REPORT ON EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENTS
2011/2012
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ABBREVIATIONS OF NAMES OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND FACULTIES

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<th>Norwegian</th>
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<tr>
<td>UiT</td>
<td>University of Tromsø</td>
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<tr>
<td>UiN</td>
<td>University of Nordland</td>
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<tr>
<td>UiO</td>
<td>University of Oslo</td>
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<td>UiB</td>
<td>University of Bergen</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTNU</td>
<td>Norwegian University of Science and Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>UiA</td>
<td>University of Agder</td>
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<td>UiS</td>
<td>University of Stavanger</td>
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<tr>
<td>UMB</td>
<td>Norwegian University of Life Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helsefak</td>
<td>Faculty of Health Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSL-fak</td>
<td>Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>BFE-fak</td>
<td>Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics</td>
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<td>NT-fak</td>
<td>Faculty of Science and Technology</td>
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<td>Jurfak</td>
<td>Faculty of Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kunstfak</td>
<td>Faculty of Fine Art</td>
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A decision was made at the meeting of the Council of State on 15 February 2013 that as of 1 August 2013 the University of Tromsø (UiT) and Finnmark University College (HiF) would become one institution under the name University of Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway. The merged institution will, from the autumn semester 2013, face opportunities and challenges of major significance for the educational activities. Educational management, quality of education, internationalisation, management of multi-campus systems with common programme descriptions and increased demands for flexible education are some of the topics covered in the merger process and that will receive major focus in the future. These areas also have had significant attention at UiT in the lead up to the merger date and are referred to in the Report on educational attainments for the year.

Focus on quality of education and educational management

The 10-year anniversary of the Quality Reform is a recurrent theme in this year’s Report on the status of higher education in Norway by the Ministry of Education and Research. Higher education in Norway has experienced a significant increase in the number of students, the number of inbound and outbound exchange students has doubled, the number of PhDs attained has doubled, the research publication has increased by 60% and the number of credits attained has increased somewhat. In this context, it is possible to conclude that the Quality Reform has had a positive effect, particularly with respect to internationalisation and organized research training.

Although the Quality Reform is largely an academic reform, the status report shows that during this period there has been a significant increase in research intensity. The government's White Paper on research, Long-term perspectives – knowledge provides opportunity, also emphasizes this link between higher education and research more strongly than previously. The government believes that research and development-based education helps to ensure quality in the programmes of study and would like more student involvement in efforts involving research and development. However, the White Paper on research points out that after the introduction of the Quality Reform and implementation of the qualifications framework, there is a need for an evaluation of where higher education stands today and provides advice on the way forward.

On the education side, the status report shows that the completion rate among students has not developed to the extent that the intentions of the reform indicated, and that the institutions still face major challenges. In this respect, focus on education and education quality is essential to intensify efforts in this area. At UiT there have been systematic efforts to investigate various opportunities to raise the status of efforts involving quality of education. Some areas of work will be referred to in the following.

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2 White Paper no. 18 (2012-2013) Long-term perspectives – knowledge provides opportunity
Meriting of educational work

UiT has over a longer period had focus on placing educational and research work on an equal footing. Among other projects, an initiative was introduced to study how development work aimed at programmes of study may be merited in connection with the allocation of R & D sabbaticals, or a separate education sabbatical. The outgoing Rectorate has initiated this work in the current period and the incoming Rectorate indicated in its manifesto that it will continue to have focus on placing teaching and research duties on an equal footing. Several of the reports in the merger process also recommend that this be continued in connection with the work group appointed to examine the criteria for the awarding of R & D sabbaticals. This is an extremely important area, and will be an integral part of the overall efforts to increase the status of education focused activities.

ProTed – Centre for Professional Learning in Teacher Education

NOKUT – the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education – on commission from the Ministry of Education and Research manages a scheme of Centres of Excellence in Higher Education. The status as a centre of excellence in higher education is allocated to environments that can show excellence in quality and innovative practices in education. An important demand to the centres is the dissemination of the attained results and knowledge.

