a Nordic Master Programme that students must physically stay at a minimum of two universities. The aim is to ensure that students, in addition to gaining educational benefits, are familiar with Nordic society.

Nordic added value may also include the following:

- Branding the Nordic HE (the Nordic Area of Higher Education).
- Contributing to Nordic identity (e.g. cultural elements or fields of study such as clean tech, Nordic architecture, ecological production, Nordic literature, etc.).
- Relating Nordic HE to research and development in the Nordic labour market.
- A Nordic approach in learning.
- Sustainable programmes in small fields of study.
- Building capacity in highly specialised (demanding) fields.

7.1.3 Recommendation 3

A Nordic Master Programme must comply with current national regulations in order to ensure that the programme meets the requirements for a master's degree in the participating countries.

In terms of legislation, the five countries do not describe or treat international degree co-operation in exactly the same way. The ad hoc group considers useful the provision in the Danish Ministerial Order on the International Education Activities of Universities no. 1389 of 13th December 2011, section 5 (Bekendtgørelse om universiteternes internationale uddannelsesforløb):

When establishing full programmes or parts of programmes abroad, the university must ensure that the programme is not established in contravention of the legislation of the host country.

Moreover, the requirements in one country may be stricter than those in others. It is also important to be aware that, even if provisions do not follow directly from the sections of the relevant act concerning international degree co-operation, some national requirements must still be taken into account.

As such, these recommendations are based on national requirements that should be acceptable to all five countries. The recommendations do not require changes in the national provisions, although clarification may be required with regard to the legal status of a joint diploma (see above).

7.1.4 Recommendation 4

The development and implementation of the programme are based on an agreement signed by a legal representative of the co-operating institutions. The agreement describes the duties of each of the co-operating universities.

A written agreement as a foundation for the co-operation is an obvious requirement in all five countries, even if this provision may not always be found in the legislation. However, some of the countries have described in detail what must be agreed on, while others put it in more general terms. The ad hoc group has worked out a template for an agreement based on the national requirements (Appendix 7). Based on the five countries' requirements, the ad hoc group has also made a template for the programme description as an attachment to the agreement. The template for the programme description is in line with the *ECTS Users' Guide 2014* (draft version of 25th July 2014).³⁶

The agreement and the detailed requirements therein must be considered of primary importance. As such, the countries' provisions concerning the agreement are quoted here.

Denmark: The provisions are laid down in the Ministerial Order on the International Education Activities of Universities no. 1389 of 13th December 2011, section 6, subsections 1–3; section 8, subsection 1; and section 14, subsection 1 (Bekendtgørelse om universiteternes internationale uddannelsesforløb):

³⁶ Not yet published.

6. When the university offers full programmes or parts of programmes abroad with one or more co-operating universities, a co-operation agreement must be concluded between the participating Danish university/universities and the co-operating universities.

(2) The co-operation agreement must be concluded in accordance with the provisions of this ministerial order.

(3) The university must ensure that the individual student is enrolled in the programme either at the Danish university or abroad.

8. The following must be also be provided in co-operation agreements with foreign universities on full programmes and compulsory studies.

(1) The entire programme of studies for the programme, including a description of the quality of the programme and its relevance to the global labour market for use in quality assurance, cf. section 15.

(2) The admission requirements that applicants must fulfil to be enrolled in the programme, including requirements for the qualifying examination at upper secondary school or qualifying programmes at bachelor level.

(3) The guidelines for distribution of the number of enrolled students between the universities where the programme elements may be taken, including the academic criteria used as selection criteria in the event that not all applicants may be enrolled in the programme [...].

14. When concluding agreements on compulsory or optional studies abroad as part of programme with one or more co-operating universities, the university must ensure that students enrolled at the Danish university are not to pay any study expenses which the students would not be liable to pay under the provisions set out in the University Act or rules laid down under the University Act. In addition, the university must ensure reciprocity and economic balance in the exchange with the foreign universities, cf. section 4, subsection (5), of the Ministerial Order on the Funding and Audit, etc. of Universities.

Finland: The Finnish legislation does not stipulate a requirement for an agreement. However, the 2014 memo *Design and implementation of joint/double degrees* from the Finnish National Board of Education (ENIC/NARIC) includes the following recommendation:

According to the Ministry of Education Recommendation, the agreement must include at least information about the extent of the degree programme, student admission, the rights and status of the student, the award of degree certificates, the responsibilities of each institution and the funding of the programme. Additionally, the agreement may cover administration of financial transactions, a description of the joint management/steering group, questions relating to quality assurance, procedures concerning termination of the agreement (on what terms, to what timetable; how the rights of registered students are secured) and which country's legislation will be applied in case of disputes. There may also be several agreements for different purposes.

Iceland: The Icelandic legislation contains no provision concerning the elements that should be included in a joint programme agreement. However, the requirement for an agreement is implicit. With regard to regular student exchange, the University of Iceland specifies on its website that:

There must be an *agreement*³⁷ between your home university and the University of Iceland in your field of study.

Individual universities have their own rules. For example, the University of Iceland's Standards and Requirements for the Quality of Master's Programmes 2013 (Viðmið og kröfur um gæði meistaranáms við Háskóla Íslands, 2013) state the following:

Joint Master's Programmes. If a Master's programme is organised jointly with another university or other universities, a special agreement shall be entered into, and care shall be taken that the programme fulfils quality and programme requirements comparable to those at the University of Iceland, and that responsibility for the quality and organisation of the programme is clear. In making such agreements, the UI Division of Academic Affairs and the UI Graduate School shall be consulted.

Norway: Regulations concerning quality assurance and quality development in higher education and tertiary vocational education, chapter 4, sections 4–2 (Forskrift om kvalitetssikring og kvalitetsutvikling i høyere utdanning og fagskoleutdanning, FOR–2010–02–01–96):

§ 4–2. Demands applying to joint degrees – the institution's responsibility. Universities and colleges that offer joint degrees must enter into a formal agreement with collaborating institutions that regulates matters of responsibility between the parties, including the awarding of degrees and the text and title of the diploma.

The Norwegian Agency of Quality Assurance in Education: Regulations concerning supervision of the educational quality in higher education (Academic Supervision Regulations), chapter 7, sections 7–4 (Forskrift om tilsyn med utdanningskvaliteten i høyere utdanning (studietilsyns-forskriften), FOR–2013–02–28–237):

³⁷ <http://www.hi.is/adalvefur/samstarfsskolar>

It must be clearly defined which parts of the programme are the responsibility of each co-operating institution.

Sweden: The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), chapter 6, section 11b (Högskoleförordning (1993:100), kapitel 6, paragraph 11b):

In the agreement the higher education institution shall ensure that:

1. every component of the programme is arranged by one of the higher education institutions party to the educational co-operation, and
2. the components of the programme arranged by an institution other than the higher education institution itself shall also be based on an academic or artistic footing and on proven experience and shall be organised so that the programme maintains a high standard.

The agreement shall indicate clearly:

1. which component of the programme the higher education institution shall organise
2. which component of the programme another higher education institution shall organise
3. to which higher education institution or institutions organising components of the programme an applicant to the programme is to be admitted
4. that the higher education institution may admit applicants only to the component of the programme arranged by the higher education institution
5. when a student who has been admitted to a component of the programme by another higher education institution shall be considered to be a student pursuant to Section 11c
6. that students shall be able to transfer credits for a successfully completed component of a programme at another higher education institution to the programme at the higher education institution without special review
7. what qualification the programme can lead to at each of the higher education institutions
8. other conditions required for the organisation of the programme.

7.1.5 Recommendation 5

Students registered on the programme must be assured that they can complete the programme even if the co-operation is discontinued.

The Norwegian legislation includes a clear provision concerning the student's rights in the event that the co-operation is discontinued.

Regulations concerning quality assurance and quality development in higher education and tertiary vocational education, chapter 4, § 4-2 (4) (Forskrift om kvalitetssikring og kvalitetsutvikling i høyere utdanning og fagskoleutdanning, FOR-2010-02-01-96):

If joint degree collaboration arrangements come to an end, the institution must enter into agreement with another institution that can take academic responsibility for the student's completion of the programme and final exams, or implement other measures that make it possible for the students to complete the programme. Such measures shall be approved by NOKUT in cases where NOKUT was the original accrediting body for the provision in question, cf. § 4-1 (2).

The Danish Ministerial Order on the International Education Activities of Universities no. 1389 of 13th December 2011, section 21, subsection 2 (Bekendtgørelse om universiteternes internationale uddannelsesforløb), safeguards the rights of students enrolled on the programme at a Danish university to complete their studies at this university:

The university ensures that students enrolled in the programme at the Danish university may in special cases complete and finish all of their studies in Denmark.

7.1.6 Recommendation 6

The form of the documentation of a successfully completed degree is stated in the agreement.

The successful completion of the Nordic Master Programme must lead to the award of either a joint degree (i.e. one single diploma issued on behalf of at least two of the co-operating institutions and fully recognised in both countries) or multiple degrees (i.e. at least two diplomas issued by two of the co-operating institutions and fully recognised in these countries). In exceptional cases it may be acceptable to issue a

single national degree.³⁸ The diplomas must clearly indicate that the education has been provided in co-operation with other institutions.

One single document

The ad hoc group has studied several existing joint diplomas issued by European (including Nordic) institutions within higher education. The usual template is a diploma on *one paper*, signed by the designated authorities of the degree-awarding institutions. In addition to the name and date of birth of the degree-holder, the information is mostly limited to the names of the awarding institutions, the degree(s) and the programme, and sometimes the laws that apply to the degree. More detailed information is given in the attached diploma supplement, which follows an international template. The national legislation in all five Nordic countries states that the diploma must be followed by a diploma supplement filled in according to the international model.

Very few electronic student systems support joint diplomas. As such, a joint diploma will, in most cases, be created for a specific purpose. This is, of course, one of the reasons why institutions prefer a single paper. But does it give enough information? And given that it is not an official document, is the diploma supplement internationally recognised?

The ad hoc group has discussed the issuing of a qualification in one document. The ad hoc group is fully aware that Nordic institutions have different traditions and rules concerning the diploma, with regard to both content and layout. However, the ad hoc group is also aware that particular institutions, at the start of a co-operation, ask for templates in order to establish a model for a joint diploma. A template for a joint diploma can be found in Appendix 8 to this report. The aim of this template is to ensure that the diploma is comprehensive enough to avoid the need for additional information. This especially applies in connection with recognition.

What should be the content?

The countries' national legislation contains no specific provisions concerning the content of (a) joint degree diploma(s), except that Finland, Norway and Sweden require the diploma(s) to indicate, where applicable, that the degree is a joint degree.

³⁸ Danish higher artistic education institutions are exceptions, due to the Danish law concerning these institutions (see Appendix 1). If a bill presented by the Danish minister of culture in June 2014 is passed by the Danish Parliament in winter 2014, the higher artistic education institutions within the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture can participate in international study programme co-operation.

The content of a diploma is of the highest importance. What is of interest to the readers? What do readers need to know? Bearing in mind that the diploma is an official credential, one that will be studied closely by employers and recognition authorities, the ad hoc group has drawn up a model for an informative joint diploma (one document) – see Appendix 8. Essentially, the model consists of all of the elements that must be included in the national diplomas. In order to avoid a need for additional information (e.g. for recognition purposes), the template, together with the diploma supplement, should give as much information as possible on the qualification, the programme and the degree-holder's performance.

The ad hoc group suggests that the template consists of a set of transcripts of records from institutions where the candidate has studied, the content of the programme and the candidate's results. The same set will, of course, be used in the diploma supplement.

The content of the diploma – national provisions

Denmark: Ministerial Order on the International Education Activities of Universities no. 1389 of 13th December 2011, section 25, subsections 1, 2, and 4 (Bekendtgørelse om universiteternes internationale uddannelsesforløb):

25. [...] The university is responsible for ensuring that a diploma is issued to students enrolled in the programme at the Danish university. The university must ensure that the students receive a diploma which is recognised in the countries in which the part of the programme were taken.

(2) [...] The university must ensure that each grade awarded is accompanied on the diplomas by the letter on the ECTS scale which corresponds to the grade in question. A description of the grading scale used must be enclosed with the diplomas [...].

(4) The diploma must show which programme elements were completed at the Danish university and which were completed at one or more co-operating universities abroad.

Finland: Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004 (Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista/Statsrådets förordning om universitetsexamina), as amended by Decree 1039/2013:

Section 26 – Diplomas

The university shall issue to the student a diploma on the completion of a lower or higher university degree, which must indicate:

- the name of the degree and the field of education;
- the major subject or a corresponding entity or the degree programme;
- possible specialisation included in the degree and the speciality;
- the main content of the degree; and
- the language proficiency demonstrated by the student. The recording of the language proficiency shall take account of section 19 of the Government Decree on the Demonstration of Proficiency in the Finnish and Swedish Languages in Civil Service (481/2003).

For a degree completed in a language other than Finnish or Swedish, in accordance with the Government Decree on University Degrees, section 11(2), a Finnish- or Swedish-language degree certificate shall also be awarded, accompanied by a Finnish or Swedish degree title included in the Appendix thereto, as well as by the English degree title mentioned therein.

If the studies leading to the degree have been organised in accordance with section 3(2) as leading to one or more university degrees, organised jointly by one or more Finnish or foreign universities, the degree certificate shall contain information on all the degrees awarded on the basis of the same studies, the degree certificates awarded with reference to the degrees completed and the universities awarding the degrees.

The university shall issue a diploma supplement intended for international use to a person who has completed a degree or studies at the university. The diploma supplement shall provide sufficient information about the university and about the studies or study attainments recorded in the diploma or certificate, and about their level and status in the education system.

Iceland: Higher Education Institution Act no. 63, 2006, chapter III, article 6 (Lög um háskóla nr. 63/2006):

Study at a Higher Education Institution shall conclude with a degree or other final diploma, which is awarded when a student has successfully completed examinations in all courses and satisfactorily completed all assigned projects. On graduation, students shall receive a diploma supplement.

Norway: The Norwegian legislation includes quite a few provisions concerning the content of the diplomas, e.g. Act relating to universities and university colleges, chapter 3, section 3–11 (Lov om universiteter og høyskoler (universitets- og høyskoleloven), LOV–2005–04–01–15):

(1) The institution shall issue a diploma for a completed course. At the same time, a diploma supplement shall be issued. NOKUT may issue guidelines for the content of the diploma supplement. [...]

(4) It shall be indicated on the diploma if the education has been provided in co-operation with other institutions, cf. section 3–2, first paragraph [...].

However, the higher education institutions have expressed a wish to harmonise both the content and the layout of the diplomas. Thus, the Norwegian diplomas follow a template recommended by the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions in 2013. In addition to the name of the programme and the qualification, the Norwegian diplomas comprise information about the programme and the results achieved.

Sweden: The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), chapter 6, sections 10 and 11 (Högskoleförordning (1993:100) kapitel 6, paragraph 10 och 11):

In the certificate the higher education institution shall indicate:

1. the title of the qualification
2. the cycle in which it was awarded
3. if the qualification forms part of a joint degree as laid down in Section 17 of Chapter 1 of the Higher Education Act (1992:1434)
4. the first and second-cycle courses taken for award of the qualification, and
5. at which higher education institution the courses laid down in item 4 or corresponding third-cycle courses and programmes have been completed.

Continued

A translation of the title of the qualification to one or several languages may be included in the certificate.

A certificate shall be accompanied by:

1. a diploma supplement that describes the study programme and its place in the educational system [...] The Swedish Council for Higher Education may issue more detailed specifications of the contents of a diploma supplement as laid down in item 1 above.

If a certificate is awarded for a study programme undertaken at more than one higher education institution, it shall be awarded by the institution at which it was completed by the student. This does not apply, however, if the higher education institutions involved have reached some other agreement or the higher education institutions shall jointly issue a joint degree pursuant to Section 17 of Chapter 1 of the Higher Education Act (1992:1434).

The ad hoc group suggests that the template includes a set of transcripts of records from the institutions where the candidate has studied, the content of the programme and the candidate's results. The same set will, of course, be used in the diploma supplement.

7.1.7 Recommendation 7

The parties jointly develop the programme description. Within the curriculum the different courses provided by the parties follow the regulations for the courses given by each institution. ECTS credits are allocated based on learning outcomes and student workload.

The learning outcomes approach

The Finnish Memo *Design and implementation of joint/double degrees* by the National Board of Education (ENIC/NARIC, 2014) states that:

The starting point for programme design is the definition of learning outcomes.

All five countries agree that the pedagogical approach to curriculum design begins with the description of learning outcomes – and, crucially, the learning outcomes must be in line with the forms of teaching and assessment methods.

Denmark, Iceland and Norway have all adopted qualifications frameworks for higher education. The Swedish Higher Education Act defines the

objectives of the second-cycle level, while the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance, Appendix 2, defines the learning outcomes for a master's degree.³⁹ In Finland, a National Framework for Qualifications and Other Learning has been formulated, but has not yet been approved. However, the aims of the higher university (master's) degree, i.e. knowledge and skills that the student will acquire on the programme, are defined in the Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004, section 12 (Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista/Statsrådets förordning om universitetsexamina), as amended by Decree 1039/2013.

When describing learning outcomes for a joint programme, the partners must ensure that they are in line with both local and national requirements. The above-mentioned descriptions of national learning outcomes are quoted in Appendix 1 to this report.

In this connection, consideration must also be paid to the European Commission's communication *Supporting growth and jobs – An agenda for the modernization of Europe's higher education systems (2011)*.⁴⁰ The communication highlights the quality and the relevance of higher education:

Higher education enhances individual potential and should equip graduates with the knowledge and core transferable competences they need to succeed in high-skill occupations. Yet curricula are often slow to respond to changing needs in the wider economy, and fail to anticipate or help shape the careers of tomorrow, and graduates struggle to find quality employment in line with their studies. Involving employers and labour-market institutions in the design and delivery of programmes, supporting staff exchanges and including practical experience in courses can help attune curricula to current and emerging labour-market needs and foster employability and entrepreneurship.

Employability and socio-economic sustainability

That a programme of study should have relevance for working life is an obvious requirement in the Nordic countries, and one of the criteria for programme approval.

The ad hoc group respects that relevance to local national labour markets must be the primary concern. However, we recommend that the countries also consider the national labour market in a broader interna-

³⁹ At least three models for the preamble of the diploma supplement exist. The text used in this report can be found in the *Outline structure for the diploma supplement*: http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/diploma-supplement_en.htm

⁴⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/policy/modernisation_en.pdf

tional perspective when discussing employability and sustainability in relation to the Nordic Master Programme.

The criterion of socio-economic sustainability is laid down in the Danish Accreditation Act of Institutions of Higher Education no. 60 of 12th June 2013, section 18 (Lov om akkreditering af videregående uddannelsesinstitutioner):

[...] Prækvalifikationen er en vurdering af, om den nye uddannelse eller det nye uddannelsesudbud er samfundsøkonomisk og uddannelsespolitisk hensigtsmæssigt [...].

The *Finnish* legislation puts it this way, in the Universities Act 558/2009, section 2 (Yliopistolaki/Universitetslag):

The mission of the universities is to promote free research and academic and artistic education, to provide higher education based on research, and to educate students to serve their country and humanity. In carrying out their mission, the universities must promote lifelong learning, interact with the surrounding society and promote the impact of research findings and artistic activities on society.

Furthermore, according to the Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2007, section 28 (Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista/Statsrådets förordning om universitetsexamina):

The university shall have the duty to constantly evaluate and develop degrees, degree studies and teaching. Attention shall be especially paid to the quality of degrees, instruction, guidance counselling and studies, to educational needs in society, to the national and international equivalence of degrees and studies, and to the effectiveness of education.

Some of the aims of the higher university (master's) degree defined in the Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004, section 12 (Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista/Statsrådets förordning om universitetsexamina), as amended by Decree 1039/2013, concern employability (translation into English is not yet available):

Målet för utbildning som leder til högre höskoleexamen är att den som har avlagt examen har:

(2) förmåga att tillämpa vetenskaplig kunskap och vetenskapliga metoder eller färdigheter för självständigt och krävande konstnärligt arbete, [...]

(3) Förutsättningar att vara verksam i arbetslivet i krävande sakkunnig- och utvecklingsuppgifter inom sitt eget område och i internationellt samarbete.

(5) goda kommunikativa färdigheter och språkkunskaper för det egna området samt för internationell verksamhet och internationellt samarbete.

Utbildningen grundar sig på forskning eller konstnärlig verksamhet samt på yrkespraxis inom området.

In *Iceland*, the provision concerning employability is found in the Higher Education Institution Act no. 63, 2006, chapter I, article 2 (Lög um háskóla nr 63/2006):

Higher Education Institutions educate students through teaching and participation in scientific research to prepare them for jobs that require scientific methods, knowledge and skills. A Higher Education Institution prepares students for a responsible participation in a democratic society. Education provided by Higher Education Institutions takes into account the needs of society and can have an academic, as well as a professional education focus.

The provision concerning employability is clear in the *Norwegian* Regulations concerning supervision of the educational quality in higher education, chapter 7, section 7–2 (Forskrift om tilsyn med utdanningskvaliteten i høyere utdanning (Studietilsynsforskriften) FOR–2013–02–28–237):

The programme must have a clear academic relevance for employment and/or further study.

In *Sweden*, employability is also referred to in the Swedish Higher Education Authority's quality-assurance and evaluation criteria (2014):

Utbildningens användbarhet och förberedelse för arbetslivet ska vara en viktig aspekt i granskningarna. I det arbetet bör företrädare för arbetslivet involveras tydligare.

The academic year and credits

All five countries are legally required to define the academic year in terms of credits. A successfully completed academic year of full-time study is set to 60 credits (in Denmark, called *ECTS-point*; in Finland, *opintopiste/studiepoäng*; in Iceland, *námseining*; in Norway, *studiepoeng*; and in Sweden, *högskolepoeng*. All countries also use the European term ECTS).

Denmark: The Danish (Consolidation) Act on Universities no. 960 of 14 August 2014, section 4, subsection 3.2 (Lov om universiteter):

[...] (2) 60 ECTS credits correspond to one year of full-time study.

Finland: Government Decree on University Degrees, 794/2004, section 5 (Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista/Statrådets förordning om universitetsexamina):

Extent of studies:

1. The measure for the extent of studies shall be a credit unit. Courses shall be quantified according to the workload required. The average input of 1,600 working hours needed for studies of one academic year shall correspond to 60 credits.

Iceland: Higher Education Institution Act no. 63/2006, chapter III, article 6 (Lög um háskóla nr. 63/2006):

[...] A full study programme shall normally consist of 60 credits per study year and reflect all student work during that time [...].

Norway: Act relating to universities and university colleges, chapter 3, sections 3–8, 1 (Lov om universiteter og høyskoler (universitets- og høyskoleloven), LOV–2005–04–01–15):

A full academic year shall be equivalent to 60 credits.

