

Act relating to universities and university colleges

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Part I. Joint provisions

Chapter 1. Purpose and scope of the Act

Section 1-1. *Purpose of the Act*

The purpose of this Act is to make provisions for universities and university colleges to

- a) provide higher education at a high international level;
- b) conduct research and academic and artistic development work at a high international level;
- c) disseminate knowledge of the institution's activities and promote an understanding of the principle of academic freedom and application of scientific and artistic methods and results in the teaching of students, in the institution's own general activity as well as in public administration, in cultural life and in business and industry.

Amended by [Act of 14 Dec 2007 no. 117](#) (effective 1 Jan 2008 pursuant to [Decree of 14 Dec 2007 no. 1440](#)).

Section 1-2. *The scope of the Act - universities and university colleges*

(1) The Act must apply to universities and university colleges that provide education accredited pursuant to this Act or that have obtained institutional accreditation, cf. Section 3-1, as

- a) a university,
- b) a specialized university institution or
- c) a university college.

(2) The category to which an individual institution belongs will be decided by the King on the basis of an accreditation assessment by the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT).

(3) The King may, on the basis of an accreditation assessment by NOKUT, decide that certain provisions of this Act will apply correspondingly to other institutions.

(4) The Ministry may, on the recommendation of the board, decide that deviations may be made from provisions of this Act and from regulations laid down pursuant to the Act in connection with time-limited educational or organizational pilot schemes.

(5) The Act must apply to universities and university colleges with activities in the Realm. The Act must apply to Svalbard and Jan Mayen unless otherwise prescribed by the King. The King may lay down special provisions out of regard for local conditions.

(6) The Act will not apply to activities conducted outside the Realm. The King may nevertheless decide that such activities must wholly or partly be made subject to the provisions of the Act.

(7) By agreement with a foreign state or international organization, the scope of the Act may be extended or restricted within specific fields.

Section 1-3. *The institutions' activities*

Universities and university colleges must promote the purpose of the Act by:

- a) providing higher education based on the foremost within research, academic and artistic development work, and experience-based knowledge;
- b) conducting research and academic and artistic development work;
- c) efficiently managing the resources provided and actively seeking external resources;
- d) helping to disseminate and communicate the results of research and of academic and artistic development work;
- e) contributing to innovation and value creation based on results from research and academic and artistic development work;
- f) facilitating participation in the public debate by the institution's staff and students;
- g) helping to ensure that Norwegian higher education and research are at the forefront of international research and of developments within higher education;
- h) cooperating with other universities, university colleges and corresponding institutions in other countries, local and regional civic and working life, public administration and international organizations;
- i) providing continuing and further education in the institution's field of accreditation.

Section 1-4. *The special responsibilities of certain institutions*

- (1) Universities and university colleges have a special responsibility for basic research and research training in the fields in which they award doctorates.
- (2) The University of Bergen, the University of Oslo, the University of Tromsø - the Arctic University of Norway, the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, and the University of Stavanger have a special national responsibility for developing, managing and maintaining museums with scientific collections and public exhibitions. The Ministry may issue further regulations concerning cooperation and division of responsibilities between the universities in this area.
- (3) The Ministry may assign certain institutions a special national responsibility for research or education in specific fields. In the same way, the Ministry may assign certain institutions special national responsibility for developing, managing and maintaining research libraries, knowledge repositories and databases, as well as museums with scientific collections and public exhibitions for specific fields.
- (4) The Ministry may, in consultation with the institution concerned, place the management of a common national operation at a specific institution without the institution's own governing body being made responsible for the academic activities involved.

Amended by [Acts of 12 Dec 2008 no. 105](#) (effective 1 Jan 2009 pursuant to [Decree 12 Dec 2008 no. 1340](#)), [19 June 2009 no. 96](#) (effective 1 Aug 2009 pursuant to [Decree 19 June 2009 no. 676](#)), [20 June 2014 no. 55](#) (effective 1 Aug 2014 pursuant to [Decree of 20 June 2014 no. 817](#)).