ProTed – Centre for Professional Learning in Teacher Education was in 2012 awarded the status of Norway’s first centre of Excellence in Higher Education – and is a joint venture between UiT and the University of Oslo (UiO). ProTed shall contribute to developing R & D-based education, innovative ways of working with R & D-based education and to disseminate knowledge about the design of the teaching and learning environments that promote learning. This work is aimed at renewing and developing the core activities in teacher education through systematic R & D work, research and evaluation. ProTed is well underway in all development areas, and aims to develop 1-2 models of outstanding quality within each area that can be implemented in teacher education. The development area “Integrated Study Design” has an overall and synthesising function in the development work, and the goal is to establish a knowledge base for the design of integrated teacher training programmes.

The university’s education award

The university’s annual education award shall provide recognition of efforts to develop the quality of education, and to inspire greater efforts in this work. The prize is NOK 50,000 and a diploma.

A total of eight candidates were nominated for the education award in 2012. The prize was awarded to Professor Liv Lundberg (Academy of Contemporary Arts and Creative Writing, Faculty of Fine Arts) for her development of the programme in creative writing and for her role as an academic supervisor. Lundberg is regarded as being synonymous with the programme in creative writing since it was started as a pilot project. The pilot year was evaluated as being extremely successful and the programme was continued. Lundberg has built up a good literary environment and a writers’ workshop where applicants from across the country are lining up to get in. Although it has a relatively low budget, the programme in creative writing is regarded as a solid, academically advanced and innovative educational provision. Lundberg was nominated by the creative writing year group 2010/2011 and 2011/2012.

Educational management

In relation to the expectations concerning the reduction of drop-out rates and the increase in throughput and the overall quality assurance of the course of study, the necessity of good programme
design and management is emphasized. The Ministry of Education and Research has on several occasions pointed to the need for stronger educational management in higher education institutes, the importance of educational management being handled strategically by the institution’s board and gaining attention in line with the research management. In connection with the university board’s stipulation of a model for governance and management of the merged university, it was decided that a review of the governance and management arrangements would be implemented by the end of the first election period. Control and management of the programmes of study were not part of this evaluation and, consequently, will be evaluated in a separate process.

Evaluation of the programme management at UiT will mainly be carried out in three phases. In the first phase, experiences from the current governance arrangements of programme management will be mapped. The main objective is to gain information about the type of academic programme management is currently utilized by the programmes of study, the division of work between department and programme management, and promoting the key areas of work for the various forms of programme management. All faculties at UiT have responded to the survey. The process is currently on hold as it will be relevant that the experiences from HiF are also included.

In the second phase, a project group will be appointed to review the data from the survey, and plan and implement further evaluation, including the choice of method. The survey will also provide a basis for gathering further experiences from selected programmes of study with different models for programme management. It is particularly important that the evaluation takes into account the new university’s challenges associated with programme management of multi-campus programmes of study. The project group will publish a report analyzing the current activities and recommendations for future forms of programme management. After a hearing process, the report will be presented to the University Board.

In order to meet demands for increased focus on education management in terms of both competency enhancement and status, in phase three of the evaluation process a conference on educational management will be held, with special focus on programme management. The conference will be followed up with mini seminars / workshops to discuss the work group’s report and future forms of programme management.

Structure of this year’s Report on educational attainments

UiT is this year approaching the end of the current strategic period, and will from the autumn semester 2013 have a new Rectorate and a new board that will lay the foundation for a new strategy. This year’s report on educational attainments will discuss the various topics relevant to education in the current long-term strategic plan, and each chapter will sum up the discussion and assess whether the institution has achieved the goals that were set. The assessments and analyses are based mainly on the faculties’ reports, educational statistics and the findings from internal and external evaluations. In conjunction with the University Board’s consideration of the report on educational attainments 2010/2011, management signals and measures were given for the units to implement, and in their reports the units have given feedback on these. Follow-up of these management signals is discussed in the various chapters. Owing to the fact that UiT is in a transition period, as a result of the merger and
change of leadership, this year’s report on educational attainments will not propose management signals for the next period.

UiT has decided that future reporting to and consideration of the report and educational attainments will follow the same model that applies for the Triennial Review of Research and Development. In other words, the University Board will each year consider the report and educational attainments in the spring semester and not in the autumn semester as has been the case previously. Further, an expanded version of the report and educational attainments will be prepared every three years. In the intervening years, an annual report will be presented to the University Board based mainly on educational statistics.