Sweden: The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), chapter 6, section 2 (Högskoleförordning (1993:100), kapitel 6, paragraf 2):

The extent of a course or study programme shall be denoted by credits, with full-time study during a normal academic year of 40 weeks corresponding to 60 credits.

The students' workload

With regard to the measurement of students' workload, the ad hoc group has followed the international task force⁴¹ charged with updating the *ECTS Users' Guide* of 2009.⁴² The new draft defines students' workload as follows:

Workload is an estimation of the time the individual typically needs to complete all learning activities such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, work placements and individual study required to achieve the defined learning outcomes in formal learning environments. The correspondence of the full-time workload of an academic year to 60 credits is often formalized by national legal provisions. In most cases, workload ranges from 1,500–1,800 hours for an academic year, which means that one credit corresponds to 25–30 hours of work. It should be recognized that this represents the typical workload and that for individual learners the actual time to achieve the learning outcomes will vary.⁴³

Most of the Nordic countries follow this recommendation in practice.

The academic year – the academic calendar

The institutions set their own academic calendar on a yearly basis. However, by law, the education period lasts ten months in Norway and 40 weeks in Sweden.

Norway: Act relating to universities and university colleges, chapter 3, section 3–8.1 (Lov om universiteter og høyskoler (universitets- og høyskoleloven), LOV–2005–04–01–15):

The academic year is normally 10 months. Teaching terms shall be decided by the board.

Sweden: The Higher Education Ordinance 1993:100, chapter 6, section 2 (Högskoleförordning (1993:100), kapitel 6, paragraf 2):

The extent of a course or study programme shall be denoted by credits, with full-time study during a normal academic year of 40 weeks, corresponding to 60 credits.

⁴¹ Nominated by the European Commission.

⁴² <http://www.ehea.info/work-group-details.aspx?wkgroupId=23>

⁴³ Not yet published.

The grading scale

The grading scale differs between the Nordic countries. In all Nordic countries, institutions issue a *Transcript of Records* in English upon request. Therefore, the ad hoc group suggests that the individual examination results, with information on the grading scale, should be part of the joint diploma. This avoids the need for any translation of the grades.

7.1.8 Recommendation 8

Each party should contribute at least 30 ECTS credits to the joint curriculum.

To date, each institution involved in a Nordic Master Programme has been required to contribute at least 20 ECTS credits to the joint programme. The ad hoc group recommends changing this, in order to make the programme more international. This change is also in line with the group's recommendation concerning the physical mobility period. The recommendation is that the student fulfils at least 30 ECTS credits during the mobility period.

7.1.9 Recommendation 9

The same requirements for admission, including any requirements for language proficiency, apply to all applicants to each study programme.

The legislation in all five countries includes provisions concerning eligibility for admission to a research-based master's programme, i.e. a relevant bachelor's degree or qualification that can be assessed as equivalent. Even so, it is necessary for the partners to discuss which kind of bachelor programmes are relevant to the programme in question, and which can be assessed as equivalent. In the event that there are more qualified applicants than there are places available, a list of selection criteria must be established.

7.1.10 Recommendation 10

The extent of the study programme is 120 ECTS credits.

Master's programmes of 120 ECTS credits are the most common in the Nordic countries and in Europe at large. Since 2007, this has also been the case for the Nordic Master Programme. There is no reason to suggest a new provision.

7.1.11 Recommendation 11

The same requirements for successful completion apply to all students registered on the programme.

The partners develop the programme jointly and decide on the programme descriptions. These descriptions apply to the running of the programme and to all students registered on the programme.

7.1.12 Recommendation 12

An admitted student's home institution is the institution where he/she is admitted and normally enrolled during the first semester of the programme. The host institution is the institution where the student spends his/her mobility period, and where he/she is registered during that study period.

Due to different provisions in the Nordic countries concerning the enrolment of students and the enrolled students' rights and obligations (e.g. tuition fees), the ad hoc group recommends the use of the terms *home institution* and *host institution*.

7.1.13 Recommendation 13

The curriculum must include a physical mobility period involving at least one host institution. It is recommended that successfully completed mobility period(s) will account for a total of at least 30 ECTS credits.

It is vital that students admitted to a Nordic Master Programme take a substantial part of their education at a minimum of one host university. The stay at the host institution should be of the utmost value in the context of internationalisation.

7.1.14 Recommendation 14

The curriculum must include a master's thesis⁴⁴ of at least 30 ECTS credits.

The legislation in all of the Nordic countries supports this provision.

7.1.15 Recommendation 15

The degree(s) is (are) awarded upon completion of the joint curriculum.

⁴⁴ Or, in the case of higher artistic education, a project based on artistic research.

Before the programme is launched, it should be agreed what kind of documents are to be issued to the student. Furthermore, if a joint diploma is chosen, the partners should agree which partner will issue the diploma.

The group therefore recommends, in the model for an agreement, in line with Danish practice according to the Ministerial Order on University Examinations and Grading (the Examination Order) no. 670 of 19th June 2014, section 31, subsection 1 (Bekendtgørelse om eksamen og censur ved universitetsuddannelser (eksamensbekendtgørelsen)), that:

The university issues certificates for successfully completed programmes, see subsection (2). Certificates must be sent to the graduate within two months of the announcement of the assessment of the final exam at the latest. The month of July is not included when calculating the two-month time limit.

The ad hoc group is aware of the fact that this regulation only applies to Danish “national” degrees, and not to joint degrees, cf. the Ministerial Order on the International Education Activities of Universities, no. 1389 of 13th December 2011 (Bekendtgørelse om universiteternes internationale uddannelsesforløb).

However, the ad hoc group recommends that the higher education institutions adopt this practice, even if it is not obligatory.

8. Approval of a programme

The new study programmes that Nordic higher education institutions intend to offer must be approved or accredited by the designated authority.

In the *Danish* system, since 1st July 2013, accreditation within higher education takes place as institutional accreditation – or, if the institution has not yet received an institutional accreditation, as programme accreditation. A university may always request accreditation of a programme on the condition that the university pays for it.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Science, however, must prequalify all new higher educational programmes. Prequalification consists of an assessment of whether the new programme is in line with the socio-economic and education policies criteria, and otherwise meets legal requirements.

The same rules apply to higher artistic education institutions under the Ministry of Culture's regulations for the accreditation and prequalification of higher artistic education institutions.

In Finland, universities are autonomous and have internal regulations and rules for the approval of new study programmes. According to the Universities Act 558/2009, section 7 (Yliopistolaki, Universitetslag), as amended by Decree 728/2013, the Ministry of Education and Culture is involved in allocating educational responsibilities in the following way (unofficial translation):

Further provisions pertaining to the degrees awarded by the universities, the objectives of the degrees, the structure of the studies and other study requirements, and the degrees to be conferred by each university (educational responsibility), shall be enacted by government decree. Provisions pertaining to the status of university degrees in the system of higher education degrees shall be enacted by government decree. Provisions pertaining to a more explicit distribution of educational responsibilities among the universities, to fields and programmes of specialisation, and to the specialisation fields and programmes offered at each university, shall be enacted by a Ministry of Education and Culture decree, prepared in co-operation with universities.

In connection with the preparation and organisation of new study programmes, *Icelandic* universities will, according to the Higher Education Institution Act no. 63/2006, chapter III, article 8 (Lög um háskóla nr. 63/2006), publish information on how the study programme meets the

requirements and demands stated in the qualification framework for higher education and degrees. Each institution has its own internal rules concerning the establishment of new programmes in fields for which they are accredited. For example, at the University of Iceland, the University Council approves new programmes (following a proposal from the faculty that has been accepted by the school board). The university comprises five schools, each of which has 3–6 faculties.

In *Norway*, the board of the institution is responsible for the approval of programme descriptions for each programme, as per the Act relating to universities and university colleges, chapter 3, section 3–3 (Lov om universiteter og høyskoler (universitets- og høyskoleloven), LOV-2005-04-01-15).

The responsibility for approval of programmes in *Sweden* is also laid down in the higher education institution's internal rules or regulations, as per the Swedish Higher Education Act 1992:1434, chapter 2, section 5 (Högskolelag (1992:1434)).

9. Quality assurance

All five countries have established quality-assurance agencies, the role of which is to support the development of education and organise external evaluations of higher education institutions and their quality-assurance systems:

- The Danish Accreditation Institution.
- The Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (FINEEC).
- The Quality Board for Icelandic Higher Education (Gæðaráð íslenskra háskóla).
- The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT).
- The Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ).

The Norwegian and Swedish agencies also appraise the degree-awarding power.

The work of the individual institutions and the quality-assurance bodies differs slightly, but all follow the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (the ENQA-standards, adopted by the Bologna ministers in Bergen in 2005).⁴⁵

The provisions regarding curriculum design or programme descriptions are laid down in various regulations, but specific elements in the descriptions might differ somewhat. Here, we would like to draw attention to the forthcoming *ECTS Users' Guide*, which will be discussed at the Ministerial Conference and Bologna Policy Forum in Yerevan in 2015. The ad hoc group's template for an agreement includes a template for a programme description, which has been drawn up in line with the *ECTS Users' Guide* of 25th July 2014.⁴⁶

National overarching legislation concerning the aim of the education at master's level and provisions concerning quality assurance of the programmes:

⁴⁵ https://www.eqar.eu/fileadmin/documents/e4/050221_ENQA_report.pdf

⁴⁶ Not yet published.

Denmark

Act on the Accreditation of Institutional of Higher Education no. 601 of 12th June 2013 (Lov om akkreditering af videregående uddannelsesinstitutioner).

Finland

Universities Act 558/2009, section 87 (Yliopistolaki/Universitetslag).

Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004 section 12 (Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista/Statsrådets förordning om univeritetsexamina), as amended by Decree 1039/2013.

Iceland

Higher Education Institution Act no. 63, 2006 (Lög um háskóla nr 63/2006).

National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education no. 530/2011 (Viðmið um æðri menntun og prófgráður, nr. 530–2011)

Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions no. 1067/2006, according to Article 3 of Higher Education Act, no. 63/2006 (Reglur nr. 1067/2006 um viðurkenningu háskóla á grundvelli 3. gr. laga nr. 63/2006 um háskóla).

Norway

Regulations concerning supervision of the educational quality in higher education (Academic Supervision Regulations) (Forskrift om tilsyn med utdanningskvaliteten i høyere utdanning (Studietilsynsforskriften), FOR-2013-02-28-237).

Sweden

The Higher Education Ordinance 1993:100 (Högskoleförordning 1993:100).

10. Recognition for further studies

All five countries have ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention developed by the Council of Europe and UNESCO and adopted in 1997, which states that “Each country shall recognize qualifications – whether for access to higher education, for periods of study or for higher education degrees – as similar to the corresponding qualifications in its own system unless it can show that there are substantial differences between its own qualifications and the qualifications for which recognition is sought.”⁴⁷

All five countries are also committed to the Nordic Declaration on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education – the *Reykjavik Declaration*, signed in 2004 by the Nordic countries and based on the Lisbon Recognition Convention. With the Reykjavik Declaration, the Nordic countries will ensure that “qualifications in the field of higher education of the Nordic countries shall be given full mutual recognition.”⁴⁸

All five countries have included in their legislation provisions concerning, among other things, quality assurance of their programmes of study. The relevant authorities within the higher education system must ensure that the programmes are in line with quality-assurance provisions and other provisions. Furthermore, there are strict regulations concerning the approval and accreditation of programmes.

The ad hoc group is aware that the Nordic Council of Ministers has established another ad hoc group to study the Reykjavik Declaration during spring and autumn 2014.

Assuming that our recommendations above regarding the Nordic Master Programme are taken into account, there should not be any obstacles to mutual, automatic recognition of a joint, research-based master’s degree awarded by Nordic institutions. As the recommendations are written, we see them as being in line with national requirements in all five countries. Thus, the qualification of a Nordic Master Programme

⁴⁷ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/recognition/lrc_EN.asp

⁴⁸ https://www.hsv.se/download/18.539a949110f3d5914ec800093110/Nordic-Declaration-ENG_13kb.pdf

should be automatically recognised in the five countries. Mutual, automatic recognition of a degree, in this case a completed Nordic Master Programme, implies that the level of the degree is recognised in all of the other Nordic countries, and should be automatically considered valid for further study and employment throughout the Region.

11. Tuition fees and scholarships for third-country students in the Nordic countries

Public higher education institutions in the Nordic countries do not have tuition fees, either for national students or EU, EEA and Swiss students.

In Norway, however, all students pay a semester fee for services provided by the *Studentsamskipnaden* (student welfare organisation), while in Iceland all students are charged an annual registration fee. In Finland, membership of a student union is obligatory, and all student unions at HE institutions charge small fees.

It should be mentioned that private higher education institutions in both Norway and Iceland may charge tuition fees.

The situation is different with the regard to third-country students, i.e. students with a non-EU, -EEA or -Swiss nationality. In Denmark, third-country students have paid tuition fees since 2006 (since 2008 for artistic higher education). Sweden introduced tuition fees for third-country students in 2011. Third-country students also pay an application fee in Sweden, and at some HE institutions in Denmark and Iceland. The trial period finishes at the end of 2014, and the debate continues as to whether Finnish HEIs should be able to charge fees from third-country students.

For the most part, there are no tuition fees in Finnish higher education. In 2010–2014, there is a tuition fee trial period for third-country students in Finland.

Studies are still tuition-free in Norway⁴⁹ and Iceland, except for the student welfare fees and registration fees, and tuition fees for private higher education.

⁴⁹ However, this may change according to a proposal of 8th October 2014 by the Ministry of Education and Science on the introduction of tuition fees for third-country students in Norway. The background for this is *Budget proposals from the Government to the Parliament (Prop. 1, S Tillegg 1 (2013–2014))*. The proposal is currently under consideration, with a deadline of 4th December 2014.

Scholarships may be granted to talented students in tuition fee-demanding countries.

At a conference in Finland in October 2013 organised by the Nordic Council, HE institutions highlighted the effect of tuition fees regarding recruitment to Nordic Master Programmes.

Third-country students make up approximately 40% of the students enrolled on Nordic Master Programmes (cf. Oxford Research: *Student Survey of the "Nordic Master Programme"*, 2012).⁵¹ No data has yet been collected about the proportion that has paid tuition fees (cf. *Tuition Fees for International Students*, Nordic Council of Ministers, 2013).⁵³

Below, the ad hoc group has mapped the rules regarding tuition fees in the Nordic countries and described the range of scenarios for enrolled/registered students in the different countries. The description is based on the report *Tuition Fees for International Students* (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2013), supplemented by information from national authorities.

The purpose is to identify whether the different practices regarding tuition fees create any kind of legal/administrative barriers for the Nordic Master Programme.

Finally, the ad hoc group has identified some solutions that may solve the problems that arise from the Nordic countries' different practices with regard to tuition fees.

⁵¹ https://wikihost.uib.no/matnat/images/5/59/Rapport_NMP_Survey_EN.pdf

⁵³ <http://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:702023/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

11.1 The regulations in the different Nordic Countries

The table below outlines the situation:

Tuition and student union fees/registration fees in the Nordic countries (full degree students)

	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Finland	Iceland
Tuition fees/third-country students	1st August 2006 (universities) 1st January 2008 (artistic HE institutions)	1st July 2011	n/a	Trial period 2010–2014	n/a
Amount	EUR 6,200–13,100 p.a. (or more)	EUR 6,500–15,500 p.a.	-	EUR 5,000–12,000	-
Tuition fees/national/EU/EEA students	n/a	n/a	Private HE	n/a	Private HE
Amount	n/a	n/a	Varies	n/a	Private HE: Up to ISK 990,000 per annum for graduate studies
Application fees	Some universities charge third-country students an application fee	Application fee for third-country students	n/a	n/a	Application fee for third-country students in some universities (EUR 50)
Registration fees/fees to student unions	n/a	n/a	Semester fee for welfare services provided by the <i>Studentsamskipnad</i>	All students pay student union fees; the amount is at the discretion of the HE's student union	Annual registration fee around EUR 480, includes a negotiated fee to student union(s)
General regulations	Students admitted to a Danish university should not pay any study expenses that students would not pay under Danish rules when studying abroad as part of an agreement with one or more co-operating universities		NOK 400 to 600 per semester	Around EUR 100 per year	

11.1.1 Denmark

The Danish university must ensure reciprocity and economic balance in its exchange with the foreign university.⁵⁴

The principle of balance is applied over a span of years and to the sector as a whole. The individual university may apply a stricter interpretation of the regulation in order to observe the balance principle.

It would probably be considered a deviation from the regulation if all third-country students were distributed to non-paying countries.

Third-country students

In 2005, the Danish parliament decided that, from 1st August 2006, third-country students from outside the EU/EEA/Switzerland, with a few exceptions,⁵⁵ must pay full tuition fees for higher education in Denmark.

Third-country students – both full-degree students and non full-degree students – admitted or registered at a Danish university are charged tuition fees, unless the foreign student is studying at the Danish university as part of an exchange agreement between the Danish HE institution and the foreign university.

Students studying in Denmark on an exchange basis, i.e. with Danish students taking their places at their home universities, according to an agreement between a Danish university and one or more HE institutions abroad, are exempt from paying tuition fees.

This implies that a student registered at a foreign HE institution (home institution) will not be charged a tuition fee by the Danish university (host institution) at which the student is registered and studying at as part of a joint programme.

Some Danish universities also charge application fees for third-country students in connection with applying for admission to the universities.

Amounts

The universities set the tuition fees. Generally speaking, the price should correspond to the cost of the programme. In practice, this implies that the price of a programme is, at a minimum, equal to the grant that the

⁵⁴ The following description applies only to the regulation concerning the Danish universities.

⁵⁵ Third-country students exempted from tuition fees are students who have been granted:

- a permanent residence permit
- a temporary residence permit that can be upgraded to a permanent one
- a residence permit as the accompanying child of a non-EU/EEA parent holding a residence permit based on employment (§ 9a of the Danish Aliens Act).

university receives from the Danish state (the taximeter rate for the programme concerned).

Fees are normally kept close to the taximeter rate, but may be up to twice this figure. Fees for social sciences and humanities typically use a rate of EUR 6,000 or more, while technical, science and medical programmes are generally more expensive and may use an annual rate of EUR 13,000 or more.

Scholarships

Governmental (full or partial) scholarships (tuition fee waivers) with a full grant, a partial grant or no grant are offered to foreign students from outside the EU/EEA or Switzerland at universities.

The higher artistic education institutions in Denmark do not have such scholarship schemes.

The scholarships distributed through the universities are limited in number. In order to be eligible for such a scholarship, the student must be enrolled at the Danish university.

The allocation of scholarships is decided by the university, based on merit (high level of skill/excellence) or in agreements with foreign universities, based on strategic alliances.

The total pool for scholarships is 52 million in 2014.⁵⁶

In 2015 and 2016, a new scholarship programme will be established for talented students from outside the EU, EEA and Switzerland, as part of the government's plan for attracting talented international students to Denmark.

The total amount available is DKK 25 million. Scholarships will be targeted toward areas where Denmark lacks a highly skilled workforce.

Some of the universities have established additional scholarships funded by external companies or foundations.

Scholarships under the Cultural Agreements are available to master's students from Serbia, Turkey, China, Japan, Israel, Egypt and Russia, both inside and outside the EU/EEA.

As part of its plan to attract international students, the government has proposed that scholarships under the Cultural Agreements should primarily target students from outside of Europe.

⁵⁶ Finanslov 2014, § 19, 2: http://www.fm.dk/publikationer/2014/finanslov-for-finansaaret-2014/~media/Publikationer/Imported/2014/AFL14/Finanslov%2019_WEB.pdf

Other regulations

When concluding co-operation agreements on compulsory or optional studies abroad as part of a programme with one or more co-operating universities, Danish universities must ensure that the admitted students do not pay any study expenses that they would not pay under Danish rules during a study period abroad.

This also implies that those students should not pay any application fees or registration fees charged by foreign universities.

The same rules apply to artistic HE institutions under the regulation of higher artistic institutions.

11.1.2 Finland

Third-country students

During a trial period in 2010–2014, Finland allowed HE institutions to charge tuition fees from third-country students⁵⁷ admitted to a master's degree programme in a foreign language, at either a university or a university of applied sciences.

Amounts

Institutions can independently determine the level of fees charged.

In 2012, 41 programmes charged tuition-fees, ranging from EUR 5,000 to EUR 12,000 per academic year. The most commonly charged fee is EUR 8,000.

Student union fees

All student unions at HE institutions charge a small student union fee.

Every Finnish university has its own self-governing student union. Student union membership is mandatory by law for all students studying for a bachelor or master's degree. A student union may also grant membership to other students at the university. The student unions are responsible for all representation of students, and elect the student members of different administrative organs, including the board of the university. The student unions are also responsible for the students' health care, and usually co-ordinate and finance the activities of smaller, more specialised student organisations. To finance their activities, the

⁵⁷ Citizens outside the Nordic Region, EU, EEA and Switzerland.

student unions charge a membership fee and pursue different commercial activities.

The rector of the university confirms the amount of the membership fee, and the university is responsible for collecting payments. The fee is around EUR 100 per year (for example, the University of Helsinki charges EUR 92; the University of Turku, EUR 94; and the University of Eastern Finland, EUR 114).

Scholarships

HE institutions participating in the trial period must also offer a scholarship scheme. Almost all students who are charged tuition fees receive grants of different sizes from either the HE institution or the Erasmus Mundus programme. The grant covers the tuition fees either in full or in part.

The different HE institutions award the scholarships based on academic criteria.

11.1.3 Iceland

Third-country students

Students do not pay tuition fees for higher education at public higher education institutions in Iceland.

Private higher education institutions charge students tuition fees up to ISK 500,000 (including registration fee) per annum for undergraduate studies and ISK 990,000 (including registration fee) per annum for graduate studies.⁵⁸

Students from non-EU/EEA countries may be charged application fees. At the University of Iceland, this fee is EUR 50.

Registration and student union fees

All students must pay an annual registration fee of ISK 75,000 (approximately EUR 480). The maximum fee is fixed across all HE institutions.

The registration fee funds various services provided to students other than teaching. Part of the registration fee can also be allocated to student unions.

⁵⁸ http://www.ru.is/media/almennt/Verdskra204_2015.pdf

Scholarships

In Iceland, scholarships are administered by the state. Some institutions (like the University of Iceland) may have their own scholarship funds, especially for post-graduate studies. A small number of scholarships are awarded to international students.

11.1.4 Norway

Third-country students

In Norway, neither Norwegian students nor students from non-EU/EEA countries currently pay tuition fees at state universities or university colleges.⁵⁹ However, this may change according to a proposal of 8th October 2014 by the Ministry of Education and Science on the introduction of tuition fees for third-country students in Norway. The background for this is *Budget proposals from the Government to the Parliament (Prop. 1, S Tillegg 1 (2013–2014))*. The proposal is currently being debated, with a deadline of 4th December 2014.⁶⁰

Tuition fees for private HE institutions

Most private HE institutions, accounting for around 14% of all HE institutions, charge tuition fees for their programmes and courses.

Amounts

Third-country students pay the same amount as national and EEU/EEA and Swiss students.

Student union fees

All students in universities and university colleges in Norway are obligated to join a *Studentsamskipnad* (student welfare organisation), according to the Norwegian Regulations on Student Welfare Organization. A *Studentsamskipnad* is organised as a private company owned by the students, and takes care of welfare services such as student accommodation, cafeterias, gyms, social and health services, and day-care centres for students' children.

As members of a *Studentsamskipnad*, all students pay a semester fee that gives them access to all services, including medical, dental and

⁵⁹ As co-ordinators within a partnership, Norwegian public higher education institutions are not allowed to charge student tuition fees on behalf of the partners.

⁶⁰ <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd.html?id=586> Høringer, Kunnskapsdepartementet.

social services. At the University of Bergen, the semester fee is NOK 550 as of autumn 2014. The student parliaments in each university can decide to encourage students to pay an extra fee (NOK 20 or more) for international fundraising.⁶¹

In order to get a residence permit, third-country students must document an annual income of NOK 97,500. For third-world countries and certain other countries, Norway offers a scholarship of this amount, as part of the quota scholarship programme (as of autumn 2014, this programme is under revision). Annually about 1,100 students receive such scholarship.

In the private sector, the institution itself defines the nature of scholarships for international students and the criteria for awarding them. The criteria for awarding scholarships are academically based.

11.1.5 Sweden

Third-country students

Since 2011, non-EU/EEA/Swiss students enrolled at a Swedish HE institution pay a study fee and also an application fee of SEK 900.

Non-EU/EEA/Swiss students admitted to programmes at a Swedish HE institution via an approved exchange programme, e.g. a joint degree student, do not pay tuition fees to the Swedish HE institution, provided that they are admitted to and nominated by their home institution.

The principle of balance is applied over a span of years.

Amount

The universities and university colleges in Sweden set the tuition fees for the different programmes. However, the legislation stipulates that the fee should cover the full costs.

The application fee is SEK 900.

Scholarships

Sweden has established two scholarship systems: Swedish Institute Study Scholarships and Swedish Tuition Fee Scholarships.

The Swedish Institute Study Scholarships, which can be used for tuition fees and living expenses, are awarded by the Swedish Institute to

⁶¹ According to Regulations on Student Welfare Organisation (comments to § 17), Nordplus, Erasmus and other bilateral students are exempt from paying the semester fee.

highly qualified students from countries with which Sweden has a long-term development co-operation.

Approximately 120 scholarships are awarded per academic year.

The Swedish Tuition Fee Scholarships (IPOET – International Programme Office for Education and Training) are allocated to the HE institution based on the number of international students that each HE institution has accepted in the past.

The HE institutions themselves decide whether the funds will be earmarked for full scholarships to a few students or, for example, half-scholarships to a larger number of students. The scholarships only cover tuition fees, not living expenses.

In total, SEK 160 million is earmarked for students from countries outside the EU/EEA/Switzerland.

The HE institutions may also fund scholarships through, e.g. company programmes or foundations.

Solutions

The amounts paid by fee-paying students for the same programme may vary from hundreds to thousands of euros, depending on the country of admission and the study pathways of third-country students.

Naturally, this would imply that third-country students are attracted to non-tuition-fee-charging HE institutions as their first country of study (home institution).

However, it may not seem fair that some third-country students should pay tuition fees, while others are exempt from tuition fees for the same programme, depending on the Nordic country of admission and study pathways.

The ad hoc group has discussed four possible solutions:

1. Eliminate the tuition fee for third-country students admitted to a Nordic Master Programme.
This is the preferred solution by the experts from the HE institutions in the ad hoc group. The model would require legislative changes. The Danish expert did not consider it politically or legally viable to grant special treatment to particular student groups.
2. Charge a programme fee for all third-country students on a programme, regardless of the country of enrolment. The universities in fee-charging countries will then invoice the university with overall responsibility for the programme the appropriate amount for their third-country students in order to fulfil national legal requirements. The proposal is unlikely to be viable in the countries that do not

charge tuition fees. Norwegian HE institutions appointed as co-ordinators are not allowed to invoice fees for institutions in fee-charging countries. Similarly, partner institutions cannot charge programme fees for students enrolled at a Norwegian institution. NB The situation in Norway may change due to a proposal made by the government based on *Budget proposals from the Government to the Parliament (Prop. 1, S Tillegg 1 (2013–2014))* and the current hearing on the introduction of tuition fees for third-country students in Norway (deadline 4th December 2014).

3. Maintain payment requirements for third-country students, but the Nordic Council of Ministers grants a certain number of scholarships to third-country students enrolled on Nordic Master Programmes. This system would benefit fee-charging countries and should therefore be discussed carefully between all the Nordic countries.
4. Maintain payment requirements for third-country students and offer scholarships based on a decision by the HE institution – in other words, as per the existing system, where no special priority is given to third-country students enrolled on Nordic Master Programmes.

12. The old recommendations are still valid

The *10 Golden Rules for New Joint Master Programmes*, which were worked out within the European University Association's Joint Masters Project in 2004, remain very useful and topical:⁶²

- Know why you are setting up the programme.
- Choose your partners carefully.
- Develop well-defined programme goals and student-learning outcomes with your network partners.
- Make sure that all the institutions (not just academic colleagues) fully support the programme's goals and objectives.
- Ensure that sufficient academic and administrative staff resources are involved in the programme.
- Ensure that a sustainable funding strategy for the programme is in place.
- Take care that information about the programme is easily accessible to students.
- Organise and plan sufficient meetings in advance.
- Develop language policy and encourage local language learning.
- Decide who is responsible for what.

⁶² Developing joint Masters Programmes for Europe: Results of the EUA Joint Masters Project, March 2002–Jan 2004, pp. 23–24. http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/Joint_Masters_report.1087219975578.pdf

13. Sammendrag

13.1 Ad hoc-gruppen.

Nordic Master Programme ble etablert som pilotprosjekt i 2007. Formålet var å fremme utviklingen av høykvalitets samarbeidsprogrammer mellom institusjoner i de 5 nordiske landene:

- The Council of Ministers believes that the longstanding tradition of co-operation between Nordic researchers and academic institutions, the relative similarity of the countries in the Region and the high standard of their quality-assurance systems together provide a solid foundation for innovative and attractive Master's programmes.
- Objectives:
 - The overall objectives of the NMP are to enhance the internationalisation of higher education and attract both Nordic and non-Nordic students to study at HEIs in the Region. The NMP builds upon both the excellence of the individual institutions and collaboration between Nordic HEIs in order to provide programmes that the individual institutions would not be capable of offering on their own.

I pilotperioden fram til 2013 ble det gjennomført fem utlysninger, og i alt 23 prosjekter er blitt tildelt støtte, av disse ble to ikke slutført.

I løpet av disse årene og med informasjon bl a fra de etablerte prosjektene, har det kommet tilbakemeldinger om administrative og lovgivningsmessige hindre for etablering av denne typen samarbeid. Disse antatte eller reelle hindrene har også vært medvirkende til de mange ulike strukturene i de etablerte programmene i NMP.

I forbindelse med overgangen fra pilotprosjekt til et permanent tiltak, vurderte Nordisk Ministerråd derfor at det var behov for å få fastslått om det fantes hindre innenfor lovgivningen og evt andre annetsteds, og en ad-hoc-gruppe ble nedsatt, med representanter for alle fem landene. Gruppens medlemmer er valgt ut på bakgrunn av deres kompetanse på feltet, og ikke som representanter for sine institusjoner.

Gruppens arbeid som presenteres i den foreliggende rapporten, omfatter to hovedelementer, det ene er en omfattende gjennomgang av

eksisterende lov- og regelverk i alle de 5 landene, med referanser, der det klargjøres definisjoner og avgrensninger i forhold til spørsmålet om inngåelse av fellesgrader. Basert på lovgivningene er det så satt opp forslag til anbefalinger for en nordisk master, slik at de tilbudte programmer tilbyr en ekstra "nordisk verdi" i forhold til de masterprogrammer, som kun tilbys nasjonalt. Det er videre gitt en oversikt over alle institusjoner i Norden som nå fyller disse kriteriene, og hvilke som faller utenfor.

Det andre hovedelementet av rapporten inneholder veiledninger og anbefalinger knyttet til utvikling og drift av et Nordic Master Programme, herunder prosessen fram til et ferdig utviklet program, mal for vitnemål og vitnemålstillegg, mal for avtale mellom partnere osv.

Gjennomgangen har vist at det er få formelle hindre for å utvikle og gjennomføre en fellesgrad mellom institusjoner i de 5 landene. I alle land er det mulig/tillatt å inngå fellesgrader, men det er noen begrensninger man må være kjent med, f.eks. knyttet til nasjonal godkjenning, der noen institusjoner kan inngå slike avtaler etter eget initiativ, mens andre må ha godkjenning på forhånd fra det nasjonale godkjenningsorganet.

Lovgivningen i de 5 landene er i seg selv ikke til hinder for samarbeid, men for noen utdanninger er omfanget på studiet en begrensende faktor, ved at antall studiepoeng (ECTS credits) for studiene avviker fra standarden på 120 for to års studium.

Det gruppen har sett som den største enkeltstående utfordringen, har vært studieavgiftene som noen land har innført for studenter som ikke kommer fra EU/EØS-området, og som delvis må antas å begrense rekrutteringspotensialet i et Nordic Master Programme, og ellers kunne bidra til ikke-tilsiktete forskyvninger av studievalg for denne gruppen studenter.

Etter at gruppen var ferdig med sitt arbeid, ble det kjent at den norske regjeringen foreslår studieavgift etter tilsvarende prinsipper som i Sverige og Danmark for disse studentgruppene. Forslaget er ute til høring, og endelig beslutning er derfor ikke fattet, men en effekt vil bli at forskjellene landene imellom vil bli mindre mht dette spørsmålet.

Appendix 1:

Legislation – International Degree Cooperation (short summaries and sources) – 28.10.2014

Denmark

Danish participation in joint master programmes

Universities

A Danish university may offer both a whole programme and parts of a programme with one or more foreign universities and issue a joint degree. The individual Danish university decides on its international cooperation in joint programmes. It also decides whether the university will issue a joint degree or not.

The participation is regulated through the Danish Consolidation Act on Universities (no 960 of 14th August 2014 with amendments) and the Ministerial Order on the International Activities of Universities, no 1389 of 15th December from 2011.

The Ministerial Order is a so called “stand alone” regulation which regulates all conditions regarding the universities participation in international educational activities. The intention is to give the universities the greatest possible flexibility regarding the establishment of international educational activities and participation in joint master programmes.

The university decides on admission requirements and selection criteria. Those criteria however must ensure the academic progression of the programme.

According to the Danish legislation a student can only be enrolled in one university, and the university must ensure that the individual student is enrolled either at the Danish university or abroad. The university has the full responsibility for the students enrolled (admitted). A student can be registered (indskrevet) both at his/her home university and the university where he/she actually is studying.

The student is covered by the provisions in the Danish University Act for the part of the programme taken at the Danish university and covered by the rules governing the cooperating university for part of the programme taken at the cooperating university.

According to the Ministerial Order the joint programme/degree collaboration agreement must include the following elements: regulate the enrolment of students; assure that the studies abroad are research based and at the same educational level; the entire programme; admission requirements; guidelines for distribution of enrolled students. The Ministerial Order also lays down the regulation on which elements the universities shall include in a curriculum.

The agreement may furthermore not contain agreement on payment that differ from the rules on non-payment/payment of fees etc. for studies in Denmark. As a general rule Danish and EU-citizens do not pay tuition fee while third countries citizens (with some exceptions) enrolled or registered at the Danish university do pay tuition fee.

Students studying in Denmark in exchange for Danish students taking their places at their home universities, according to agreements between the Danish university and one or more higher education institutions abroad, are exempted for paying tuition fees.

This implies that a student admitted at a foreign higher education institution (home higher education institution) will not be charged a tui-

tion fee by the Danish university while the student is registered and studying at the Danish university as part of a joint programme (host higher education institution).

Governmental scholarships (friplads) with a full grant, a partial grant or no grant (stipendium) are offered to foreign students from outside the EU/EEA. The scholarships are distributed through the universities and are limited in number.

The issuing of a Danish diploma is a Danish administrative act. A Danish university may issue a Danish diploma for courses that they offer as a joint programme if the university estimates that the programme has the same quality as a similar Danish programme. This implies that a Danish university may issue a Danish diploma even if the student has not studied at the Danish university as part of his/her programme as long as the university estimates that the programme has the same quality as a similar Danish programme. The diploma must show which elements were completed at the respective universities.

A Danish University may have a diploma endorsed or signed by one or more of the cooperation universities and may also endorse a diploma from one of more of the cooperating universities. In both cases the diploma is then valid under Danish and foreign law making it a joint degree.

Since 1st July 2013 accreditation within higher education takes place as institutional accreditation, or if the institutions have not yet received an institutional accreditation as programme accreditation. A university may always ask for an accreditation of a programme on the condition that the university pays for the accreditation.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Science, however, must prequalify new higher educational programmes. Pre-qualification is an assessment of whether the new programme is appropriate according to the socio-economic and education policies criteria and otherwise meets legal requirements.

Application for pre-qualification may be submitted twice a year (October and February).

Other higher educational institutions⁶³

Academies of Professional Higher Education (erhvervsakademier) and University Colleges (professionshøjskoler) offer professionally oriented first cycle degree programmes but not programmes at second cycle level

⁶³ Source: Fælles uddannelsesforløb: omfang og muligheder. Udarbejdet af DAMVAD for Uddannelses- og Forskningsministeriet, Danmark, 2014.

(master's level). Both types of higher education institutions have the legal right to develop and offer joint degree programmes.

The consolidation act no 466 of 8th May 2013 on maritime training programmes (Lov om maritime uddannelser) does not include descriptions of international matters. It is expected that the draft of the revised act on maritime training programmes will include international matters. However, maritime higher educational institutions are not allowed to offer programmes at second cycle degree level (master's level).

Some higher artistic education institutions are regulated by the Ministry of Culture and some by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science.

The consolidation law on higher artistic educational institutions from 2013 does not regulate international activities but the section 9 in the consolidation act empowers the minister to decide which programmes the institutions may offer. All new programmes under the regulation of higher artistic education institutions have to be prequalified.

The minister of culture has approved some joint degree programmes. However, the institutions may only deliver national diplomas as the law does not regulate joint or double diplomas. The institutions may indicate on the national diploma that part(s) of the programmes was (were) completed at foreign higher education institutions.

The Danish minister of culture has in June 2014 presented a bill according to which the higher artistic education institutions under the Ministry of Culture will get the parallel possibilities for international educational activities as the universities. The bill implies among other that the higher artistic education institutions under the Ministry of Culture can participate in international study program cooperation. The new regulation will enter into force 1st January 2015 if the bill is voted by the Danish parliament.

Legislation

Lov om universiteter (universitetsloven), jf. lovbekendtgørelse nr. 960 af 14. august 2014, (<https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=164209>).

Bekendtgørelse nr. 1389 af 15. december 2011 om universiteternes internationale uddannelsesforløb, (<https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=139760>).

Bekendtgørelse nr. 1252 af 13. december 2011 om fripladser med stipendium som støtte til leveomkostninger til visse udenlandske studerende ved universiteterne, (<https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=139474>).

Lov nr. 601 af 12. juni 2013 om akkreditering af videregående uddannelsesinstitutioner, (<https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=151871>).

Bekendtgørelse nr. 745 af 24. juni 2013 om akkreditering af videregående uddannelsesinstitutioner og godkendelse af nye videregående uddannelser (Akkrediteringsbekendtgørelsen), (<https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=152480>).

Lov om videregående kunstneriske uddannelsesinstitutioner, jf. lovbekendtgørelse nr. 1673 af 11. december 2013,
(<https://www.retsinformation.dk/forms/R0710.aspx?id=160764>).

Bekendtgørelse nr. 250 af 14. marts 2014 om akkreditering af videregående uddannelsesinstitutioner og godkendelse af nye videregående uddannelser under Kulturministeriet, (<https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=161916>).

Bekendtgørelse nr. 407 af 5. maj 2009 om opkrævning af betaling fra udenlandske studerende på Kulturministeriets videregående uddannelser,
(<https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=123889>).

Addresses

- *Uddannelses- og Forskningsministeriet*
www.ufm.dk
Ministry of Higher Education and Science
www.ufm.dk/en
- *Styrelsen for Videregående Uddannelser*
www.ufm.dk
The Danish Agency for Higher Education
www.ufm.dk/en
- *Danmarks Akkrediteringsinstitution*
www.akkr.dk
The Danish Accreditation Institution
www.en.akkr.dk
- *Danske Universiteter*
www.dkuni.dk
Denmark
www.dkuni.dk/english
- *Kulturministeriet*
www.kum.dk
Ministry of Culture
<http://kum.dk/servicemenu/english/>

Finland

Finland and joint degrees

Education leading to lower and higher university degrees may be based on subjects or in the form of degree programmes. Education leading to a higher university degree built on a lower university degree or education of a corresponding level may also be arranged as a degree programme to which there is a separate selection. Education leading to a higher education degree may also be arranged in international cooperation. Degree education may also be arranged as education leading to one or several degrees jointly by one or several Finnish or foreign universities. The Finnish legislation does not specify the contents or form of joint degrees in more detail.

In the Finnish context, a “joint degree” refers to a degree programme jointly developed and provided by more than one higher education institution, which confers one or more degree certificates. The Ministry of Education issued a recommendation on the development of international joint and double degrees in 2004. The Ministry of Education Recommendation also use the term “joint degree” to cover what are known as

“double degrees”, i.e. programmes conferring two or more degree certificates. The Finnish National Board of Education in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish higher education institutions and the Centre for International Mobility CIMO has prepared a memo on designing joint degrees. The memo has been updated in January 2014 and it is available in Finnish, Swedish and English.

Universities are autonomous and have internal regulations and rules by which new study programmes are approved. However, the Ministry of Education and Culture is involved in distributing educational responsibilities among the universities in the following way: Further provisions pertaining to the degrees awarded by the universities, the objectives of the degrees, the structure of the studies and other study requirements, and the degrees to be conferred by each university (educational responsibility) shall be enacted by Government Decree. Provisions pertaining to the status of university degrees in the system of higher education degrees shall be enacted by Government Decree. Provisions pertaining to a more explicit distribution of educational responsibilities among the universities, to fields and programmes of specialisation, and to the specialisation fields and programmes on offer in each university shall be enacted by Ministry of Education and Culture Decree that is prepared in cooperation with universities.

Legislation

Yliopistolaki (2009/558)/Universitetslag (2009/558)/Universities Act (558/2009).
Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista (794/2004)/Statsrådets förordning om universitetsexamina (794/2004)/Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004).

Liite: Luettelo yliopistojen koulutusaloista, tutkintojen nimistä ja yliopistoista, joissa tutkintoja voidaan suorittaa.

Bilaga: Förteckning över utbildningsområdena vid universiteten, examinas namn och de universitet där examina kan avläggas.

Appendix: List of fields of education in universities, the degree titles and the universities awarding the degrees.

Addresses

- *Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö/Undervisnings- och kulturministeriet*
Ministry of Education and Culture
www.minedu.fi
- Opetushallitus/Utbildningsstyrelsen
Finnish National Board of Education
www.oph.fi/english
(ENIC-NARIC-Finland).
- *Kansainvälisen liikkuvuuden ja yhteistyön keskus CIMO/Centret för internationell mobilitet och internationellt samarbete CIMO*
Centre for International Mobility CIMO
www.cimo.fi/frontpage
- Kansallinen koulutuksen arviointikeskus/Nationella centret för utbildningsutvärdering
The Finnish Education Evaluation Centre
<http://karvi.fi/en/>
- *Suomen yliopistot UNIFI ry/Finlands universitet UNIFI rf.*
Universities Finland UNIFI
www.helsinki.fi/halvi/srno/english/index.html

Iceland

Joint degree collaboration agreement with a foreign university

According to articles 5, 7, 9 and 10 of the Higher Education Institutions Act no. 63/2006⁶⁴ [*Lög um háskóla*], universities are eligible to recognize credits from other universities and to confer degrees in cooperation with other universities if these studies confirm with the National Qualification Framework for higher education,⁶⁵ issued by the Minister of Education, Science and Culture. There is no special provision in the national law concerning the elements that should be included in a joint programme agreement.

It is implicit by law (Higher Education Institutions Act no. 63/2006⁶⁶ and the Act on Public Higher Education Institutions no. 85/2008⁶⁷ [*Lög*

⁶⁴ <http://eng.menntamalaraduneyti.is/media/MRN-PDF-Althjodlegt/Higher-Education-Act-no.-63-2006nytt.pdf>

⁶⁵ <http://www.stjornartidindi.is/DocumentActions.aspx?ActionType=Open&documentID=afd35930-4c5a-4de4-bd7e-2134da404446>

⁶⁶ <http://eng.menntamalaraduneyti.is/media/MRN-PDF-Althjodlegt/Higher-Education-Act-no.-63-2006nytt.pdf>

⁶⁷ <http://eng.menntamalaraduneyti.is/media/MRN-PDF-Althjodlegt/Act-on-Public-Higher-Education-Institutions-no-85-2008---amended-2010.pdf>

um opinbera háskóla]) that for a student to be an eligible student (who gains credits for his/her studies) he/she must be registered and pay the registration fee for the academic year, or semester. A student studying in a joint programme (according to a contract) must be registered at the (home) university during the whole programme, but will only pay the registration fee at the home institution for the academic year/semester he/she spends there. In theory it is up to the university concerned how this is executed.

The laws do not specify a minimum number of ECTS credits required for participation in a joint programme. It is up to each university or faculty to decide. For a two year joint masters study programme (120 ECTS) the minimum would in most cases be 30 ECTS, depending on the number of universities participating in the programme. If there were two universities involved, the minimum would be 30–60 ECTS. The size of a master thesis is usually 30–60 ECTS (may vary according to discipline).

Upon commencing study, each graduate student shall be assigned a supervisor, with whom he/she can discuss the arrangement of the study programme, selection of courses and other aspects connected to the study programme. The supervisor and the student shall jointly submit a plan of study to be approved by the Faculty. The supervisor shall advise the student on the final project or thesis.

There is always an external examiner. In a few cases there is a public defence, however, in some cases the student must give a lecture (seminar) on the subject.

It is negotiated in a contract between institutions which country's legislation should be followed during the student's mobility period (concerning instruction, examination rules, appeals (e.g. regarding grades)).

Doctoral studies, admission etc.

The requirements for universities to offer doctoral studies are described in the National Qualification Framework. In addition there are special rules issued by the Minister on Doctoral Studies in Higher Education Institutions⁶⁸ according to article 7 of the Higher Education Institutions Act no. 63/2006.