Cooperation with the faculties
During the process with this year’s report on educational attainments, the faculties have been encouraged to show which assessments and analyses form the basis of the attained result and implemented measures. The report on educational attainments for 2010/2011 pointed out that the work on the annual reporting should be reviewed with a view to whether the reporting processes provide sufficient information. In this context, a proposal was made to consider the establishment of an inter-faculty forum to discuss the process and content of the annual reporting. In January 2013 the Department of Academic Affairs established the Forum for quality of education, consisting of both academic and administrative staff at the faculties and other relevant units (the forum is mentioned in more detail later in this chapter). Since its establishment, the forum has had useful discussions about the reporting process, and it has been possible to a higher degree than previously to reconcile the expectations between the various levels in the reporting process, as well as expectations of the content of the final report on educational attainments. Further, the forum will discuss the management of future reports on educational attainments, including with respect to the possibility of focusing the reports more on the selected themes.

Overall presentation of the three degree cycles
In previous reports on educational attainments, the third degree cycle, the PhD programme, has been presented in a separate chapter. The University Board expressed during the consideration of the previous report on educational attainments that education and research activities should be addressed in a more overall manner. This is also in line with the government’s desire for a stronger link between education and research. Consequently, in this year’s report on educational attainments, the analyses of the PhD programmes are included in the relevant chapters.

Main points in this year’s report on educational attainment

One of the overarching objectives of UiT’s strategy is to offer programmes of study at a level and of a quality that meets national and European standards. In this context, systematic efforts involving quality and implementation of the qualification framework will be included as specific subsidiary objectives in the plan of action. In the autumn semester 2012 UiT gained approval of its quality assurance system from NOKUT. All faculties report that they have implemented the qualification framework within the stipulated deadline and in this respect it may be said that UiT has achieved the goal outlined in the long-term strategic plan. However, it comes to light from both NOKUT’s

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6 White Paper no. 18 (2012-2013) Long-term perspectives – knowledge provides opportunity
evaluation and the reporting from the faculties that there are still challenges connected with efforts relating to quality of education. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

During the strategic period, UiT has had a positive development in the number of applicants. The number of applicants recruited that had a programme of study at UiT as their first priority far exceeded the university’s objective, and in addition has a large local admission. With an increase of approx. 20% in the number of applicants via the Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service (NUCAS) admissions in 2009-2012, and an increase of 14.3% in the number of applicants who start studies at UiT, one may conclude that UiT has largely succeeded in its efforts involving recruitment. However, the university experiences that there are not qualified applicants for a number of PhD positions, and as such the recruitment to the PhD programmes is unsatisfactory. Challenges related to ensuring good and stable recruitment of students at all levels is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

The strategy is based on the assumption that internationalisation is closely linked to the development of the quality of the educational provisions and the academic activities in general. An increased level of attention to developing an international campus is a topic that is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. In 2009 UiT sat the target of having 15% international students by the end of 2013. This target was not reached as the proportion of international students in 2013 constituted 9%. Part of the reason for this is the increase in the total number of students during the strategic period. This target does not apply to PhD students, where almost one-third of the students are foreign nationals.

Chapter 5 examines drop-out and completion of studies. Increased correlation between the students’ planned course of study and actual length of study has been an overarching objective for UiT, and figures for completion rates show that at a national level there has been very little development after the Quality Reform was introduced 10 years ago. This is also the case at UiT, and during the strategic period no clear improvement has been measured in the completion rate and time-to-degree. UiT has, however, had a positive development in the ratio of completed credits per student, which suggests that the academic intensity is increasing nonetheless.

An important part of the efforts involving quality of education is the follow-up and routines for grading and cases of appeal. In this context it is worth mentioning that new descriptions of grades at a national level for natural science and technology subjects will contribute to broader use of the grading scale at Master’s level. The Ministry of Education and Research and the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR) both emphasize that this is an example to be followed in all subject areas. During the strategic period UiT has experienced a major increase in the number of appeals to the university’s Appeals Committee and Chapter 6 provides more details about the reasons for this increase. However, the majority of appeals are not upheld by the Appeals Committee.