These rules contain a description of the conditions and requirements an institution must fulfil to be permitted to organize doctoral study pro-

⁶⁸ <http://www.stjornartidindi.is/Advert.aspx?ID=e38bc3ce-a822-4c6c-af76-d4e5766a7d02>

grammes. One condition is a description of admission requirements and demands for satisfactory preparation.

In the case of the University of Iceland the general framework for master's and doctoral studies are to be found in article 69 of the university regulations, see www.hi.is/adalvefur/reglur_fyrir_haskola_islands#69

In addition, Faculty rules shall specify the degrees required for admission to study in each instance. A Faculty shall also make provision for the minimum grades required in previous study, if applicable. These (more detailed) rules must be approved by the University Council. There may be some variations between disciplines, but in general the prerequisite for admission to doctoral studies is a master's degree with a first class grade.

Accreditation of fields of study

The fields of study offered at Higher Education Institutions in Iceland must be *accredited* by the Minister of Education, Science and Culture, as specified in the *Higher Education Institutions Act, No. 63/2006*⁶⁹ and further detailed in the Regulation on the Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions, No. 1067/2006⁷⁰ [*Reglur um viðurkenningu háskóla*]. Degrees and diplomas that can be offered by Icelandic HEIs are systematically described in a *National Qualification Framework for higher education*,⁷¹ issued by the Minister of Education, Science and Culture. Within the boundaries set by the accredited fields of study (and the relevant sub-categories or subjects), and in keeping with the National Qualification Framework, Icelandic HEIs are free to decide which programmes of study they offer, cf. article 7 of the Higher Education Institutions Act.

In the case of the University of Iceland new programmes are approved by the University Council, after a proposal from the Faculty that has been accepted by the respective School Board (the university is composed of five schools, each of which has 3–6 faculties).

⁶⁹ <http://eng.menntamalaraduneyti.is/media/MRN-PDF-Althjodlegt/Higher-Education-Act-no.-63-2006nytt.pdf>

⁷⁰ http://www.hi.is/files/accreditation_of_heis.pdf

⁷¹ <http://www.stjornartidindi.is/DocumentActions.aspx?ActionType=Open&documentID=afd35930-4c5a-4de4-bd7e-2134da404446>

Quality control

As specified in articles 11 and 12 of the Higher Education Institutions Act, No. 63/2006,⁷² quality control of teaching and research is carried out both by an internal evaluation of HEI's and by regular external evaluation. The Minister of Education, Science and Culture lays down rules on quality control of teaching and research. Higher Education Institutions carry out systematic quality control of teaching and research on the basis of an internal evaluation. The internal evaluation of a university and its individual units shall be carried out regularly and deal with policy and objectives, study content, teaching, teaching methods, assessment, research, research effectiveness, working conditions, administration and external relations. Active participation of staff and students in the internal quality control process of HEI's shall be ensured as appropriate. HEI's shall publish information about their internal quality control system. See for example http://english.hi.is/quality_assurance

According to articles 13 and 14 of the HEIs Act, the Minister of Education, Science and Culture determines when to conduct an external evaluation of teaching and research and sets the agenda for three years. In addition, the Minister can decide to conduct a special evaluation of a HEI or its specific units when required. The external evaluation can involve an institution as a whole, or individual fields of study or science, faculties, study programmes or other specified elements of the institution's operation. The external evaluation can also involve several institutions at a time.

An external evaluation is carried out in consultation with the respective HEI, which provides the assistance and information required for the evaluation. Evaluation reports, produced on the basis of the Act, shall be published together with a statement regarding how the respective university intends to react to the evaluation results. See http://www.menntamalaraduneyti.is/haskola_visindamal/mat-og-uttektr/

According to the Act, the Minister of Education, Science and Culture can delegate the administration of an external evaluation of teaching and research to a committee, an institution, a company or other relevant agent, national or international. This has been delegated to the Icelandic Centre for Research (*Rannis*).⁷³

The implementation of an external evaluation shall be, according to the Act, assigned to an independent agent and the evaluation process

⁷² <http://eng.menntamalaraduneyti.is/media/MRN-PDF-Althjodlegt/Higher-Education-Act-no.-63-2006nytt.pdf>

⁷³ <http://www.rannis.is/english/>

shall involve both domestic and foreign experts, as well as a student representative. The implementation has been assigned to the Quality Board for Icelandic Higher Education⁷⁴ which has published the Icelandic Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF).⁷⁵ The prime objective of the QEF is to support the autonomous and diverse higher education institutions in the task of providing excellent learning experience to students and awarding high standards of degrees.

According to article 10 of the Higher Education Act, universities are authorized to evaluate studies from other HEIs. The term recognition (*viðurkenning*) is used in the context to confirm that studies are valued satisfactory as a part of a study programme or for the purpose of further studies, a degree or employment activities. The result is to place the studies at a comparable level in the Icelandic system.

In the transcript of records each course taken in another university is named and shown as ECTS “transferred credits from a certain amount of ECTS transferred from a certain university” (*metið nám*) and instead of the grade the term *transferred* (*metið*) is used.

According to the National Qualification Framework for higher education in Iceland HEIs shall describe learning outcomes for each qualification and demonstrate how the objectives of the description are attained by the courses or parts of the study programmes that constitute each qualification. Institutions shall specify, in their Diploma Supplements, to which cycle and stage each qualification belongs, according to the National Qualification Framework for higher education in Iceland. See National Qualification Framework for higher education.⁷⁶

Curriculum, Course Catalogue etc.

Each institution publishes its curriculum for their different courses and programmes. In the case of the University of Iceland the Course Catalogue (curriculum), published annually, shall describe, among other things, organisation of study in each School and Faculty, School and Faculty administration, study programmes, entrance requirements, study requirements and learning outcomes, progress of study, maximum length of study, degrees granted, courses offered and their weighting, instructional terms, methods of instruction, organisation of instruction, curriculum details, evaluation of

⁷⁴ <http://www.rannis.is/qef/quality-board/>

⁷⁵ <http://www.rannis.is/qef/quality-enhancement-framework/>

⁷⁶ <http://www.stjornartidindi.is/DocumentActions.aspx?ActionType=Open&documentID=afd35930-4c5a-4de4-bd7e-2134da404446>

study, examination requirements, practical training, assignments and all other aspects of study, as applicable.

General information on entrance requirements, limits to the number of students, the application procedure, registration, payment of fees, examinations, credits and grades, student services and student's rights and duties shall also be published in the Course Catalogue.

Legislation

Higher Education Institutions Act, no. 63/2006, English version:

[http://eng.menntamalaraduneyti.is/media/MRN-PDF-Althjodlegt/](http://eng.menntamalaraduneyti.is/media/MRN-PDF-Althjodlegt/Higher-Education-Act-no.-63-2006nytt.pdf)

Higher-Education-Act-no.-63-2006nytt.pdf

Icelandic version <http://www.althingi.is/lagas/nuna/2006063.html>

The Public Higher Education Institutions Act, no. 85/2008,

English version [http://eng.menntamalaraduneyti.is/media/MRN-PDF-](http://eng.menntamalaraduneyti.is/media/MRN-PDF-Althjodlegt/Act-on-Public-Higher-Education-Institutions-no-85-2008---amended-2010.pdf)

Althjodlegt/Act-on-Public-Higher-Education-Institutions-no-85-2008---amended-

2010.pdf, Icelandic version <http://www.althingi.is/lagas/nuna/2008085.html>

(amended July 2013).

The National Qualification Framework for Higher Education,

[http://www.stjornartidindi.is/DocumentActions.aspx?ActionType=Open&documentID](http://www.stjornartidindi.is/DocumentActions.aspx?ActionType=Open&documentID=afd35930-4c5a-4de4-bd7e-2134da404446)

=afd35930-4c5a-4de4-bd7e-2134da404446

Regulation on the Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions, no. 1067/2006,

English version http://www.hi.is/files/accreditation_of_heis.pdf (draft translation),

Icelandic version [http://www.stjornartidindi.is/Advert.aspx?ID=1e376204-ca17-](http://www.stjornartidindi.is/Advert.aspx?ID=1e376204-ca17-40c8-892e-f8baba1177c6)

40c8-892e-f8baba1177c6

Regulation on Quality Assurance of Teaching and Research, no. 321/2009 (in Ice-

landic only) [http://www.stjornartidindi.is/Advert.aspx?ID=0291e0b1-b673-46d3-](http://www.stjornartidindi.is/Advert.aspx?ID=0291e0b1-b673-46d3-b037-f22772902b22)

b037-f22772902b22

Regulation on Doctoral Studies in Higher Education Institutions, no. 37/2007 (in

Icelandic only)

[http://www.stjornartidindi.is/Advert.aspx?ID=e38bc3ce-a822-4c6c-af76-](http://www.stjornartidindi.is/Advert.aspx?ID=e38bc3ce-a822-4c6c-af76-d4e5766a7d02)

d4e5766a7d02

Addresses

- *Mennta- og menningarmálaráðuneytið*
Ministry of education, Science and Culture.
www.menntamalaraduneyti.is/
- *Háskóli Íslands*
University of Iceland
<http://english.hi.is>
Office for Academic Affairs, University of Iceland
[ENIC-NARIC Iceland]

- *Samstarfsnefnd háskólastigsins*
www.hi.is/adalvefur/samstarfsnefnd_haskolastigsins
- *Gæðaráð íslenskra háskóla*
www.rannis.is/starfsemi/gaedarad/
Quality Board for Icelandic Higher Education
<http://en.rannis.is/activities/quality-enhancement-framework/>
- *Rannis*
Icelandic Centre for Research
www.rannis.is/

Norway

Higher education in Norway – Introduction

Higher education is regulated in the Act relating to universities and university colleges 2005 (Universities and Colleges Act; Norwegian: “Lov om universiteter og høyskoler” <http://lovdata.no/pro/#document/NL/lov/2005-04-01-15>).

Section 1–1 of the Act lists the three principal duties of the institutions:

- To offer education at a high international level.
- To do research at a high international level.
- To disseminate research and knowledge to the public.

The Act applies to both public and private institutions.

Section 1–3, a) states that higher education should be based on “the foremost within research.”

The Act and its regulations

Insofar as the Act itself does not give detailed provisions, it authorizes the Ministry of Education and Research to issue Regulations. The Ministry has issued a number of such regulations. In some areas, the institutions themselves may also issue regulations.

Categories of institutions

Under the Act, there are three categories of institutions:

- Universities.
- Specialized universities (vitenskapelig høyskole).
- University colleges.⁷⁷

Universities are those institutions which

- Were established as such under previous legislation, or
- later achieved accreditation as universities.

The same applies to the other categories.

Reference: Universities and colleges act, sec. 1–2.

Awarding degrees

Which degrees the various institutions may award, is set out in the “Regulations on Degrees and Titles protected by law” (FOR 2005–12–16 nr 1574) (The Norwegian “Forskrift om grader og yrkesutdanninger, beskyttet tittel og normert studietid ved universiteter og høyskoler”).

Establishing programmes; self-accreditation:

- All *universities* are self-accrediting at all levels (bachelor’s, master’s and PhD).
- *Specialized universities* are self-accrediting at bachelor’s level. In addition, they are self-accrediting at second and third cycle level in those fields where they are legally entitled to award doctoral degrees (i.e. those fields in which they are specialized).

⁷⁷ Some institutions which have no accreditation under the Act may have accreditation for individual programmes. If so, the Act applies to that or those programmes. These institutions have the right to use the name “Høyskole” (university college). In this respect, it is not possible to know the difference between an accredited university college and a university college with accredited study programme by the name of the institution.

- *University colleges* are also self-accrediting at bachelor's level. In addition, they may have accreditation from NOKUT for specific second and third level programmes. They are self-accrediting at second and third cycle level in those fields where they are specialized).

Insofar as an institution is self-accrediting, it is authorized to decide for itself which programmes to establish, and which courses make up the various programmes.

Reference: Universities and Colleges Act, sec. 3–3, subsections 1 and 2.

Establishing programmes; NOKUT accreditation.

Institutions that wish to establish programmes for which they may not self-accredit, will have to apply to the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) in each particular case. If, within the *new* programme, the institution proposes to use elements from a programme which is already accredited, the pre-existing elements will have to be re-accredited.

The contents of a programme

The programme description (curriculum) of each programme is determined by the institution's highest governing body, the Board. Included in the curriculum is the course descriptions (sometimes called module descriptions).

Reference: Universities and Colleges Act, sec. 3–3, subsection 3.

Examinations and grading

Two grading scales apply:

- The A–F scale (Pass grades: A–E; fail grade: F).
- The Pass/Fail scale.

Reference: Universities and Colleges Act, sec. 3–9, subsection 6.

As a rule, institutions decide for themselves whether to use internal or external examiners, and how many. However, when assessing a student's independent work in a higher degree programme (in practice: master's theses), the institutions are obligated to use at least two examiners, and one examiner must be external.

Reference: Universities and Colleges Act, sec. 3–9, subsec. 2, second sentence.

Joint degrees

If the institution has self-accrediting powers at the relevant level (cycle), then the institution is also authorized to enter into joint programme collaboration with other institutions, in Norway and abroad. The Ministry may issue regulations concerning degree programmes established in collaboration between two or more institutions.

Reference: Universities and Colleges Act, sec. 3–2, subsection 1.

Diplomas

All students who complete a degree programme, are entitled to a diploma. If the programme in question is a joint degree programme, the diploma must say so. All diplomas are to be accompanied by a Diploma Supplement.

Reference: Universities and Colleges Act, sec. 3–11, subsections 1 and 4.

The quality assurance regulations

These regulations are issued by the Ministry pursuant to the provisions mentioned immediately above. The regulations state that multi-institution collaborations on joint degree programmes shall be based on written agreements between all the participating institutions (the partners). The agreement should include provisions concerning the various partners responsibilities, as well as provisions on the awarding of the degree and the diploma(s). The regulations also explicitly state that each student in a joint degree programme must be ensured a mobility period (studieopphold) at a cooperating institution.

The regulations (“Regulations concerning quality assurance and quality development in higher education and tertiary vocational education”; in Norwegian: “Forskrift om kvalitetssikring og kvalitetsutvikling i høyere utdanning og fagskole utdanning”) can be found here: <http://lovdata.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2010-02-01-96>

The supervision regulations

These regulations are issued by NOKUT, on authority delegated from the Ministry. They are called “Regulations concerning supervision of the educational quality in higher education (Academic Supervisions Regulations)”; in Norwegian: “Forskrift om tilsyn med utdannings kvaliteten i høyere utdanning” (studietilsynsforskriften) (<http://lovdata.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2013-02-28-237>).

They require all programmes of study to be described with reference to learning outcomes, which must be expressed in terms of a candidates expected achievements in knowledge, skills and general competence, as

set out in the National Qualifications Framework. Teaching methods and assessment forms must be in alignment with the learning outcomes.

The Qualifications Framework

The Ministry adopted the Norwegian Qualifications Framework for life-long learning on 15th December 2011 (in Norwegian: “Nasjonalt kvalifikasjonsrammeverk for livslang læring (NKR)”). The framework has eight levels, but level 1 is not in use in Norway. Levels 6–8 apply to higher education, and are also known as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycles.

- http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd/tema/hoyere_utdanning/nasjonalt-kvalifikasjonsrammeverk.html?id=564809
- http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/KD/Vedlegg/Internasjonalt/NQR_higher_education.pdf

Legislation

www.lovdato.no

Lov om universiteter og høyskoler, 2005/Act relating to universities and university colleges, 2005, LOV-2005-04-01-15 (only in Norwegian) <http://lovdato.no/dokument/NL/lov/2005-04-01-15>

Forskrift om grader og yrkesutdanninger, beskyttet tittel og normert studietid ved universiteter og høyskoler, 2005/Regulations on degrees and professional programmes, protected titles and prescribed length of study programmes at Norwegian Higher Education Institutions, 2005, FOR-2005-12-16-1574 (only in Norwegian) <http://lovdato.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2005-12-16-1574>

Forskrift om kvalitetssikring og kvalitetsutvikling i høyere utdanning og fagskoleutdanning/Ministerial Regulations concerning quality assurance and quality development in higher education and tertiary vocational education, 2010, FOR-2010-02-23-96 <http://lovdato.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2010-02-23-96>

Forskrift om utdanningskvaliteten i høyere utdanning (Studietilsynsforskriften)/Regulations concerning supervision of the educational quality in higher education (Academic Supervision Regulations), 2013, FOR-2013-02-28-237 <http://lovdato.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2013-02-28-237>

<http://www.nokut.no/no/Universitet-og-hoyskoler/Lover-og-forskrifter/> in English

Forskrift om krav til master-grad/Regulations concerning the master's degree, 2005, only in Norwegian.

<http://lovdato.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2005-12-01-1392>

Nasjonalt kvalifikasjonsrammeverk for livslang læring (NKR), 2011/The Norwegian National Qualifications Framework, adopted by the Ministry of Education and Research.

<http://www.nokut.no/en/Facts-and-statistics/The-Norwegian-Educational-System/The-Norwegian-qualifications-framework/>

Addresses

- *Kunnskapsdepartementet*
Ministry of Education and Research.
www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd.html?id=586
- *NOKUT – Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen*
Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education.
www.nokut.no [ENIC-NARIC Norway]
- *Senter for internasjonalisering av utdanning*
Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU).
www.siu.no
- *Universitets- og høyskolerådet*
The Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions.
www.uhr.no

Sweden

Swedish participation in joint Master's programmes

The extent of courses and study programmes

The extent of a course or study programme shall be denoted by credits, with full-time study during a normal academic year of 40 weeks corresponding to 60 credits.

Credit transfer

If a student at a higher education institution in Sweden has successfully completed a higher education course or study programme, she or he is entitled to transfer the credits awarded for a course or study programme at another higher education institution. This does not apply, however, if there is a substantial difference between these courses or study programmes.

The same applies for students who have successfully completed a course or study programme:

- at a university or higher education institution in Denmark, Finland, Iceland or Norway or a signatory to the Council of Europe's Convention of 11th April 1997 on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, or
- at Nordiska högskolan för folkhälsovetenskap (NHV – The Nordic School of Public Health).

A student is entitled to transfer credits from a course or study programme other than that mentioned above if the nature and extent of the knowledge and skills cited by the student are such that they correspond on the whole to the course or study programme for which the credits are to be recognised. A student may also be given credit for corresponding knowledge and skills acquired in a vocational or professional capacity.

The higher education institution shall assess whether credits can be awarded for the prior course or study programme or professional or vocational experience.

Credits may only be awarded to those who are students unless otherwise provided by statute or ordinance.

Joint degrees

A Swedish higher education institution may take part in educational cooperation with one or more foreign universities or university colleges leading to a joint degree only if this cooperation is based on a written agreement. The individual Swedish university decides independently on its own international collaboration as well as whether it will issue a joint degree or not. The participation is regulated through the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance 2010:1064.

An agreement of this kind may only be entered into by a Swedish higher education institution for which the state is the accountable authority with another national higher education institution or a higher education institution outside Sweden that is not a physical individual.

In the written agreement the collaborating higher education institutions shall ensure that every component of the programme is arranged by one of the higher education institutions that takes part in the educational cooperation, and that the components of the programme arranged by an institution other than the higher education institution itself shall also be based on an academic or artistic footing and on proven experience and shall be organised so that the programme maintains a high standard.

The agreement shall indicate clearly which component of the programme the higher education institution shall organise and which component of the programme another higher education institution shall organise.

Further the agreement must specify to which higher education institution or institutions organising components of the programme an applicant to the programme is to be admitted and that the higher education institution may admit applicants only to the component of the programme arranged by the higher education institution.

Students shall be able to transfer credits for a successfully completed component of a programme at another higher education institution to the programme at the higher education institution without special review. It must also be clear what qualification the programme can lead to at each of the higher education institutions.

A student who has been admitted at another higher education institution to a component of the programme shall be considered to be a student admitted to a higher education institution being a partner in the written agreement when he or she is pursuing studies within the framework of the programme at that higher education institution. This applies only if the other higher education institution organises the component of the programme to which it has admitted the student.

Credits for a component of a programme subject to the agreement successfully completed by a student at another higher education institution shall be transferred to a programme at a higher education institution being a partner in the agreement without special review.

A Swedish higher education institution may award a joint degree only if the student has completed the programme and also fulfilled the requirements for the award of a qualification at the higher education institution and at least one other higher education institution that has organised a component of the programme.

Each higher education institution awarding a qualification included in the joint degree may confer the degree awarded by the higher education institution.

Every qualification included in the joint degree awarded by a foreign higher education institution must belong to the same cycle as at the Swedish higher education institution.

When a higher education institution awards a joint degree together with another higher education institution, it may use the same document for its award as the other higher education institution.

Admission to second-cycle courses and study programmes

A person meets the general entry requirements for a course or study programme leading to the award of a second-cycle general qualification or a second-cycle qualification in the fine, applied and performing arts if he or she:

- possesses a first-cycle qualification comprising at least 180 credits or a corresponding qualification from abroad, or
- by virtue of courses and study programmes in Sweden or abroad, practical experience or some other circumstance has the aptitude to benefit from the course or study programme.

An exemption may be made to the requirement of a qualification pursuant to item 1 in the first paragraph if an applicant is considered to meet the requirements for the award of such a qualification but no certificate has been issued due to special circumstances.

A person meets the general entry requirements for a course or study programme leading to the award of a second-cycle professional qualification that requires specific professional registration or the prior award of a specific qualification if he or she has acquired the specified professional registration or possesses the specified qualification. A person who fulfils the conditions laid down in item 2 above also meets the general entry requirements. This does not apply however if the study programme leads to the award of a professional qualification that requires professional registration.

Legislation

The Higher Education Act (1992:1434)/Högskolelagen (1992:1434), Chapter 1, Section 18 and 18. Translation: <http://www.uhr.se/sv/Information-in-English/Laws-and-regulations/The-Swedish-Higher-Education-Act/>

The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), Chapter 6, Section 2,6,6,8,11a–f, Chapter 7, Section 28 and 29. Translation: <http://www.uhr.se/sv/Information-in-English/Laws-and-regulations/The-Higher-Education-Ordinance/>

Appendix 1 List of Higher Education Institutions for which the state is the accountable authority and their names/Förteckning över universiteter och högskolor som staten är huvudman för samt deras benämning.

Appendix 2 Qualifications ordinance.

Addresses

- *Utbildningsdepartementet*
Ministry of Education and Research
www.regeringen.se/sb/d/1454
- *Universitets- och högskolerådet*
Swedish Council for Higher education
www.uhr.se/Information-in-English/
(ENIC-NARIC Sweden)

- *Universitetskanslerämbetet*
Swedish Higher Education Authority
www.uk-ambetet.se/
- *Sveriges universitets- och högskoleförbund*
The Association of Swedish Higher Education
www.suhf.se/
- *Svenska Institutet*
The Swedish Insitute
<https://si.se/>

Appendix 2:

Descriptions of the educational systems in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden⁷⁸ – 28.10.2014

Denmark

Danish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education, 2012

Public higher education institutions in Denmark are regulated by national legislation concerning degree structures, teacher qualifications and examinations. All programmes are accredited by national, independent accreditation agencies and the Accreditation Council.⁷⁹

Higher education institutions

Higher education is offered by four types of higher education institutions:

- Academies of Professional Higher Education (*Erhvervsakademi*) offering professionally oriented first cycle degree programmes.
- University Colleges (*Professionshøjskole*) offering professionally oriented first cycle degree programmes.
- Research universities (*Universitet*) offering first, second and third cycle degree programmes in all academic disciplines.

⁷⁸ Published by the ENIC-NARIC Networks <http://www.enic-naric.net/index.aspx?s=n&r=g&d=about> Section 8 in Diploma Supplement.

⁷⁹ Since 1st July 2013 accreditation within higher education takes place as institutional accreditation, or if the institutions have not yet received an institutional accreditation as programme accreditation. A higher education institution may always ask for an accreditation of a programme on the condition that the higher education institution pays for the accreditation.

University level institutions offering first, second and third cycle degree programmes in subject fields such as architecture, design, music and fine and performing arts.

- Most of the higher education institutions are regulated by the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education (types 1–4). The Ministry of Culture regulates a small number of higher education institutions offering first, second and third cycle degree programmes in fine and performing arts (type 4).

Degrees in the Danish Higher education System

Danish qualifications levels	Ordinary higher education degrees	Adult/Continuing higher education degrees	Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area – Bologna Framework	European/National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning – EQF/NQF
h	Academy Profession (AP) degree (90–150 ECTS)	Academy Profession (AP) degree (60 ECTS) (also known as Further Adult Education (VU) degree)	Short cycle	Level 5
Bachelor's level	Professional Bachelor's degree (180–270 ECTS)*	Diploma degree (60 ECTS)	First cycle	Level 6
	Bachelor's degree (within the arts) (180 ECTS)			
	Bachelor's degree (180 ECTS)			
Master's level	Master's degree (within the arts) (120–180 ECTS)	Master degree (60–90 ECTS)	Second cycle	Level 7
	Master's degree (120 ECTS)**			
PhD level	PhD degree (180 ECTS)		Third cycle	Level 8

* Can be obtained through a full regular bachelor's programme (180-240 ECTS) or a top up bachelor's programme following an Academy Profession degree.

** A few Master's programmes are up to 180 ECTS.

Danish higher education institutions use ECTS credits for measuring study activities. 60 ECTS correspond to one year's full-time study.

Qualifications framework

The qualification levels form the basis for the Danish National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, which is certified in accordance with the overarching Bologna Framework according to the principles adopted by the European Ministers of Higher Education. Danish higher education qualifications at levels 5–8 of the Danish Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (NQF) are also compatible with levels 5–8 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

Admission and progression

General access to higher education in Denmark requires an Upper Secondary School Leaving Certificate or comparable qualifications. Admission to some particular programmes requires entrance examination or submission of a portfolio of artistic work.

Completion of a short-cycle degree qualifies students for admission to a first cycle programme. Holders of an Academy Profession degree can obtain a Professional Bachelor's degree within the same field of study through a top-up programme. Completion of a first cycle degree qualifies students for admission to the second cycle.

Ordinary Higher Education degrees

The Academy Profession degree is awarded after 90–150 ECTS and includes a period of work placement of at least 15 ECTS. The programmes are development-based and combine theoretical studies with a practical approach. Programmes are, among others, offered within Marketing Management, Computer Science and Chemical and Biotechnical Science. The Danish title is field of study followed by the abbreviation *AK* and the English title is *AP Graduate in* [field of study].

The Professional Bachelor's degree is awarded after 180–240 ECTS and includes a period of work placement of at least 30 ECTS. The programmes are applied programmes. They are development-based and combine theoretical studies with a practical approach. Examples of professional bachelor's degree holders are nurses, primary and lower secondary school teachers and certain types of engineers. The Danish title is *Professionsbachelor i* [field of study] and the English title is *Bachelor of* [field of study].

The Bachelor's degree from a university is awarded after 180 ECTS. The programmes are research-based and are offered in all scientific fields. The Danish title is *Bachelor (BA) i* [field of study] or *Bachelor (BSc) i* [field of study] and the English title is *Bachelor of Arts (BA) in* [field of study] or *Bachelor (BSc) of Science in* [field of study].

The Bachelor's degree (within the arts) is awarded after 180 ECTS. The programmes are based on research and artistic research. Programmes are offered within the fine arts. The Danish title is *Bachelor (BA) i* [field of study], *Bachelor i musik (BMus)* [field of study] or *Bachelor i billedkunst (BFA)* [field of study] and the English title is *Bachelor of Arts (BA) in* [field of study], *Bachelor of Music (BMus)* [field of study] or *Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in* [field of study]. A higher education degree within theatre or filmmaking is awarded after 4 years of study (240 ECTS).

The Master's degree is awarded after 120 ECTS. The programmes are research-based and are offered in all scientific fields. The Danish title is abbreviated to *Cand.* [latin abbreviation of academic area] *i* [field of study]. The English title is *Master of Arts (MA) in* [field of study] or *Master of Science (MSc) in* [field of study].

The Master's degree (within the arts) is awarded after 120–180 ECTS. The programmes are based on research and artistic research. The Danish title is abbreviated to *Cand.* [latin abbreviation of academic area] [field of study]. The English title is *Master of Arts (MA) in* [field of study], *Master of Music (MMus)* [field of study] or *Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in* [field of study]. Music Academies offer a specialist degree of 2 to 4 years following the master's degree.

The PhD degree is awarded after 180 ECTS. PhD programmes are offered by the universities and some university level institutions offering degrees in the artistic and cultural field.

Detailed descriptions of degree levels can be found in the Danish Qualifications Framework at www.nqf.dk. Please consult the relevant Diploma Supplement for information about the learning outcome of any specific degree.

Adult and continuing higher education

The programmes normally consist of 2 years of part-time study, equivalent to 1 year of full-time study (60 ECTS credits). Certain master programmes require 1½ years of full-time study (90 ECTS credits). Admission requirements are a relevant educational qualification and at least 2 years of relevant work experience.

Adult education qualifications are available at levels corresponding to those of the ordinary higher education system.

- The Further Adult Education degree (*videregående voksenuddannelse*) is awarded after studies at short cycle level and gives access to diploma programmes.

- The Diploma degree (*diplomuddannelse*) is awarded after studies at first cycle level and gives access to master programmes.
- The Master degree (*masteruddannelse*) is awarded after studies at second cycle level.

The 7 point grading scale

The grading system used in all state-regulated education programmes as of September 2007 is the 7 point grading scale. Apart from the 7 point grading scale, pass/fail assessment may also be used. 02 is the minimum grade for passing an exam.

Description of grades: 12: For an excellent performance displaying a high level of command of all aspects of the relevant material, with no or only a few minor weaknesses; 10: For a very good performance displaying a high level of command of most aspects of the relevant material, with only minor weaknesses; 7: For a good performance displaying good command of the relevant material but also some weaknesses; 4: For a fair performance displaying some command of the relevant material but also some major weaknesses; 02 For a performance meeting only the minimum requirements for acceptance; 00: For a performance which does not meet the minimum requirements for acceptance; -3 For: a performance which is unacceptable in all respects.

Finland

Finnish National Board of Education

Information on the National Higher Education System

The Finnish education system consists of basic education, general and vocational upper secondary education, higher education and adult education. The basic education consists of a 9-year compulsory school for all children from 7 to 16 years of age.

Post-compulsory education is given by general upper secondary schools and vocational institutions. The general upper secondary school provides a 3-year general education curriculum, at the end of which the pupil takes the national Matriculation examination (*ylioppilastutkinto/studentexamen*). Vocational institutions provide 3-year programmes, which lead to upper secondary vocational qualifications (*ammattillinen perustutkinto/yrkesinriktad grundexamen*).

General eligibility for higher education is given by the Matriculation examination and the upper secondary vocational qualification. These

qualifications require at least 12 years of schooling. Equivalent foreign qualifications also give general eligibility for higher education.

The Finnish higher education system comprises of universities (yliopisto/universitet) and polytechnics (ammattikorkeakoulu, AMK/yrkeshögskola, YH). All universities engage in both education and research and have the right to award doctorates. The polytechnics are multi-field institutions of professional higher education. Polytechnics engage in applied research and development. The polytechnics use the terms polytechnic or university of applied sciences when referring to themselves. This higher education system description uses the term polytechnic.

Higher education studies are measured in credits (opintopiste/studiepoäng). Study courses are quantified according to the work load required. One year of studies is equivalent to 1,600 hours of student work on the average and is defined as 60 credits. The credit system complies with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

University degrees

The Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004) defines the objectives, extent and overall structure of degrees. The universities decide on the detailed contents and structure of the degrees they award. They also decide on their curricula and forms of instruction.

First-cycle university degree

The first-cycle university degree consists of at least 180 credits (3 years of full-time study). The degree is called kandidaatti/kandidat in all fields of study except Law (oikeusnotaari/rättsnotarie) and Pharmacy (farmaseutti/farmaceut). The determined English translation for all these degrees is Bachelor's degree, the most common degrees being the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science.

Studies leading to the degree provide the student with: (1) knowledge of the fundamentals of the major and minor subjects or corresponding study entities or studies included in the degree programme and the prerequisites for following developments in the field; (2) knowledge and skills needed for scientific thinking and the use of scientific methods or knowledge and skills needed for artistic work; (3) knowledge and skills needed for studies leading to a higher university degree and for continuous learning; (4) a capacity for applying the acquired knowledge and skills to work; and (5) adequate language and communication skills.

Studies leading to the degree may include: basic and intermediate studies; language and communication studies; interdisciplinary pro-

grammes; other studies and work practice for professional development. The degree includes a Bachelor's thesis (6–10 credits).

The second-cycle university degree

The second-cycle university degree consists of at least 120 credits (2 years of full-time study). The degree is usually called *maisteri/magister*. Other second-cycle degree titles are *diplomi-insinööri/diplomingenjör* (Technology), *proviisori/provisor* (Pharmacy) and *arkkitehti/arkitekt* (Architecture). The determined English translation for all these degrees is Master's degree, the most common degrees being the Master of Arts or Master of Science. The second-cycle university degree title in the fields of Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Dentistry is *lisensiaatti/licentiat*, the English title being Licentiate. The admission requirement for the second-cycle university degree is a first-cycle degree.

In the fields of Medicine and Dentistry the university may arrange the education leading to the second-cycle university degree without including a first-cycle university degree in the education. In Medicine the degree consists of 360 credits (6 years of full-time study) and in Dentistry the degree consists of 300 credits (5 years of full-time study).

Studies leading to the second-cycle university degree provide the student with: (1) good overall knowledge of the major subject or a corresponding entity and conversance with the fundamentals of the minor subject or good knowledge of the advanced studies included in the degree programme; (2) knowledge and skills needed to apply scientific knowledge and scientific methods or knowledge and skills needed for independent and demanding artistic work; (3) knowledge and skills needed for independently operating as an expert and developer of the field; (4) knowledge and skills needed for scientific or artistic postgraduate education; and (5) good language and communication skills.

The studies leading to the second-cycle university degree may include: basic and intermediate studies and advanced studies; language and communication studies; interdisciplinary study programmes; other studies; and internship improving expertise. The degree includes a Master's thesis (20–40 credits).

Doctoral degrees

Students can apply for doctoral studies after the completion of a relevant second-cycle degree. The aim of doctoral studies is to provide student with an in-depth knowledge of their field of research and capabilities to produce novel scientific knowledge independently.

A pre-doctoral degree of *lisensiaatti/licentiat* (Licentiate) may be taken before the Doctor's degree and in general it takes 2 years of full-time study to complete.

The Doctor's degree takes approximately 4 years to complete after the second-cycle degree or 2 further years following the pre-doctoral degree. A student who has been admitted to complete the Doctor's degree must complete a given amount of studies, show independent and critical thinking in the field of research and write a Doctor's dissertation and defend it in public.

Polytechnic degrees

The government decree on polytechnics (352/2003 including amendments) defines the objectives, extent and overall structure of polytechnic degrees. The Ministry of Education confirms the degree programmes of polytechnics, and within the framework of these regulations, the polytechnics decide on the content and structure of their degrees in more detail. The polytechnics also decide on their annual curricula and forms of instruction.

First-cycle polytechnic degrees

The first-cycle polytechnic degree consists of 180, 210 or 240 credits (3 to 4 years of full-time study) depending on the study field. For specific reasons, the Ministry of Education may confirm the scope of the degree to exceed 240 credits. The first-cycle polytechnic degree is called *ammattikorkeakoulututkinto/yrkeshögskoleexamen*. The determined English translation for the degree is Bachelor's degree. The degree titles indicate the field of study, e.g. Bachelor of Engineering or Bachelor of Health Care.

Studies leading to the degree provide the student with (1) broad overall knowledge and skills with relevant theoretical background for working as expert of the field; (2) knowledge and skills needed for following and advancing developments in the field; (3) knowledge and skills needed for continuous learning; (4) adequate language and communication skills; and (5) knowledge and skills required in the field internationally.

The first-cycle polytechnic degree comprises basic and professional studies, elective studies, a practical training period and a Bachelor's thesis or a final project.

The second-cycle polytechnic degrees

The second-cycle polytechnic degree consists of 60 or 90 credits (1 or 1.5 years of full-time study). The degree is called *ylempi ammattikorkeakoulututkinto/högre yrkeshögskoleexamen*. The determined English

translation for the second-cycle polytechnic degree is Master's degree. The degree titles indicate the field of study, e.g. Master of Culture and Art or Master of Business Administration. Eligibility for second-cycle polytechnic degrees is given by a relevant first-cycle degree with at least 3 years of relevant work or artistic experience.

Studies leading to the degree provide the student with (1) broad and advanced knowledge and skills for developing the professional field as well as the theoretical skills for working in demanding expert and leadership positions in the field; (2) profound understanding of the field, its relation to work life and society at large as well as the knowledge and skills needed for following and analysing both theoretical and professional developments in the field; (3) capacity for life-long learning and continuous development of one's own expertise (4) good language and communication skills required in work life; and (5) knowledge and skills needed to function and communicate in the field internationally.

The second-cycle polytechnic degree comprises advanced professional studies, elective studies and a final thesis or a final project.

Iceland

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

The Higher Education System in Iceland (revised July 2013)

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has the overall responsibility for higher education on Iceland. The legal framework covering higher education in Iceland is the Higher Education Institution Act no. 63/2006. This framework act applies to all educational institutions providing higher education leading to a degree and which have been accredited by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, according to rules on accreditation no. 1067/2006. Each institution of higher education is accredited in particular fields of study and subdivisions therein.

There are currently seven accredited institutions of higher education in Iceland. University of Iceland, University of Akureyri, The Agricultural University of Iceland and Holar University College are public institutions of higher education and are subject to the Act on Public Higher Education Institutions no. 85/2008 with amendments. Reykjavik University, Bifröst University and Iceland Academy of the Arts are private institutions and operate under structural charters approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. All higher education institutions receive

state funding. The Ministry concludes performance-related contracts with all higher education institutions under its administration.

Quality assurance of higher education institutions, both with regards to research and teaching, is carried out by an internal evaluation of higher education institutions as well as by periodic external evaluation.

The Icelandic Quality Board for Higher Education monitors the quality of the education offered in accordance with the Icelandic Quality Enhancement Framework and rules no. 321/2009.

The admission requirements for entry into tertiary education are a matriculation exam (Stúdentspróf) from an upper secondary school or an equivalent final examination. Some fields of study have additional entrance requirements. Currently, compulsory education in Iceland is between the ages of six and sixteen. Upper secondary education leading to matriculation examination is usually organized as three to four years of study.

According to the Higher Education Act no. 63/2006, teaching in higher education institutions shall be organised in courses that are evaluated according to standardized credits (ECTS). The higher education level applies credits equivalent to the European Credit Transfer System. A full study programme shall normally consist of 60 credits per academic year and reflect the total student workload during that time.

The academic year at Icelandic higher education institutions generally runs from August/September until May, and it is divided into two semesters, an autumn semester and a spring semester. Student assessment is generally based on written, oral or practical examinations, held at the end of each semester, in addition to semester papers and assignments carried out throughout the course of study.

The Minister of Education, Science and Culture issues a National Qualification Framework for Iceland, a systematic description of the structure and the degrees of higher education specifically based on learning outcomes (no. 530/2011). All accredited higher education institutes in Iceland shall follow this framework.

Organisation and structure of qualifications and degrees awarded at higher education institutions in Iceland

ISCED		Credits (ECTS)	Total credits (ECTS)
5	Cycle 1.1 Diploma	30–120	30–120
6	Cycle 1.2 Bachelor's degree	180–240	180–240
7	Cycle 2.1 Qualification at master level	30–120	210–360
	Cycle 2.2 Master's degree	90–120	270–360
8	Cycle 3 Doctoral degree	180–	450–

The first higher education cycle includes two stages, Diploma (1.1) and Bachelor's degree (1.2)

Diploma is defined as a qualification obtained at a higher education institution where the holder has completed 30–120 ECTS credits of an organised study programme.

Bachelor's Degree (BA, BS, B.Ed.) is defined as a qualification obtained at a higher education institution where the holder has completed 180–240 ECTS credits of an organised study programme.

The second higher education cycle includes two stages, the first stage is a Qualification at Master level (2.1) and the second stage is a Master's degree (2.2)

Qualification at Master level is defined as a qualification obtained at a higher education institution where the holder has completed 30–120 ECTS credits of an organised study programme at the second cycle of higher education. Qualification at Master level includes qualifications which either do not include a research project, or where the project is of less than 30 ECTS credits.

Examples of degrees and qualifications at this stage (2.1.) are MPA, MBA, Diploma at Master level, Cand. Med. et Chir. and Cand.Odont

Master's Degree is defined as a qualification obtained at a higher education institution where the holder has completed 90–120 ECTS credits of an organised study programme at the second cycle of higher education. A Master's degree includes a research project of at least 30 ECTS credits.

Examples of qualifications at this stage (2.2) are: MS, MA, Mag.Jur, ML and Cand.Psych.

The third higher education cycle has one stage, the Doctoral degree (3)

Doctoral degree (Ph.D.) is defined as a qualification from a higher education institution where the holder has completed at least 180 ECTS credits of an organised study programme at the third cycle of higher education. A Doctoral degree shall include a research project that fulfils international criteria for a Doctoral thesis.

Norway

NOKUT-the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education Information on the National Higher Education System

Higher education in Norway

The Ministry of Education and Research has the overall responsibility for higher education in Norway. Higher education is offered by four types of higher education institutions: university (*universitet*), specialized university institution (*vitenskapelig høyskole*), accredited university college (*akkreditert høyskole*), and university college with accredited study programmes (*høyskole med akkrediterte studier*). The differences between the types of higher education institutions are related to their self-accrediting authority.

All public and private higher education in Norway is subject to the Act Relating to Universities and University Colleges (Lov 2005–04–01 nr 15).⁸⁰ An institution's right to award specific degrees and the prescribed lengths of study are codified in Regulations on Degrees and Titles protected by Law (FOR 2005–12–16 nr 1574). The awarding of master's degrees is regulated by the Regulations on requirements for awarding a master's degree (FOR 2005–12–01 nr 1392).

Since 2002 Norway has adhered to the objectives of the Bologna Process in the European Higher Education Area. Most of the elements have been implemented through the reform of the Norwegian higher education system carried out in 2003. Central to the reform has been a transition from the former degree system to the bachelor's, masters and doctoral degree structure, with a few exceptions.

⁸⁰ In brackets are written the official codes of each act, published in Norwegian in the online database Lovdata, www.lovdata.no

Norwegian higher education qualifications make up the levels from 6 to 8 of the Norwegian Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (NQF) from 2011, which is the national overarching qualifications framework.⁸¹ It describes the levels of qualifications as defined by the total learning outcomes in terms of the knowledge, skills and general competence that graduates at various levels should have achieved.⁸² NQF has yet to be referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

Accreditation of institutions and programmes

The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) is an autonomous governmental agency which provides external supervision and control of the quality of Norwegian higher education, as well as of all tertiary vocational education.⁸³ NOKUT accredits new study programmes, controls the existing ones, and provides a cyclic evaluation of the institution's quality assurance systems for educational provision.

An accredited higher education institution is granted the right to offer educational provision, without having to apply to NOKUT for specific programme accreditation, in accordance with the authority that its institutional category implies. Universities may without external accreditation establish study programmes at all levels. Accredited university colleges have to apply for the accreditation of programmes at master and doctoral levels. In those fields where specialized university institutions and accredited university colleges have the right to award doctorates or corresponding degrees, they may themselves decide which study programmes and disciplines the institution shall provide. University colleges without institutional accreditation must apply to NOKUT for accreditation of study programmes at all levels. Lists of all accredited institutions (*akkrediterte institusjoner*), as well as of all accredited study programmes at the university colleges without institutional accreditation (*akkrediterte studietilbud*) are available on www.nokut.no

⁸¹ National generic learning outcomes description's levels for the bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees were defined by the Instructions on the Norwegian Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in 2009.

⁸² Learning outcomes for a specific NQF level show the minimum of what each learner should know, understand and be able to do after completing a learning process.

⁸³ Tertiary vocational education (TVE), level 5 in the NQF, is provided by *fagskoler*, which are considered as tertiary vocational education institutions. TVE is based on upper secondary education and training or equivalent competence. Courses have duration of from 6 months to 2 years. All provisions must be accredited by NOKUT.

Admission requirements and progressionDegrees and qualifications

All Norwegian higher education institutions use a system of credits (*studiepoeng*) for measuring study activities, considered equivalent to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). 60 ECTS credits (*studiepoeng*) are allocated to the workload of a full year of academic study, equivalent to 1,500–1,800 hours of study. 30 ECTS credits are normally allocated to one semester's full-time study. The academic year normally lasts for 10 months and runs from August to June.

NQF Level 6: Bachelor (1st cycle)

The bachelor's degree is awarded after three years of full-time study (180 ECTS). Some bachelor's degrees, in the field of music and performing arts, consist of four-year bachelor's programmes (240 ECTS). Teacher education for primary and lower secondary school, years 1–7 and years 5–10 is a four-year professional programme (240 ECTS).

University college graduate (høyskolekandidat) is a two-year degree (120 ECTS), a short cycle degree within the first cycle. Holders of this degree may in some cases continue their studies in a bachelor programme and thus obtain a bachelor's degree.

NQF Level 7: Master (2nd cycle)

The master's degree is normally obtained after two years of study (120 ECTS), following the completion of a bachelor's degree. A master's degree programme includes independent work (normally a thesis) of between 30 and 60 ECTS. Some experience-based master's degrees have a scope of 90 or 120 ECTS (including independent work of at least 20 ECTS).