One of the university’s most ambitious objectives concerns the flexibility of education. The long-term strategic plan states that UiT shall be a national leader and innovator in decentralized and web-based educational provisions. In order to achieve this objective, UiT has started the Fleksibel utdanning (Flexible education) project, which is discussed in Chapter 7. The project has to date involved more than 2000 students (more than 20% of the student population), which is an indication that the university has come a long way in this area during the period. However, it is difficult to tell how UiT lies at the national level since the national figures in the field do not correlate with the figures that may be obtained locally.
According to the long-term strategic plan, UiT shall develop relevant programmes of study through interaction with societal and professional fields. Chapter 8 takes a closer look at UiT’s efforts in this area and details how in different ways the academic environments interact with societal and professional fields in the development of new and existing educational provisions. It is a demanding task to maintain the status as a general university while at the same time developing the programme portfolio in line with the needs of society, demand, the university’s profile and strategic considerations. Enhanced public relations and targeted priorities at institutional level will in all likelihood be decisive in achieving the desired results. The efforts to better adapt the programme portfolio to the university’s objectives, the needs of society and the students’ demand is a continuous and long-term process that must be continued in the period of the new long-term strategic plan/strategic period.

The University Board’s decision

On 6 June 2013, the University Board made the following resolution for item S 32-13 Report on educational attainments 2011/2012:

1. The University Board takes into consideration the Report on educational attainments for the 2011/2012 academic year with the alternations and comments that emerged at the meeting.

2. The decision-making body at all units should consider the Report on educational attainments as a separate item. The Student parliament is also requested to consider the Report on educational attainments as a separate item.
CHAPTER 2
QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The University of Tromsø shall offer programmes of study and courses at a level and of a quality that meets national and European standards.

From the Strategic Document for University of Tromsø 2009-2013

An overarching objective of the Strategy Document for the University of Tromsø 2009-2013 is that UiT will offer studies at a level and of a quality that meets national and European standards. In the Plan of Action for the University of Tromsø 2009-2013, the overarching objectives are stipulated in supplementary objectives and measures. One of these is that the university shall have an internal quality assurance system that describes and provides the framework for UiT’s strategic and systematic efforts involving the quality of education. Another measure is that efforts to safeguard and develop the quality of the programmes of study at UiT are firmly rooted and are a priority among managers and employees at all levels and that students understand and gain recognition for their important role in efforts to develop the quality of education. External evaluations of programmes of study are also important. The necessity of faculties and academic environments having continuous focus on the academic level and the quality of education, on what promotes learning and on the total competence gained by the candidates are other factors that are highlighted in the plan of action. A key measure in achieving this focus is good pedagogical competence in the academic environments, as well as implementation and development of learning outcome descriptors in accordance with the national qualifications frameworks. The following section provides a review of efforts involving quality of education within the above-mentioned areas.

NOKUT's evaluation of the quality assurance system for educational activities at UiT

In 2012 NOKUT completed an evaluation of the system for quality assurance of educational activities at UiT. NOKUT regularly assesses systems for the quality assurance of educational activities at higher education institutions, and UiT’s quality assurance system was last evaluated and approved by NOKUT in 2006. NOKUT uses expert committees to assess whether the institution’s quality assurance system is satisfactory and in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Education and Research’s forskrift om kvalitetsikring og kvalitetsutvikling i høyere utdanning og fagskoleutdanning (Regulations relating to quality assurance of and quality development in higher education and tertiary vocational education).

The expert committee bases its assessments on document studies and meetings with relevant stakeholders at the institution. The committee visited UiT on 13 March and 27-29 August 2012. On its preliminary visit, the committee had meetings with the university management and leading student representatives. During its main visit in August, the committee had meetings with student representatives.

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7 Educational management is also an extremely important area in efforts involving quality of education, and is mentioned in Chapter 1 of the Report on educational attainments.

8 The committee’s main visit was planned for 30 May - 1 June, but this had to be postponed as several key people were on strike.
representatives, people with course responsibility, programme coordinators, heads of department and the management at the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education and the Faculty of Science and Technology. The expert committee’s report was presented to NOKUT’s Board on 12 December, which made the following resolution: The system for quality assurance of educational activities at the University of Tromsø gains approval.

The expert committee concludes in the report that UiT has a quality assurance system that covers all aspects of the educational activities. The committee writes that “the system is suitable for identifying quality deficiencies, and the university has documented that the system is in active use”. In addition to the recommendation that the system gains approval, the committee provides recommendations for further development of the systematic efforts involving educational quality. The following section will provide a review of how the recommendations were followed as part of the university’s ongoing efforts involving the quality of education. Further, the faculties were asked in a letter from the University Director to take NOKUT’s recommendations into consideration and implement any necessary measures.