One-tier (integrated/long-term) master's degree is a five-year study programme (300 ECTS) which results in a master's degree, with no intermediate bachelor's degree. An exception is the Master of Architecture programme at the Oslo School of Architecture and Design, which has a scope of 330 ECTS.

In the fields of medicine, psychology and theology, professionally oriented degrees/qualifications of six years duration (360 ECTS) are awarded; in the field of veterinary science-after 5½–6 years. They have retained the title *candidata/candidatus* from the former degree system.

NQF Level 8: Doctoral degree/PhD (3rd cycle)

Doctoral degree, PhD (*philosophiae doctor, ph.d.*), is awarded after three years of study, following the completion of a master's degree or a five to six-year professionally oriented degree/qualification.

Doctor philosophiae (dr. philos.) is conferred on graduates who have qualified for a doctoral degree on their own, without formal research training.

Diploma, artistic research fellowships programme (kunstnerisk utviklingsprogram) is a three-year programme in the field of creative and performing arts. It is offered as a parallel to other research-oriented provisions organized as academic PhD programmes.

Descriptions of the educational qualifications can be found in the Norwegian Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning at www.nokut.no. Please consult Section 4 of Diploma Supplement for information about the learning outcomes of any specific degree.

NOKUT-the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, 2013.

Sweden

The Swedish Higher Education System

The following description is approved by the Swedish Council for Higher Education.

General

Higher education institutions have great autonomy in the organisation of studies, use of resources and general administration. The Government may award the status of *universitet* to higher education institutions that meet certain criteria. Independent higher education providers may apply for recognition by the Government, obtain degree awarding powers and receive state funds. Qualifications from all higher education institutions that are recognized by the Government have equal official value. The same law governs all state higher education institutions. All Swedish degrees are issued in accordance with the same degree ordinances.

Quality assurance

All programmes and major subjects were evaluated by the National Agency for Higher Education between years 2001 and 2012. The Swedish Higher Education Authority is since 1st January 2013 responsible for the quality assurance system for higher education. Evaluation reports are public.

Access and admission to higher education

Higher education within all cycles has two strata of entry requirements: general and (additional) specific requirements. General eligibility to the first cycle is the same for all higher education.

General eligibility is attained either by completing an upper-secondary school programme, completed adult education at upper secondary school level or having the potential to benefit from the education, by virtue of other education, practical experience or other circumstances. The specific requirements vary according to the field of higher education and are in general expressed in terms of upper-secondary school qualifications in specific subjects. Restricted admission (*numerus clausus*) is used for all study programmes and courses.

Degree-awarding powers

Universities have the general right to award first-, second- and third-cycle qualifications. A small number of university colleges have been awarded the general right to award first and second cycle qualifications, as well as the right to award third cycle qualifications in specific domain(s). Other state university colleges have the right to award first cycle qualifications and *magisterexamen* but must apply to the Swedish Higher Education Authority for the right to award *masterexamen* and third cycle qualifications.

University colleges that are self-governing and independent, as well as the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) and the Swedish National Defence College, must apply to the Government for the entitlement to award all qualifications.

With regard to first- and second-cycle vocational or professional or qualifications in fine, applied and performing arts qualifications both state universities and university colleges must apply to the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education for degree awarding powers.

Qualifications

All courses and study programmes are placed within one of three cycles: the first, second or third cycle. All qualifications are placed within one of the three cycles. Higher education within the first and second cycles is provided in the form of courses. Courses may be grouped together into programmes with varying levels of individual choice. Students themselves are also able to combine different courses towards a degree. A course syllabus is required for each course within the first and second cycle and a programme syllabus for each study programme. Educational cycle, number of credits and intended learning outcomes has to be specified for each course. Sweden has a system of credits (*högskolepoäng*); a

normal 40-week academic year corresponds to 60 credits. The system is compatible with ECTS credits.

In the qualification ordinances, the Government has laid down which qualifications may be awarded and the scope, the objectives as well as intended learning outcomes for these qualifications. In the Swedish higher education system there are generally no intermediate qualifications. All qualifications are regarded as final, even if there is a possibility to continue studying. There are three categories of qualifications: 1. general, 2. in fine, applied and performing arts and 3. professional qualifications. Translations into English of all titles of qualifications are regulated at the national level. An institution of higher education may decide to add a prefix to a qualification title e.g. *filosofie kandidatexamen* or *medicine doktorsexamen* or/and add a major field of studies e.g. *civilingenjörsexamen i maskinteknik*.

General qualifications

First cycle

- *Högskoleexamen* (Higher Education Diploma) requires 120 credits and a diploma project.
- *Kandidatexamen* (Degree of Bachelor) requires 180 credits in a defined specialisation determined by each higher education institution itself. At least 90 credits, including an independent project of 15 credits, with in-depth studies have to be completed in the main field of study.

Second cycle

- *Magisterexamen* (Degree of Master (60 credits)) requires a defined specialisation determined by each higher education institution itself. At least 30 credits have to be completed in the main field of study including an independent project of 15 credits. In addition, normally the student must hold either a *kandidatexamen* or a professional degree of at least 180 credits or an equivalent foreign degree.
- *Masterexamen* (Degree of Master (120 credits)) requires a defined specialisation determined by each higher education institution itself. At least 60 credits have to be completed in the main field of study including an independent project of at least 30 credits. In addition, in general, the student must hold either a *kandidatexamen* or a professional degree of at least 180 credits or an equivalent foreign degree.

General admission requirements to second-cycle studies are: qualification within the first cycle of at least 180 credits or a corresponding foreign qualification. In addition, admission may be granted to an applicant who has the potential to benefit from the education, by virtue of other educational achievements, practical experience or other circumstances.

Qualifications in fine, applied and performing arts

Qualifications in fine, applied and performing arts are awarded within all three cycles. Within the first cycle: *konstnärlig högskoleexamen* (Higher Education Diploma) and *konstnärlig kandidatexamen* (Degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts), within the second cycle: *konstnärlig magisterexamen* (Degree of Master of Fine Arts (60 credits)) and *konstnärlig masterexamen* (Degree of Master of Fine Arts (120 credits)). Two third-cycle qualifications are awarded: *konstnärlig licentiatexamen* (Degree of Licentiate) and *konstnärlig doktors-examen* (Degree of Doctor).

Professional qualifications

Professional qualifications are awarded in the fields of engineering, health care, agriculture, law, education, etc. Professional qualifications may be offered within either the first or the second cycle. With a few exceptions, general entry requirements to professional degrees are the same as to general first-cycle qualification. Programmes leading to professional qualifications may vary in length depending on their content and may stretch over two cycles.

Third cycle

Licentiatexamen (Degree of Licentiate) requires at least 120 credits including The higher education institutions decide which subjects may be offered within the third cycle. For every subject, a general study plan should be drawn up. The study plan must state the principal organisation of the studies, the specific admission requirements and other necessary regulations.

Two qualifications are offered within the third cycle:

- A thesis of at least 60 credits. A higher education institution may also decide that a *licentiatexamen* can be awarded as an intermediate degree towards *doktorsexamen*.
- *Doktorsexamen* (Degree of Doctor) requires 240 credits including a thesis of at least 120 credits. The thesis has to be defended publicly.

For admission to the third cycle the applicant has to be deemed to have ability to benefit from the education and meet the general requirements to the third cycle:

- A second cycle qualification.
- Completed course requirements of at least 240 credits of which 60 credits within the second cycle or
- equivalent level of knowledge acquired in Sweden or abroad, as well as specific requirements at the institutional level.

Transitional provisions

Rules for admission to the third cycle were changed from 1st July 2007. A person who met general requirements for admission before 1st July 2007 should be considered as eligible for admission until 30th June 2015. The general entry requirements before 1st July 2007 were a completed undergraduate programme of at least 120 credits (equivalent to 180 current higher education credits) or largely equivalent knowledge acquired in some other system in this country or abroad.

Grading

There is no national grading system in Sweden. The higher education institutions may determine which grading system is to be used. No overall grade is given for a degree and students are not ranked.

Appendix 3:

Nordic higher education institutions entitled to offer 120 ects Master's degrees – 28.10.2014

Denmark

Universities (*universitet*) offering first, second and third cycle degree programmes:

- *Aalborg Universitet*
Aalborg University
<http://www.en.aau.dk>
- *Aarhus Universitet*
Aarhus University
<http://www.au.dk/en>
- *CBS Copenhagen Business School*
Handelshøjskolen
<http://www.cbs.dk/en>
- *Danmarks Tekniske Universitet – DTU*
Technical University of Denmark
<http://www.dtu.dk/english>
- *IT-Universitetet i København*
IT University of Copenhagen
<http://www.itu.dk>
- *Københavns Universitet*
University of Copenhagen
<http://www.ku.dk/english>
- *Roskilde Universitet*
Roskilde University
<http://www.ruc.dk/en/>

- *Syddansk Universitet*
University of Southern Denmark
<http://www.sdu.dk/en/>

Higher artistic educational institutions offering first, second and third cycle degree programmes/120 master's degrees:

- *Arkitektskolen Aarhus*
Aarhus School of Architecture
<http://en.aarch.dk/>
- *Designskolen Kolding*
Kolding School of Design
<https://www.designskolenkolding.dk/en>
- *Det Jyske Musikkonservatorium*
The Royal Academy of Music. Aarhus/Aalborg
<http://www.musikkons.dk/index.php?id=13>
- *Det Kongelige Danske Kunstakademis Skoler for Arkitektur, Design og Konservering*
The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Schools of Architecture, Design and Conservation School of Architecture
<https://kadk.dk/en>
- *Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium*
The Royal Danish Academy of Music
<http://english.dkdm.dk/>
- *Rytmask Musikkonservatorium*
Rhythmic Music Conservatory
<http://www.rmc.dk/en/>
- *Syddansk Musikkonservatorium og Skuespillerskole **
The Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts, Southern Denmark
<http://www.amda.dk>
(Only the higher music arts education programmes, 4-year education programmes within dramatic arts)

*The Danish minister of culture has in June 2014 presented a bill according to which the higher scene artistic education programmes will be structured in a bachelor's and master's degree in the future. The new regulation will enter into force 1st January 2015 if the bill is voted by the Danish Parliament. The regulation will include Det Danske Musikakademi (The Danish Academy of Musical Theatre), Statens Scenekunstscole (The Danish National School of Performing Arts), Aarhus Teater, Odsherred Teaterskole, and The Dramatic Arts School which will be separated from the Academy of Music Arts Southern Denmark. The new bachelor's and master's programmes are expected to be offered from August 2016 and 2018 respectively.

Finland

The Finnish higher education system consists of two complementary sectors; universities (yliopisto/universitet) and polytechnics (ammattikorkeakoulu, AMK/yrkeshögskola, YH). The mission of universities is to conduct scientific research and provide undergraduate and postgraduate education based on it. All universities have the right to award doctorates. Polytechnics train professionals in response to labour market needs and conduct R&D which supports instruction and promotes regional development in particular. The polytechnics use the term university of applied sciences when referring to themselves. This higher education system description uses the term polytechnic. The polytechnics are not included in the following list because the studies at second-cycle consist of 60–90 credits.

1039/2013 Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista annetun valtioneuvoston asetuksen muuttamisesta /Statsrådets förordning om ändring av statsrådets förordning om universitetsexamina

Bilaga

Förteckning över utbildningsområdena vid universiteten, examinas namn och de universitet där examina kan avläggas:

Helsingin yliopisto /Helsingfors universitet /University of Helsinki,
<http://www.helsinki.fi/university/>

Itä-Suomen yliopisto /Östra Finlands universitet /University of Eastern Finland,
<http://www.uef.fi/en/home>

Jyväskylän yliopisto /Jyväskylä universitet/University of Jyväskylä,
<https://www.jyu.fi/en>

Lapin yliopisto /Lapplands universitet/University of Lapland,
<http://www.ulapland.fi/InEnglish>

Oulun yliopisto /Uleåborgs universitet/University of Oulu,
<http://www.oulufi/english/>

Tampereen yliopisto /Tammerfors universitet/University of Tampere,
<http://www.uta.fi/english/>

Turun yliopisto /Åbo universitet/University of Turku,
<http://www.utu.fi/en/Pages/home.aspx>

Vaasan yliopisto /Vasa universitet /University of Vasa, <http://www.uva.fi/en/>
Åbo Akademi /Åbo Akademi University, <http://www.abo.fi/?lang=en>

Lappeenranta teknillinen yliopisto/Villmanstrands tekniska universitet/Lappeenranta
University of Technology, <http://www.lut.fi/web/en/>

Hanken Svenska handelshögskolan, <http://www.hanken.fi/public/en/>

Aalto-yliopisto /Aalto-universitetet /Aalto University, <http://www.aalto.fi/en/>

Tampereen teknillinen yliopisto /Tammerfors tekniska universitet/Tampere Uni-
versity of Technology, <http://www.tut.fi/en/>

Taideyliopisto /Konstuniversitetet (Sibelius-Akademien – master's degree 150 ECTS, Teaterhögskolan, Bildkonstakademien) /University of Arts, Helsinki (Academy of Fine Arts, Sibelius Academy – master's degree 150 ECTS, Theatre Academy),
<http://www.uniarts.fi/en/>

Svenska social- och kommunalhögskolan vid Helsingfors universitet /Swedish School of Social Science,
<http://sockom.helsinki.fi/english/index.html>

Education leading to the degree Master of Military Science (sotatieteiden maisteri/magister i militärvetenskaper) is provided by the National Defence University (Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu/Försvarshögskolan) <http://www.puolustusvoimat.fi/en/> operating within the Ministry of Defence sector.

735/2006 Valtioneuvoston asetus maanpuolustuskorkeakoulusta annetun asetuksen muuttamisesta.

735/2006 Statsrådets förordning om ändring av förordningen om försvarshögskolan

Iceland

- *Háskóli Íslands*
University of Iceland
<http://english.hi.is/>
- Háskólinn á Akureyri
University of Akureyri
<http://english.unak.is/>
- Landbúnaðarháskóli Íslands
The Agricultural University of Iceland
<http://www.lbhi.is/en/english>
- Háskólinn á Hólum
Holar University College
<http://www.holar.is/en/english>

Private institutions:

- *Háskólinn í Reykjavík*
Reykjavik University (private)
<http://en.ru.is/>
- *Háskólinn á Bifröst*
Bifröst University (private)
<http://www.bifrost.is/>
- *Listaháskóli Íslands*
Iceland Academy of Arts
<http://english.lhi.is/>

Norway

See: web-pages of the individual institution.

Forskrift om grader og yrkesutdanninger, beskyttet tittel og normert studietid ved universiteter og høyskoler, 2005 (Regulations of Degrees and Titles protected by Law, 2005).

Universities

These institutions are fully authorized to offer programmes and award degrees at all levels of higher education.

- *Universitetet i Oslo*
University of Oslo
<http://www.uio.no/english/>
- *Universitetet i Bergen*
University of Bergen
<http://www.uib.no/en>
- *Universitetet i Tromsø – Norges Arktiske Universitet*
UiT The Arctic University of Norway
<http://en.uit.no/startside>
- *Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet NTNU*
NTNU Trondheim Norwegian University of Science and Technology
<http://www.ntnu.edu/>
- *Norges miljø- og biovitenskapelige universitet NMBU*
NMBU –Norwegian University of Life Sciences
<http://www.nmbu.no/en>
- *Universitetet i Stavanger*
University of Stavanger
<http://www.uis.no/frontpage/>
- *Universitetet i Agder*
University of Agder
<http://www.uia.no/en>
- *Universitetet i Nordland*
University of Nordland
<http://www.uin.no/english/Pages/default.aspx>

Specialised universities (Vitenskapelig høgskole)

Specialised university institutions are authorised to offer programmes at all levels but within their specific field of specialisation.

- *Arkitektur- og designhøgskolen i Oslo AHO*
The Oslo School of Architecture and design (AHO)
<http://www.aho.no/en/AHO/About-AHO/>
- *Norges handelshøyskole NHH*
NHH – The Norwegian School of Economics
<http://www.nhh.no/Default.aspx?AreaID=7>
- *Norges idrettshøgskole*
Norwegian School of Sport Sciences
<http://www.nih.no/en/>
- *Norges musikkhøgskole*
Norwegian Academy of Music
http://nmh.no/en/norwegian_academy_of_music
- *Sámi allaskuvla /Samisk høgskole*
Sámi University College
<http://www.samiskhs.no/en>
- *Høgskolen i Molde Vitenskapelig høgskole i logistikk*
Molde University College Specialized University in Logistics
<http://www.himolde.no/english/Sider/side.aspx>

Accredited State University Colleges

These institutions must apply for accreditation of master's level studies to NOKUT (The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education). Educational components earlier accredited for other programmes than a joint study programme must receive a renewed accreditation.

- *Høgskolen i Bergen*
Bergen University College
<http://www.hib.no/english/default.asp>
- *Høgskolen i Buskerud og Vestfold*
Buskerud an Vestfold University College
http://www.hbv.no/?lang=en_GB
- *Høgskolen i Gjøvik*
Gjøvik University Colleg
<http://english.hig.no/>

- *Høgskolen i Harstad*
Harstad University College
<http://www.hih.no/index.php?lang=eng>
- *Høgskolen i Hedmark*
Hedmark University College
<http://www.hihm.no/English>
- *Høgskolen i Lillehammer*
Lillehammer University College
<http://www.hil.no/eng>
- *Høgskolen i Narvik*
Narvik University College
<https://nuc.hin.no/>
- *Høgskolen i Nesna*
Nesna University College
<http://www.hinesna.no/node/1396>
- *Høgskolen i Nord-Trøndelag*
Nord-Trøndelag University College
<http://www.hint.no/english#.UvDd4xC2xsl>
- *Høgskolen i Oslo og Akershus*
Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences
<http://www.hioa.no/eng/>
- *Høgskulen i Sogn og Fjordane*
Sogn og Fjordane University College
<http://www.hisf.no/en/home>
- *Høgskolen Stord/Haugesund*
Stord/Haugesund University College
<http://www.hsh.no/english.htm>
- *Høgskolen i Sør-Trøndelag*
Sør-Trøndelag University College
<https://www.hist.no/>
- *Høgskolen i Telemark*
Telemark University College
<http://www.hit.no/eng>
- *Høgskolen i Volda*
Volda University College
<http://www.hivolda.no/index.php?&lang=eng>

- *Høgskolen i Østfold*
Østfold University College
<http://www.hiof.no/eng/english/frontpage?lang=eng>
- *Høgskolen i Ålesund*
Aalesund University College
<http://www.hials.no/eng>
- *Kunst og designhøgskolen i Bergen*
Bergen Academy of Art and Design
<http://www.khib.no/english/>
- *Kunsthøgskolen i Oslo*
Oslo National Academy of the Arts
<http://www.khio.no/Engelsk/>
- *Forsvarets høgskole*
The Norwegian Defence University College (NDUC)
<http://hogskolene.forsvaret.no/english/Pages/english.aspx>
- *Politihøgskolen*
Norwegian Police University College
<http://www.phs.no/en/>

Private institutions

- *Ansgar Teologiske Høgskole*
Ansgar College and Theological Seminary
<http://www.ansgarhogskole.no/information-in-english>
- *Bergen Arkitektelhøgskole*
Bergen School of Architecture
<http://www.bas.org/en/Academics/Master-in-Architecture>
- *Det teologiske Menighetsfakultet*
MF Norwegian School of Theology
<http://www.mf.no/index.cfm?id=381605>
- *Diakonhemmet høgskole*
Diakonhemmet University College
<http://www.diaconhemmet.no/DUC>
- *Fjellhaug Internasjonale Høgskole*
Fjellhaug International University College (FIUC)
<http://fih.fjellhaug.no/om-oss/in-english/>
- *Handelshøyskolen BI*
BI Norwegian Business School
<http://www.bi.edu/research/Expert-list-for-media-/>

- *Høyskolen Campus Kristiania*
<http://www.campuskristiania.no/>
- *Høyskolen Diakonova*
Diakonova University College
<http://www.diaconova.no/eng/diaconova-university-college>
- *Lovisenberg diakonale høgskole*
<http://www.ldh.no/>
- *Misjonshøgskolen*
School of Mission and Theology
<http://www.mhs.no/en/>
- *NLA Høgskolen*
NLA University College
<https://www.nla.no/eng/english-frontpage?lang=eng>
- *Norges Informasjonstekniske Høgskole (NITH)*
<http://nith.no/en/about-nith>
- *Rudolf Steinerhøgskolen*
Rudolf Steiner University College (RSUC)
<http://www.rshoyskolen.no/english-menu/>

Sweden

Universities have the general right to award first-, second- and third-cycle qualifications. A small number of university colleges have been awarded the general right to award first and second cycle qualifications, as well as the right to award third cycle qualifications in specific domain/s. Other state university colleges have the right to award first cycle qualifications and *magisterexamen* but must apply to the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education for the right to award *masterexamen* and third cycle qualifications.

University colleges that are self-governing and independent, as well as the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) and the Swedish National Defence College, must apply to the Government for the entitlement to award all qualifications.

With regard to first- and second-cycle vocational or professional or qualifications in fine, applied and performing arts qualifications both state universities and university colleges must apply to the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education for degree awarding powers.

List of Higher Education Institutions entitled to award all qualifications

- *Uppsala universitet*
Uppsala University
<http://www.uu.se/en/>
- *Lunds universitet*
Lund University
<http://www.lunduniversity.lu.se/>
- *Göteborgs universitet*
University of Gothenburg
<http://www.gu.se/english/>
- *Stockholms universitet*
Stockholm University
<http://www.su.se/english/>
- *Umeå universitet*
Umeå University
<http://www.umu.se/english/?languageId=1>
- *Linköpings universitet*
Linköping University
<http://www.liu.se/?l=en>
- *Karolinska institutet*
<http://ki.se/en/startpage>
- *Kungliga Tekniska högskolan (KTH)*
KTH Royal Institute of Technology
<http://www.kth.se/en>
- *Luleå tekniska universitet*
Luleå University of Technology
<http://www.ltu.se/?l=en>
- *Karlstads universitet*
Karlstad University
<http://www.kau.se/en>
- *Chalmers tekniska högskola*
Chalmers University of Technology
<http://www.chalmers.se/en>
- *Linnéuniversitetet*
Linnæus University
<http://lnu.se/?l=en>

- *Örebro universitet*
Örebro University
<http://www.oru.se/English/>
- *Mittuniversitetet*
Mid Sweden University
<http://www.miun.se/en>
- *Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet*
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
<http://www.slu.se/en/>
- *Handelshögskolan i Stockholm*
Stockholm School of Economics
<http://www.hhs.se/en>

List of Higher Education Institutions entitled to award a Master's degree (masterexamen) in one or more specific domain(s)

- *Blekinge tekniska högskola*
Blekinge Institute of Technology
<http://www.bth.se/engg>
- *Erstad Sköndal högskola*
Ersta Sköndal University College
<http://www.esh.se/in-english/>
- *Gymnastik- och idrottshögskolan*
The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences
<http://www.gih.se/In-English/>
- *Högskolan i Borås*
University of Borås
<http://www.hb.se/en/>
- *Högskolan Dalarna*
Dalarna University
<http://www.du.se/en>
- *Högskolan i Gävle*
University of Gävle
<http://www.hig.se/Ext/En/University-of-Gavle.html>
- *Högskolan i Halmstad*
Halmstad University
<http://www.hh.se/english>

- *Högskolan i Jönköping*
Jönköping University
<http://hj.se/en.html>
- *Högskolan Kristianstad*
Kristianstad University Sweden
<http://www.hkr.se/en/english-start-page/>
- *Högskolan i Skövde*
University of Skövde
<http://www.his.se/en/>
- *Högskolan Väst*
University Väst
<http://www.hv.se/enn>
- *Konstfack*
University College of Arts, Crafts and Design
<http://www.konstfack.se/en/>
- *Kungliga Musikhögskolan i Stockholm*
KMH Royal College of Music in Stockholm
<https://www.kmh.se/english>
- *Malmö högskola*
Malmö University
<https://www.mah.se/english>
- *Mälardalens högskola*
Mälardalen University Sweden
<http://www.mdh.se/>
- *Södertörns högskola*
Södertörn University
<http://www.sh.se/>
- *Teologiska högskolan, Stockholm*
Stockholm School of Theology
<http://www.ths.se/site/index.php/in-english.html>

In the following link it is possible to find out in what domain(s) a certain Higher Institution is entitled to award a Master's degree (masterexamen):

- <http://www.uk-mbetet.se/utbildningskvalitet/sokblandexamenstillstand.4.782a298813a88dd0dad800011597.html.printable>

Appendix 4:

Suggested Guidelines for the initiation and development of a Nordic Master Programme – 28.10.2014

Guidelines

These guidelines focus on the development of a joint programme of study and what the Ad hoc group recommends should be discussed in order to prepare cooperation agreements. These guidelines are made in order to present *a practical example* how the partners could cooperate. During the development period, from the initial discussions on cooperation until a written agreement of further development, management and running a programme is signed by all the cooperating institutions, the parties should agree on the following documents:⁸⁴

- The application for funding for development of a Nordic Master Programme.
- The Memorandum of Intent (Cooperation agreement concerning the *development* of the programme.⁸⁵
- The Agreement with attachments between [institution], [institution], and [institution] concerning *the further development, management and running* of the Nordic Master Programme in <field>.⁸⁶

These guidelines cover the programme development phase until the agreement for further development, management and running is completed. Please observe that templates for the programme description,

⁸⁴ In addition to the above listed documents the cooperating institutions are asked to each send to the granting authority a Letter of Endorsement signed by the legal representative of the institutions, a template is found as Appendix 5 to this document.

⁸⁵ A template is found as Appendix 6 to this document.

⁸⁶ A template is found as Appendix 7, however, as a separate file.

programme structure diagram and the course are attached to this agreement.

In order to make it easier for the users, the actions are numbered. The guidelines are quite detailed and there can, of course, be other models.

1. Initial discussions

Initial discussions between individual colleagues from different Nordic institutions about potential study programme cooperation, based on shared academic interests in a field of study.

Initial discussions can be started by anyone.

2. Discussions with colleagues at the home higher education institution⁸⁷

Discussions in the home departments about potential cooperation between named institutions. First information to the faculty level about the intention of programme cooperation.

Responsible: The departments.

3. Appointments

Appointment of academic and administrative staff for the development of the programme at each institution.

Responsible: The departments.

4. First meeting

One of the involved institutions sets up a meeting with at least these agenda topics:

- Clarification of the outline of the potential programme, its objectives and relevance for the working life and society.
- Agreement on the name of the programme.
- Questions concerning the academic and administrative requirements in the application form.
- The budget.
- Appointment of coordinating institution.

⁸⁷ It is very important that all levels at the institutions are involved/informed from the beginning.

The coordinating institution will be responsible for:

- Further contact between the participating institutions.
- The submission of the application for a Nordic Master Programme.
- The agreement with the funding authority.
- The handling of the grant received.
- Reports according to the requirements from the funding authority.

Responsible: The institution which is willing to organise the first meeting.

5. Securing of support

Submission of a short proposal to the Board of department(s) at each institution on a planned cooperation in a Nordic Master Programme. The proposal must include the objective and the relevance of the programme and a calculation of necessary academic and administrative capacity and any other resources.

Responsible: The appointed persons for developing the programme.

6. Approval at departmental level

Approval by the involved department(s) at each of the cooperating institutions.

Responsible: The departments.

7. Securing of support at faculty level

Submission of a short proposal on cooperation to the faculty *with copy to the central level* at each of the cooperating institutions. The proposal must include the objective and the relevance of the programme and a calculation of necessary academic and administrative capacity/resources.

Responsible: The departments.

8. Approval at faculty level

Approval by the involved faculties on cooperation between the partners.

Responsible: The faculties.

9. Second meeting/videoconference

The coordinating institution sets up a meeting with the following agenda:

Application for the development of a Nordic Master Programme.

The application form consists of several questions to be answered by the applicants. It is recommended that the questions of the application should have been on the agenda already at the first meeting, in order to give time to the participants to prepare the answers. Each question

should be answered giving enough information in order to meet the criteria for grants.

Responsible: The coordinating institution.

10. Fulfilling and submission of the application. Letters of Endorsement

The coordinating institution is responsible for submitting the application, and each cooperating institution is responsible for submitting a Letter of Endorsement (*Appendix 5*), signed by the rector or equivalent authority.

Responsible for the submission of the application: The coordinating institution.

11. Notification of successful application

If the application is successful and the funding for development is granted, the cooperating institutions should continue following the next steps in the guidelines.

If not successful, the feedback on the application should be discussed and a potential renewal of the application in the next call be considered.

Responsible: The coordinating institution.

12. Memorandum of Intent (Cooperation agreement concerning the development of the programme)

Memorandum of Intent (*Appendix 6*) between the partners should be signed by the designated authority within the cooperating institutions. The Memorandum of Intent is the agreement between the cooperating institutions required by the granting authority.

Responsible: The coordinating institution.

13. Appointment of the group for curriculum design and for the development of the Cooperation agreement for management and running the programme

At each cooperating institution the relevant authority appoints the members of a group for curriculum/programme design and for development of the agreement for management and running of the Nordic Master Programme. Each institution should appoint members from both the academic and the administrative staff. Student representatives should be welcomed.

Responsible: The cooperating departments.

14. Third meeting/Kick-off seminar

The coordinating institution organizes a kick-off seminar. The target group for this meeting should be the appointed group for curriculum design.

The costs of the seminar (travel expenditures, accommodation and subsistence costs) should be covered by the grant received for the programme development.

The coordinating institution is responsible for preparing the agenda for the meeting, which should include at least these topics:

The agreement between the partners. (*see a template, Appendix 7*).⁸⁸

- Alignment with the recommendation for the Nordic Master Programme.
- Programme structure and mobility tracks.
- Programme design.
- Organisation of the programme.
- Student admission system and intended student distribution.
- Diploma and Diploma Supplement.
- Quality assurance system.
- Responsible institution during the running of the programme.
- Intellectual Property Rights.
- Termination of the agreement.

Programme design:

- Name(s) of the qualification.
- Content of the programme.
- Learning outcomes at programme level.
- Student workload (according to the national requirements).
- Admission requirements.
- Courses offered within the programme, specified in ECTS credit, a whole course or parts of the course may be delivered online.
- Physical mobility paths and periods.
- Supervision of the thesis.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ The agreement is mandatory and it must be in line with national legislation in the Nordic countries.

- Teaching methods.
- Assessment and examination forms.
- Grading scales.
- Programme structure.
- Quality assurance of the programme.
- Evaluation of the programme as a whole and of the individual courses.
- Language of instruction.

Division of labour:

- Responsible institution for the courses offered within the programme.
- Student admission procedures.
- Diploma(s) and Diploma Supplement(s).
- Publicity and student recruitment strategy and activities.
- Handling of tuition fees (if necessary).

Student affairs:

- Institutions' responsibilities.
- Students' responsibilities.
- Academic calendar.
- Estimated number of students.
- Financial issues related to the grant.
- Sustainability measures.

Responsible: The coordinating institution.

15. Development of course descriptions

The departments at the cooperating institutions are responsible for:

- Name of the course.
- Size of the course, specified in credits.
- Objective(s) of the course.

⁸⁹ – or in case of higher artistic education project based on artistic research

- Content of the course.
- Learning outcomes of the course.
- Teaching methods (what kind of teaching methods should be chosen in order to obtain the learning outcomes both at course and programme level).
- Assessment forms.
- Evaluation of the course.

Internal approval of the individual course within the responsible institution(s) follows the internal routines.

Responsible: The departments.

16. Interim report

The coordinating institution submits an interim report to the granting authority. The report should describe the progress, potential problems, a plan for continued work, etc.

Responsible: The coordinating institution.

17. Fourth meeting/Working seminar

The coordinating institution sets up a meeting to finalize the agreement of cooperation and to control the attachments. Target group: all member institutions.

Main objectives:

- Control and approval of the curriculum both at programme and individual course level.
- Approval of the mandate for the future programme committee.
- Approval of the Cooperation agreement for the running and further development of the programme.

Responsible: The coordinating institution.

18. Submission of the programme description and the course descriptions and the Cooperation agreement

Responsible: The members of the group of curriculum design are responsible for the submission of the programme description, incl. the individual course descriptions and the Cooperation agreement to the cooperating departments.

19. Submission of the programme description including the course descriptions and the Cooperation agreement with any attachments to the involved faculties

If the programme description, including the course descriptions and the Cooperation agreement are approved by the departments, they should be submitted to the relevant faculties.

Responsible: The participating departments.

20. Institutional approval of the program

The approval of the programme must follow the internal quality assurance routines at each cooperating institution. At most institutions the Board is the legal authority.

Responsible: The faculties.

21. Accreditation/Recognition/Prequalification at national level

The approval of the programme must follow the national regulations in each participating country. It is the responsibility of each institution to check how this may affect the programme and further process. The submission of an application to the external authorities should not be sent before the programme is approved within the cooperating institutions.

Responsible: Each cooperating institution.

22. Final report to the granting authority

The coordinating institution submits a final report on development, content, organisation, structure, estimated number of students and accounts.

23. Appointment of the coordinating institution for the further development, management and running of the Nordic Master Programme

The coordinating institution for the development of the programme is administratively responsible for appointment of a coordinating institutions for further development, management and running of the programme. (Normally the same as the coordinator during the development period).

The coordinating institution for the further development, management and running of the Nordic Master Programme acts as the programme committee's secretariat and has the following specific tasks:

- Appointing an academic director for the programme and a person who will have the administrative responsibility for the programme within the coordinating institution.
- Preparing the meetings.

Responsible: The coordinating institution during the programme development.

24. Appointment of the programme committee for the management and running the programme

Appointment of a programme committee for the period of dd.mm.yyyy–dd.mm.yyyy. It is recommended that two members are appointed to the committee from each institution, hereof one from the academic staff and one from the administrative staff. In addition, it is recommended that the committee should include student representatives from at least two different institutions. The student representatives should be appointed for one year at the time. Other stakeholders may also be included in the committee. (The committee itself nominates the chair of the committee at the first meeting).

The cooperating institutions should specify the mandate of the committee. The mandate should be an attachment to the agreement.

The committee should be responsible for the running of the programme including changes in the programme. The committee should ensure that the running of the programme is in line with the programme description approved by the relevant authorities. There should be at least two meetings per year with the cooperating institutions, of which one of the meetings must be in person. In addition the committee should be responsible for discussions of financial matters and discussion forum for any disputes that may arise between the cooperating institutions.

(The institution which coordinated the programme design is responsible of the preparation and the agenda for the first meeting of the Programme committee.)

Responsible: Each of the cooperating institutions.

25. Development of the Cooperation agreement with attachments

Responsible: The programme committee.

26. Fifth meeting

Target group: The programme committee.

Agenda: Cooperation agreement and the start-up of the programme.

Responsible: The coordinating institution.

27. Signing of the Cooperation agreement by the legal authority of the cooperating institutions

Responsible: Each institution.

28. Withdrawal from the Cooperation agreement

Any cooperating institution may withdraw from the agreement mentioned in section 25, giving six month's written notice to the Programme committee and the cooperating institutions.

Students, who have commenced their studies at any of the cooperating universities by the date of termination, are entitled to complete their courses of study and the programme at one or more of the cooperating institutions in accordance with national regulations.

Responsible: The Programme committee.

Appendix 5

Logo	layout for the head of the letter
	[Place], [Date]
To whom it may concern	
NORDIC MASTER PROGRAMME IN <FIELD> - LETTER OF ENDORSEMENT	
I, [name], legally representing the [name of the institution], declare that the application for the Nordic Master Programme in <field> has the consent and full support of the [name of the institution].	
The [name of the institution] intends to participate in the development of a Nordic Master Programme in <field>. During the development period the work will be coordinated by [name of institution].	
The participating institutions are:	
[Name of institution, country]	
[Name of institution, country]	
[Name of institution, country]	
The responsible faculty and department at the [name of institution] will be:	
[Name of faculty]	
[Name of department]	
Responsible at the department:	
[Title] [Name]	
Department of xxxxxx	
[Name of institution]	
Address, e-mail and phone number	
[Name]	
Rector	

Appendix 6

Template
MEMORANDUM OF INTENT
between

[Name of institution],
[Name of institution], and
[Name of institution]

concerning the
development of a Nordic Master Programme in <field>

Whereas the above named institutions recognize that cooperation would be of mutual benefit and would serve as an indication of continued interest in joint projects, it is agreed that:

1. Each institution will work to encourage the development of a research based Nordic Master Programme in <field>. [include a short description of the proposed programme].
2. The Master's programme will be developed in line with the recommendations made by the Nordic Council of Ministers concerning the Nordic Master Programme.
3. The programme will use ECTS credits, based on learning outcomes and student workload.
4. Each institution will identify the staff which will work on the development of the programme.
5. Prior to offering the Nordic Master Programme in <field>, the cooperating institutions will obtain a final approval to offer the programme, and develop an agreement concerning further development, management and running of the programme in line with national and local requirements.
6. The coordinating institution, [Name of the institution] is responsible for the budget and the contact with the granting authority.

This Memorandum of Intent will become effective on the date of signing and will be effective until the Cooperation agreement has been signed or the project is terminated.

Date

Dean

Head of Department

Faculty of xxx

Department of xxx

Name of institution

Name of institution

Date

Dean

Faculty of xxx

Name of institution

Head of Department

Department of xxx

Name of institution

Date

Dean

Faculty of xxx

Name of institution

Head of Department

Department of xxx

Name of institution

Appendix 7

28.10.2014

Cooperation agreement¹ with attachments (template)

between

[name of institution],

[name of institution], and

[name of institution]

concerning the further development, management and running of the
Nordic Master Programme in <field>

I. Purpose and Scope of the Agreement

This agreement is made between

[name of institution], [address]

[name of institution], [address]

[name of institution], [address]

(hereinafter referred to as Parties).

Within these institutions the involved and responsible units are

[Department/Centre, Faculty, name of the institution]

[Department/Centre, Faculty, name of the institution]

[Department/Centre, Faculty, name of the institution]

¹ The legislation or internal rules in all the Nordic countries require that institutions which intend jointly to offer a programme of study leading to a joint degree should in writing agree on the terms. The current document is meant to be a template for the obligatory agreement between the involved institutions. The agreement must be worked out when the programme of study is developed and approved/accredited in line with local and national requirements.

PREAMBLE

The purpose of this agreement is to record the decisions and the involvement of the Parties to run the research based,² jointly developed Nordic Master Programme in <field>, hereinafter referred to as the Programme, and to outline the principles and terms of their cooperation.

All Parties have the right to offer Master's programmes, according to their respective national legislation.

This agreement will be implemented within the legal requirements at each cooperating institution.

The Programme uses ECTS credits, based on learning outcomes and student workload.

The Programme consists of a number of educational components, *courses*.

II The name of the degree(s)

The Nordic Master Programme in <field> will lead to [name of the qualification(s)].³

III Approval, Accreditation and Recognition

The Programme has been subject to accreditation/approval according to regulations in the Nordic countries and within requirements at each cooperating institution.⁴

² Research is defined both including scientific and artistic research.

³ In the Nordic countries, even within one country between institutions the additional designation of a master degree might differ. Therefore all the names of the qualification must be mentioned here.

⁴ Programmes which require prequalification (Denmark) or parts of programmes which should be subject to external accreditation (Sweden and Norway):

For programmes with Danish participation: An application concerning prequalification of the Programme must be submitted to the Danish Agency for Higher Education, <http://www.ufm.dk/en>

For programmes where parts of programmes require external accreditation the application for accreditation in Sweden must be sent to: to the Swedish Higher Education Authority, <http://english.uk-ambetet.se/>

The completed Programme leads to a second cycle degree within the national qualifications framework⁵, the qualification is recognised in all the participating Nordic countries.

IV. Structure and organisation of the cooperation

1. The programme committee⁶ consists of # member[s] from each Party as well as # student members. The committee elects its own chair.

The committee discusses and handles all major academic and administrative issues regarding the Programme, including changes in the programme description. These are subject to final approval by the Parties.⁷ The mandate of the programme committee is specified and attached to the present agreement.

2. The coordinating institution is [name of institution]. The coordinating institution acts as the secretariat of the programme committee, prepares issues to the meetings of the programme committee and has the final responsibility for the implementation of all administrative matters in accordance with this agreement and the programme description agreed upon.⁸ The coordinating institution names an academic programme director and an administrative programme coordinator.
3. The programme committee meets at least twice a year to ensure the quality of the programme and to discuss the programme description and to make proposals for any adaptation or adjustments of the Programme.

For programmes where parts of programmes require external accreditation the application for accreditation in Norway must be sent to:

The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, <http://www.nokut.no/en/>

For programmes where parts of programmes require external accreditation, the application for accreditation in Sweden must be sent to: to the Swedish Higher Education Authority, <http://english.uk-ambetet.se/>

⁵ All five countries have worked out a national qualifications framework; however all of them are not yet approved. Some of the countries have adopted a qualifications framework, but the reference process towards the two overarching European frameworks is not yet completed. The programme should be at Level 7 in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and at second cycle level in the QF-EHEA (Bologna-process).

⁶ Cooperating institutions must themselves choose the model of organisation that best suits the cooperation. This may mean that the programme's highest body will be a programme committee, an executive committee or another body.

⁷ The cooperating institutions must discuss who shall participate in the committee. Participants may include academic staff, administrators, students and external partners, depending on the customs of the cooperating institutions. The institutions are free to choose the participants of the steering body, but the body should have at least one representative from each institution. Representatives from the institutions must be appointed by the relevant decision body.

⁸ The higher education institutions must discuss the division of tasks and location/division of the tasks of the secretariat. All tasks do not necessarily have to be delegated to the coordinating institution.

4. All Parties will ensure the academic and administrative capacity necessary to execute this agreement at their own institutions.⁹
5. Budget and financial distribution is described in an annex to this agreement.

V. Programme structure

1. The name of the Master's programme is *Nordic Master Programme in <field>*, and it will be offered as a full time study programme of 120 ECTS credits. The nominal length of study is two years, including a Master's thesis¹⁰ of at least 30 ECTS credits.¹¹
2. The Programme has the following relevance for the labour market:
....
3. The aim and the content of the Programme are described in the programme description which is attached to and is part of this agreement.
4. The language of instruction is English. Examinations will be conducted in English. The Master's thesis must be submitted in English¹².
5. The periods of study and examinations passed at one Party will be fully recognised by the other Parties.
6. Students must **physically** study at at least two of the participating institutions. The physical mobility period(s) must constitute at least one semester in total, equalling 30 ECTS credits.
Virtual mobility: A whole course or part(s) of a course may be delivered online, but virtual mobility cannot compensate for the required physical mobility.
7. The thesis is assessed by two examiners from two different institutions.¹³

⁹ It is most important that the Parties agree on the resources which should be allocated to the management and running of the programme.

¹⁰ - or in case of higher artistic education project based on artistic research -

¹¹ The Master's thesis must be at least 30 ECTS credits according to the national legislations with one exception: In the Finnish legislation, the thesis is between 20-40 ECTS credit.

¹² If the granting authority has approved that also other languages can be used, this should be mentioned in the agreement.

¹³ The examiners may belong to the Parties.

VI. Degree and diploma

1. The Programme is named *Nordic Master Programme in <field>*, and this title should be used by all Parties when referring to the degree.
2. The programme will lead to the following qualification(s):¹⁴
 <name of the qualification>
 <name of the qualification>
 <name of the qualification>
3. The successful completion of the Programme leads to the award of a joint degree, documented by one single diploma^{15,16,17} and Diploma Supplement(s).
4. The content of the joint diploma is based on national regulations and it provides the following information:
 - Name of the cooperating institutions (Parties)
 - Name of the awarding institutions
 - Name of the programme
 - Name of the qualification(s)
 - Name and identification of the holder of the diploma
 - Date when the degree is obtained
 - Signature and title of the persons authorized to sign the diploma
 - A short explanation of the Nordic Master
 - General information about the programme of study
 - Objectives and content of the programme of study¹⁸
 - The title of the Master's thesis¹⁹
 - Supervision (if there has been joint supervision)
 - Learning outcomes²⁰
 - Quality assurance

¹⁴ Depending of the national legislation the same programme might lead to a qualification with different names. All the different names must be mentioned in the diploma on the front page.

¹⁵ or of multiple degrees (i.e. at least two diplomas issued by two of the Parties. In case of multiple degrees it shall be indicated on the diplomas that the programme has been provided in accordance to an agreement between the Parties).

¹⁶ If one of the cooperating institutions is a Finnish institution, the candidate who has completed this programme will also receive a national diploma.

¹⁷ The issuing of one national degree may be accepted exceptionally. Danish higher artistic education institutions are an exception due to the Danish law concerning these institutions. If a bill presented by the Danish minister of culture June 2014 is voted by the Danish Parliament in the winter of 2014 the higher artistic education institutions within the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture can participate in international study programme cooperation.

¹⁸ From the programme description.

¹⁹ - or in case of higher artistic education project based on artistic research -

²⁰ From the programme description.

- The candidate's Transcript of Records from each institution where the candidate has studied as well as a description of the credit system and grading used.
 - References to the acts on higher education applying to the Parties.
 - If applicable: Previous qualification on which admission was granted
 - Language examination
5. The diploma(s) will be accompanied by the Diploma supplement(s)
 6. The diploma with the Diploma supplement must be sent to the graduate within two months of the announcement of the final exam. The month of July is not included when calculating the two-month deadline.