Further develop evaluation routines
The committee recommends that the university undertakes a review of the current use of the online surveying tool Questback. The Committee has observed that the use of Questback is perceived as little motivation for the students and has a low level of participation. The content and timing of the evaluations are also regarded as unsuitable. The committee recommends that the university introduces systematic continuous evaluation to a greater extent.

The quality assurance system at UiT provides a description of the objective and the method of evaluation of courses and programmes of study. The continuous evaluation of courses is recommended, and it appears that the choice of evaluation method must be adapted in accordance with the distinctive characteristics of the course and programme of study to prepare for broad participation and documentation of the evaluation. In the event that the online surveying tool Questback shall be utilized, the questionnaire must be adapted for the educational provision in question.

NOKUT’s observations during the institutional visit identified a need to further develop the evaluation routines so that to a greater extent the practice is in accordance with the intentions of the quality assurance system. It may appear that there is a need for greater exchange of experiences between the academic environments and guidance in relation to the choice of evaluation method so that it can be better adapted to the distinctive characteristics and needs of the individual educational provision. In this regard the faculties have been asked to review their evaluation routines in accordance with the committee’s recommendation. This is also a topic that may be discussed on an inter-faculty basis in order for challenges and positive experiences to be shared between the academic environments. In this context we refer also to the newly established Forum for quality of education, which is mentioned below under the subheading “Strengthening the institutional level”. The university’s Learning Environment Committee has also drawn attention to evaluation work, and has recommended the establishment of a larger scale project on evaluation and how evaluations may best be implemented.

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9 Archive ref. ePhorte no. 2010/4203
10 Report from the expert committee, p. 14
11 Archive ref. ePhorte 2010/4203-52
12 See the university’s quality assurance system for educational activities, p. 18
13 Archive ref. ePhorte no. 2010/4203
Establish a “student mobilisation” project

The committee recommends that the university establishes a project or a process in collaboration with the student parliament. The aim of this, according to the committee, would be to increase the students’ engagement on a broad front, including in efforts involving quality of education. Despite the fact that students are represented on councils and committees, the committee has observed nonetheless that students are not as well involved in efforts involving the quality of education at the institution.

The committee points out an area that is challenging on both a local and national basis. It may appear difficult to engage students in some aspects of the efforts involving quality. There may be different reasons for this and it will therefore require different types of measures. It is important to engage students in the further follow-up and consequently this matter has been discussed by the Learning Environment Committee. The student representatives on the Learning Environment Committee have assumed the task of coming up with proposals of how this may be achieved. Following this other relevant stakeholders at UiT will be involved. In addition the project will be included in existing forums for both academic and administrative management from the faculties, so that it is also rooted at the faculty level.

Improve electronic communication with the students

The committee recommends that the university ensures that the students receive important information electronically to the e-mail addresses that are in use. The university would prefer the students to use the e-mail address they are allocated by the university, but the committee has observed that it appears that some students do not use these addresses.

In this respect, the faculties have been recommended to send out information to both the student’s private e-mail account and official student e-mail account, where appropriate. However, the flow of information to students is challenging and in this context it is relevant to mention the work involving the new student portal “Min side” (My page)15. This portal will enable each student to obtain information about his/her schedule, student status (status of semester registration, address, faculty affiliation etc.), messages from Fronter and the possibility of viewing e-mails sent to their official student e-mail account. This will make the electronic flow of information to the students safer. In addition, it will be easier for the students to keep updated as they will find all relevant information in the same place. It remains unclear when this project will be ready to launch.

Strengthening the institutional level

In its report the committee points out that institutional level should be strengthened. It points out that “faculty level undertakes all assessments of the ongoing programme of study in relation to national standards, and that the University Director does not undertake control or his/her own calculations of this”16. This observation does not correspond with the practice at UiT, which was pointed out in the university’s comments about the committee’s report. The fact that the management of degrees is delegated to faculty level involves the faculty level having the academic authority for the total programme provision the faculty offers. This means that the faculties have the responsibility for the evaluation and following up of existing programmes of study. An annual review of the quality of education of the programmes of study from the institutional level occurs through university’s Report on educational attainments. However, the quality assurance system requires that new programmes of study and programmes of study with significant changes are considered by the University Board. In

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14 Archive ref. ePhorte 2010/4203-52
15 This project is being managed by the Department of Communications and Public Relations
16 Report from the expert committee, p. 15
such cases, the programmes of study are thoroughly considered at the institutional level to ensure that they meet the requirements set by NOKUT as well as the institution’s own requirements.