VII. Student admission, enrolment and registration

1. In accordance with local capacity and regulations, the number of students to be admitted must be negotiated annually between the participating institutions.
2. The admission process will be conducted by the coordinating institution in accordance with admission requirements as specified in the programme description²¹. A common application form will be created. Admission requirements to the Programme will be based upon a joint decision of the Parties.
3. The institution where the student is admitted and registered in the first semester is called the home university/higher education institution. When the student studies at one of the other Parties, this is called the host university/higher education institution.

The Parties agree on that the admitted students will be registered as follows:

....

4. In the case of appeals to an individual admission decision, the appeals policy and procedures of the home institution will be followed.
5. Students will be subject to the regulations and procedures of the Party at which they follow courses and sit for examinations in a given semester. They will be provided with the same academic resources and support services that are available to all students at that Party.
6. The Parties will jointly develop a recruitment plan for the programme and each Party will develop appropriate and adequate information material for the incoming students.

²¹ The Parties may, of course decide that the admission procedure will be conducted by each "home" university/higher education institution, the institution where the student start the studies. The admission shall still be based on a joint decision.

VIII. Teaching and assessment

1. The Parties agree on the teaching and assessment responsibilities as they are specified in the attached programme structure diagram.
2. When the student has successfully completed a course, the responsible Party will send the result to the coordinating institution.
3. The responsibility for the different courses must be agreed on once a year between the Parties.
4. Each Party must deliver at least a number of courses which successfully completed give 30 ECTS.

IX. Tuition fees, student's financial responsibility and grants

1. Students from outside EU and EEA countries and Switzerland and admitted at institutions in [country] will be subject to fees according to national regulations:
...
2. The Parties in these countries will determine the level of fees, in accordance with national and institutional regulations and procedures. The fees shall be collected by the Party in question.
3. *If applicable:* A Norwegian Party does charge a compulsory fee to cover the membership fee in the Student Welfare organisation as well as other administrative fees when applicable and in compliance with national legislation in other participating countries.
5. *If applicable:* An Icelandic Party will charge a compulsory fee of ISK # when in compliance with national legislation in other participating countries.
6. Students will be financially responsible for:
 - a. Travel to and from the institutions they are attending during the length of the programme.
 - b. Books, stationery, etc.
 - c. Travel documentation, visas, etc.
 - d. Accommodation and living expenses.
 - e. Student Association/General Services Charges.(if applicable, and in compliance with national legislation in other participating countries)
 - f. International insurance coverage relevant to their stay in a given country.

X. Quality assurance

1. The Parties have agreed upon a plan in order to maintain and enhance the quality of the Programme. This plan is in accordance with the standards of quality assurance of all the Parties.

Each course will be evaluated by the students. The results will be used as input in the programme committee's annual report of the Programme as well as for continuous evaluation of the courses.

XI. Intellectual Property Rights

1. [If applicable]

XII. Disputes, Renewal, termination and amendment

1. This agreement will be in force for a period of # years, starting from ddmmyyyy, provided that the programme description has been duly approved by the respective institutions. The agreement may be prolonged by mutual consent of the Parties.
2. Changes and amendments, at the time of renewal or while the agreement is in effect, to this agreement must be in writing and approved by all Parties.
3. Any dispute that cannot be solved amicably among the Parties will be resolved within the national legal framework of the coordinating institution.
4. A Party may withdraw from this agreement, giving six months' written notice to the other Parties.
5. In the case of a Party leaving the cooperation or if the Parties decide to terminate the agreement, it is the responsibility of the home institution to ensure a reasonable arrangement for the completion of a student's study programme.

X. Signatures

Date

Legal representative

Name of institution

Date

Legal representative

Name of institution

Date

Legal representative

Name of the institution

Programme description for the Nordic Master Programme in ...

- 1) Name of the programme: Nordic Master Programme in <field>
- 2) Qualification(s) awarded
- 3) Length of programme: two years
- 4) Number of credits: 120 ECTS
- 5) Name of coordinating institution
- 6) Name of the title(s) the holder of the diploma is entitled to use
- 7) Profile of the programme
- 8) Intended learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competencies), (should be mentioned in the diploma(s) including Diploma Supplement(s))
- 9) Objectives and content of the programme (should be mentioned in the diploma(s) including Diploma Supplement(s))
- 10) Labour market relevance
- 11) Recommended previous knowledge
- 12) Admission requirements
- 13) Selection criteria
- 14) Intended distribution of students according to national recommendations
- 15) Compulsory and optional units
- 16) Mode(s) of instruction
- 17) Assessment methods and criteria
- 18) Grading scale(s)
- 19) Mobility scheme
- 20) ECTS credits of the thesis: 30 ECTS²²
- 21) Supervision of the thesis²³
- 22) Access to further studies
- 23) The academic calendar: autumn, spring
 - a) Start of semester within the cooperating institutions
 - b) End of semester within the cooperation institutions
- 24) Responsible institutions and departments for the different courses
- 25) Contact persons within the different institutions/departments
- 26) Programme committee
- 27) Contact information
- 28) Contact for programme information
- 29) Accredited/Approved: ddmmyyyy by...
ddmmyyyy by...
ddmmyyyy by...

²³ See above

**Course (Educational component) description for the Nordic Master Programme
in...**

1. Code and Name of the course
2. Number of ECTS credits allocated
3. Type (compulsory/optional) if applicable
4. Semester when the course is delivered
5. Name of the institution offering the course
6. Prerequisites
7. Objectives of the course
8. Intended learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competencies)
9. Content of the course
10. Planned learning activities and teaching methods
 - a) Lectures
 - b) Seminars
 - c) Workshops
 - d) Supervision
 - e) Laboratory work
 - f) Field studies
 - g) Etc.
11. Recommended and required reading and other learning resources/tools
12. Methods of assessment and criteria
13. Grading scale
14. Language of instruction
15. Name of lecturer(s)
16. Approved within the offering institution/department:
ddmmyyyy

Programme structure diagram with credits (template)

Sequential requirements

Nordic Master Programme in ...			
1 st semester	2 nd semester	3 rd semester	4 th semester
Name of the course: ...	Name of the course:	Name of the course:	Name of the course: The thesis/project
# of ECTS: 10 (only an example)	# of ECTS: 10	# of ECTS: 10	# of ECTS: 30
Will meet LO number # at programme level	Will meet LO number # at programme level	Will meet LO number # at programme level	Will meet LO number # at programme level
<i>Responsible Party:</i>	<i>Responsible Party:</i>	Responsible Party:	Supervision methods:
Name of the course:	Name of the course:	Name of the course:	
# of ECTS: 10	# of ECTS: 10	# of ECTS: 10	
Will meet LO number # at programme level	Will meet LO number # at	Will meet LO number # at	

	programme level	programme level	<i>Responsible Parties:</i> (Is to be decided on later.)
<i>Responsible Party:</i>	<i>Responsible Party:</i>	<i>Responsible Party:</i>	
Name of the course:	Name of the course:	Name of the course:	
# of ECTS: 10	# of ECTS: 10	# of ECTS: 10	
Will meet LO number # at programme level	Will meet LO number # at programme level	Will meet LO number # at programme level	
<i>Responsible Party:</i>	<i>Responsible Party:</i>	<i>Responsible Party:</i>	

Appendix 8

Annex 8

This is a template for a joint diploma. However, the co-operating institutions may wish to follow their traditions concerning both lay out and content. The important issue is that the cooperating institutions are aware of one another's national requirements.

The three institutions have given their permission to use their logo in this example.

JOINT DIPLOMA

Pursuant to the provisions of the partner institutions' national legislations: Lov om universiteter, jf. lovbekendtgørelse nr 367 af 14. August 2014 (The Danish Act on Universities); Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista 794/2004 (Government Decree on University Degrees), Finland; Högskolelag (1992:1435) (The Higher Education Act), Sweden, and

according to the agreement dated <dd/mm/yyyy> between the three partner institutions:

Aarhus University, Faculty of Sciences and Technology, Denmark
University of Turku, Faculty of Mathematics and Science, Finland
University of Uppsala, Faculty of Science and Technology, Sweden

on joint development and provision of the Nordic Master Programme in <field>

we hereby make known that,

having successfully completed the approved programme of study and the prescribed assessment,

<First Name> <Family Name>

<ID-number>

is dd.mm.yyyy awarded the degree

Master of in..., Aarhus University, Denmark

Master of in..., University of Turku, Finland

Master of in..., University of Uppsala, Sweden

(if applicable) <Specialization>

<Stamp>

<Stamp>

<Stamp>

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Annex 8

This is a template for a joint diploma. However, the co-operating institutions may wish to follow their traditions concerning both layout and content. The important issue is that the cooperating institutions are aware of one another's national requirements.

The three institutions have given their permission to use their logo in this example.

AARHUS UNIVERSITY
The Nordic Master Programme

Turun yliopisto
University of Turku

UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

The Nordic Master Programme builds upon both the excellence of the individual institutions and collaboration between Nordic higher education institutions. The curriculum is jointly planned and approved by the cooperating institutions. The research-based two-year programme offers the students the opportunity to live and study in at least two Nordic countries.

General information on the programme of study

The length of study for the degree is 2 years and it comprises 120 ECTS credits. One completed year of study has nominally 60 ECTS credits.

Admission to the Nordic Master Programme is based on a relevant completed first degree study (bachelor's degree) from a state recognized institution of higher education, or an equivalent background approved by the cooperating higher education institutions.

Objectives and content of the programme of study¹

<+>

The title of the Master's thesis

If applicable: Supervision:

The master's thesis has been jointly supervised by [name of the institution] and [name of the institution]

Learning outcomes

(The learning outcomes at programme level, mentioned in the programme description)

The holder of this qualification should have the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge:

Skills:

¹ Should be the same text which was used in the programme description

Annex 8

This is a [template](#) for a joint diploma. However, the co-operating institutions may wish to follow their traditions concerning both lay out and content. The important issue is that the cooperating institutions are aware of one another's national requirements.

The three institutions have given their permission to use their logo in this example.

Competences:

Additional information

If applicable: The holder of this qualification is entitled to use the title <title> in <country>, the title <title> in <country>, and the title <title> in <country>.

If applicable: In addition to this joint degree diploma, the candidate has also received a certificate/diploma in <language> for this programme.

Transcripts of records²

Enclosed

Grading Scales

See the Transcripts of Records³.

Quality assurance

Each module is subject to the quality assurance system of the institution offering the module.

Diploma Supplement

The Joint Diploma is accompanied by an international supplement, Diploma Supplement, showing some more details.

² The Joint Diploma is not valid without the Transcripts of Records (the results achieved). The Joint Diploma must include a Transcript of Records from each institution where the candidate has studied within the scope of this programme. They should be provided with a stamp and signed by an authorized person.

³ The candidate's results, including the grading scale used, should be included both in the Diploma and the Diploma Supplement. The Ad hoc group suggests therefore, that the co-operating institutions include in the Joint Diploma and the Diploma Supplement one set of "Transcript of Records", with a reference to the Transcript of Records in both documents.

Appendix 9

Learning outcomes – the aim of the education

The European Ministers of Higher Education adopted in their ministerial Bologna- process meeting in Bergen in 2005 the Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area. The communiqué which the ministers published as a result of this meeting includes the following statement:

We adopt the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA, comprising three cycles (including, within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications), generic descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences, and credit ranges in the first and second cycles. We commit ourselves to elaborating national frameworks for qualifications compatible with the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA by 2010, and to having started work on this by 2007.

The core of a qualifications framework is level descriptors in terms of learning outcomes.

Denmark, Iceland and Norway have adopted Qualification Framework for Higher Education. Also Finland and Sweden have prepared suggestions for national frameworks but they are not approved yet. However, the Swedish Higher Education Act describes the mission of the studies for the three cycles and in addition the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance includes in its appendix two expected learning outcomes for all three cycles. In Finland apply the requirements concerning the aims of the higher degree laid down in the Government Decree.

When developing the programme description for a joint master's programme leading to a joint master it is important that the developers pay attention to these descriptions, all of them quoted on the following pages:

Denmark

The Danish Qualifications Framework for Higher education, Master's Degree (kandidatgrad). 2008

Knowledge and understanding

Must possess knowledge of one or more subject areas which, in selected fields, is based on the highest international research within a subject of area.

Must be able to understand and, on a scientific basis, reflect on the knowledge of the subject area(s) and be able to identify scientific issues.

Skills

Must master the scientific methodologies and tools of the subject area(s) as well as master general skills related to work within the subject area(s).

Must be able to evaluate and select among the scientific theories, methodologies, tools and general skills of the subject area(s) and set up, on a scientific basis, new analysis and solution models.

Must be able to communicate research-based knowledge and discuss professional and scientific issues with both academic peers and non-specialists.

Competences

Must be able to manage work situations and developments that are complex, unpredictable and require new solution models.

Must be able to independently initiate and carry out discipline-specific and interdisciplinary collaboration and assume professional responsibility.

Must be able to independently take responsibility for their own professional development and specialisation.

The Danish qualification framework for master's programme within higher artistic education is found at http://kum.dk/uploads/tx_templavoila/Gradstypebeskrivelser.pdf (in Danish).

Finland

The Finnish qualifications framework is, as said, not approved yet, but on the other hand the Finnish Government decree – Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista annetun valtioneuvoston asetuksen muuttamisesta, 1039/2013 – Statsrådets förordning om ändring av statsrådets förordning om universitetsexamina, 1039/2013, chapter 12

sets the aims for what the student should be able to do or demonstrate of knowledge or skills (in Swedish):

Mål för utbildning som leder till högre högskoleexamen

Målet för utbildning som leder till högre högskoleexamen är att den som har avlagt examen har:

- goda kunskaper i huvudämnet eller en helhet som jämföras med huvudämnet och kunskaper i grunderna i ämnena eller goda kunskaper i de fördjupade studier som hör till utbildningsprogrammet
- förmåga att tillämpa vetenskaplig kunskap och vetenskapliga metoder eller färdigheter för självständigt och krävande konstnärligt arbete
- förutsättningar att vara verksam i arbetslivet i krävande sakkunnig- och utvecklingsuppgifter inom sitt eget område och i internationellt samarbete
- färdigheter för vetenskaplig eller konstnärlig påbyggnadsutbildning och för livslångt lärande
- goda kommunikativa färdigheter och språkkunskaper för det egna området samt för internationell verksamhet och internationellt samarbete.

Utbildningen grundar sig på forskning eller konstnärlig verksamhet samt på yrkespraxis inom området.

Iceland

The National Qualification Framework for higher education/ Viðmið um æðri menntun og prófgráður, 2011, Master's Degree Cycle 2.2 90-120 ECTS

Knowledge

Degree holders possess knowledge of a defined area of a scientific field or profession.

This entails that holders:

- possess knowledge of scientific subjects and challenges
- have acquired knowledge through research
- can provide arguments for their own findings
- can place the latest knowledge in context within the relevant specialised field
- are familiar with the research methods within their scientific field
- have knowledge of science ethics.

Skills

Degree holders can apply methods and procedures of a defined area of a scientific field or profession

This entails the holders:

- have adopted relevant methods and procedures
- are capable of analyzing and imparting statistical information
- can understand and tackle complex subjects in a professional context
- can apply their knowledge and understanding in their scientific and professional work
- can use the relevant equipment, technology and software
- can collect, analyze and evaluate scientific data
- are innovative in developing and applying ideas
- can apply their knowledge, understanding and proficiency in new and unfamiliar situations or in an interdisciplinary context
- can develop projects and place them in context by applying methods based on scientific theories and/or experiments

- are capable of integrating knowledge, resolve complex issues and present an opinion based on the available information
- can effectively apply research methods and implement small-scale research projects
- understand research and research findings.

Competences

Degree holders can apply their knowledge and skills in their profession and/or further study.

This entails that the holders:

- have developed the necessary learning skills and independence for further studies
- can initiate and lead projects within the scientific field and be responsible for the work of individuals and groups
- can communicate complex scientific information, challenges and findings to scholars as well as to general audience
- are capable of presenting and describing scientific issues and research findings in a foreign language
- can make decisions in an independent, professional manner and defend them
- can evaluate the suitability of the different methods of analysis and complex scientific issues in each case
- can communicate statistical information.

Norway

Norwegian Qualifications Framework/ Nasjonalt kvalifikasjonsrammeverk, 2011, Level 7 Master (2. Cycle)

Knowledge

An understanding of theories, facts, principles, procedures in subject areas and/or occupation

A candidate who has completed his or her qualification should have the following learning outcomes defined in terms of knowledge, skills and general competence. The candidate:

- has advanced knowledge within the academic field and specialized insight in a limited area
- has thorough knowledge of the scholarly or artistic theories and methods in the field
- can apply knowledge to new areas within the academic field
- can analyze academic problems on the basis of the history, traditions, distinctive character and place in society of the academic field.

Skills

The ability to utilize knowledge to solve problems or tasks (cognitive, practical, creative and communication skills). The candidate:

- can analyze and deal critically with various sources of information and use them to structure and formulate scholarly arguments
- can analyze existing theories, methods and interpretations in the field and work independently on practical and theoretical problems
- can use relevant methods for research and scholarly and/or artistic development work in an independent manner
- can carry out an independent, limited research or development project under supervision and in accordance with applicable norms for research ethics.

General competence

The skills to utilize knowledge and skills in an independent manner in different situation. The candidate:

- can analyze relevant academic, professional and research ethical problems
- can apply his/her knowledge and skills in new areas in order to carry out advanced assignments and projects
- can communicate extensive independent work and masters language and terminology of the academic field
- can communicate about academic issues, analyses and conclusions in the field, both with specialists and the general public
- can contribute to new thinking and innovative processes.

Sweden

The mission of the study

Sweden has included in their legislation the mission of the education at the three different levels (here the second-cycle):

Sweden: The Swedish Higher Education Act/Högskolelag, 1992:1434, latest amendments 2013:119, chapter 1 section 9:

Second-cycle courses and study programmes shall be based fundamentally on the knowledge acquired by students during first-cycle courses and study programmes, or its equivalent.

Second-cycle courses and study programmes shall involve the acquisition of specialist knowledge, competence and skills in relation to first-cycle courses and study programmes, and in addition to the requirements for first-cycle courses and study programmes shall:

- further develop the ability of students to integrate and make autonomous use of their knowledge
- develop the student's ability to deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations, and
- develop the students' potential for professional activities that demand considerable autonomy, or for research and development work. Ordinance (2006:173).

The expected learning outcomes are included in the Higher Education Ordinance, Appendix 2.

Degree of Master (120 credits) [Masterexamen]

Scope

A Degree of Master (120 credits) is awarded after the student has completed the courses required to gain 120 credits with a defined specialisation determined by each higher education institution itself, of which at least 60 credits are for specialised study in the principal field (main field of study) of the study programme. In addition the prior award of a Degree of Bachelor, a Degree of Bacheloring Arts, a professional or vocational qualification of at least 180 credits or a corresponding qualification from abroad is required.

The requirement of the prior award of a qualification may be waived for a student admitted to the programme without the basic entry requirement in the form of a qualification. This does not, however, apply if a waiver was granted during admission pursuant to the second paragraph of Section 28 of Chapter 7 on the grounds that the qualification had not yet been issued.

Outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

Competence and skills

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall:

- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, autonomously and creatively as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and so contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as the ability to evaluate this work
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing both nationally and internationally to clearly report and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or autonomous employment in some other qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall:

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or autonomous employment in some other qualified capacity.

Independent project (degree project)

A requirement for the award of a Degree of Master (120 credits) is completion by the student of an independent project (degree project) for at least 30 credits in the main field of study. The degree project may comprise less than 30 credits, however no less than 15 credits, if the student has already completed an independent project in the second cycle for at least 15 credits in the main field of study or the equivalent from a programme of study outside Sweden.

Miscellaneous

Specific requirements determined by the each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor shall also apply for a Degree of Master (120 credits) with a defined specialisation.

Degree of Master of Fine Arts (120 credits) [Konstnärlig masterexamen]

Scope

A Degree of Master of Fine Arts (120 credits) is awarded after the student has completed the courses required to gain 120 credits with a defined specialisation determined by each higher education institution itself. In addition the prior award of a Degree of Bachelor, a Degree of Bachelor in Fine Arts, a professional or vocational qualification of at least 180 credits or a corresponding qualification from abroad is required.

The requirement of the prior award of a qualification may be waived for a student admitted to the programme without the basic entry requirement in the form of a qualification. This does not, however, apply if a waiver was granted during admission pursuant to the second para-

graph of Section 28 of Chapter 7 on the grounds that the qualification had not yet been issued.

Outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Master of Fine Arts (120 credits) the student shall:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in areas of the field as well as specialised insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate familiarity with methods and processes for dealing with complex phenomena, issues and situations in the field.

Competence and skills

For a Degree of Master of Fine Arts (120 credits) the student shall:

- demonstrate the ability to formulate new issues autonomously and creatively and contribute to the formation of knowledge, solve more advanced problems, develop new forms of personal expression as well as to reflect critically on his or her artistic approach and that of others in the main field of study
- demonstrate the ability to create and execute his or her own ideas with his or her own personal expression, to identify, formulate and solve artistic and creative problems autonomously and also to plan and undertake advanced artistic tasks using appropriate methods within predetermined time frames
- demonstrate the ability both nationally and internationally to clearly present and discuss his or her works and artistic issues in speech, writing or in other ways and in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the competence and knowledge required to work autonomously in a professional capacity.

Independent project (degree project)

A requirement for the award of a Degree of Master of Fine Arts (120 credits) is completion by the student of an independent project (degree project) for at least 30 credits in the main field of study. The degree project may comprise less than 30 credits, however no less than 15 credits, if the student has already completed an independent project in the sec-

ond cycle for at least 15 credits in the main field of study or the equivalent from a programme of study outside Sweden.

Miscellaneous

Specific requirements determined by each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor shall also apply for a Degree of Master of Fine Arts (120 credits) with a defined specialisation.

Joint Degrees and the Nordic Countries

According to the strategy for Nordic co-operation in education and research the Nordic countries should remove obstacles for free movement for students and researchers in the Nordic region. One goal with this report has been to identify obstacles for organizing joint programmes on master level.

The Nordic Council of Ministers has until now financed, in co-operation with universities, 23 Nordic Master Programmes. Minimum of three higher education institutions develop joint programmes, that will attract both Nordic and non-Nordic students.

The report gives an overview of the legislation in relation to joint degrees in the Nordic countries. It also has recommendations for the Nordic Master Programme and offers separate thematic documents like a template for a joint diploma.

The report will hopefully serve as practical guide book for those in the process of planning or building up joint master programmes. Hopefully, the report also makes a contribution to developing other international joint programmes.

TemaNord 2015:528
ISBN 978-92-893-4067-0 (PRINT)
ISBN 978-92-893-4066-3 (PDF)
ISBN 978-92-893-4068-7 (EPUB)
ISSN 0908-6692