However, the committee recommends that the institutional level be strengthened in this type of case by establishing control routines at the institutional level to quality assure the professional assessments made at the faculty level. As mentioned earlier, work involving programme descriptions is one of the processes to be reviewed in the improvement process at UiT17. The objective of this process is to improve workflow and clarify roles at different phases in the work involving programme descriptions. NOKUT’s recommendations and observations in this area will be drawn into the work.

The committee also recommends that consideration should be to establishing a faculty-wide forum for quality and quality development with the aim of strengthening the necessary harmonization and coordination across efforts involving quality. According to the committee, such a forum could also play a role in the quality assurance of professional assessments implemented at the faculty level. As mentioned, the need for such a forum was also raised in the report on educational attainments for 2010/2011. Therefore, the Department of Academic Affairs established the Forum for quality of education in January 2013. The forum has now had three meetings at which Pro-Deans, Directors of Academic Affairs and other relevant stakeholders at the faculties have participated along with representatives from the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (RESULT), the Department of Research and Development, University Library of Tromsø and student representatives from the Learning Environment Committee. Topics such as flexible learning, efforts involving the qualifications framework and reporting to the report on educational attainments have been discussed. The form and content of the forum have also been reviewed, and there is agreement that there is a major need to discuss these types of topics across faculties and across subjects and administration. The Forum for quality of education is currently the only forum at which both academic and administrative staff members are represented.

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External evaluation of the programmes of study

During consideration of the report on educational attainments two years ago, the University Board decided that all faculties shall develop their own system and plans for external evaluation of programmes of study by year end 2011, and in accordance with the requirements of the quality assurance system. The external evaluations shall cover programmes of study at all levels.

The Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education is one of the first faculties to have in place its own system of external evaluation. In this year’s report, this faculty reports that there have generally been positive reactions from the academic environments about the external evaluations. The academic environments have expressed that they appreciate a thorough review of the entire programme of study and that they experience the suggestions from the evaluation committees as inspiring and useful. The faculty claims that the external evaluations appear to motivate the academic environments to a constructive process of further development of the programmes of study. The faculty experiences that the academic environments of their own accord propose “their” programmes of study for external evaluation, which the faculty regards as very commendable and also a clear signal that the suggestions from outside experts are perceived as valuable.

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17 See UiT’s website about the improvement process: [http://uit.no/ansatte/artikkel?p_document_id=308212](http://uit.no/ansatte/artikkel?p_document_id=308212)
In connection with last year’s reporting to the report on educational attainments, it came to light that not all faculties had such systems in place. Those that did not were asked to complete this process in the course of 2012. This year’s reports show that there are still faculties that are yet to complete systems for external evaluation. This is unfortunate and must be followed up.

Implementation of learning outcome descriptors in the programmes of study

The deadline set by the Ministry of Education and Research for implementing learning outcomes descriptors in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework for higher education was year-end 2012. The faculties have been asked to report on their implementation efforts and to make assessments of how the work should be continued and quality assured following implementation. Specifically, how to secure academic connection between course and program level, as well as conformity between teaching methods, forms of assessment and requirements for learning outcomes. The faculties have also been asked to shed light on any relevant issues concerning this.

All faculties report that they have implemented the qualifications framework in their programmes of study. This work has been challenging and has made considerable demands on cooperation in the interface between the academic work and administrative efforts concerning quality of education. With respect to the PhD programmes, the implementation efforts have the topic of several meetings of the Forum for organized research training\(^\text{18}\), while programmes of study at Bachelor and Master’s degree level have been discussed on various occasions at the Forum for quality of education. The faculties have chosen different methods for the implementation work. The following paragraphs are devoted to some of the issues mentioned in the faculty reports, which illustrate challenges and relevant issues that are in all likelihood common for all faculties.

The Faculty of Health Sciences refers to the fact that efforts to revise course and programme descriptions have challenged the pedagogical skills of the academic staff and have led to a need for rethinking. The faculty believes that involving all academic staff in an educational development process is a prerequisite for the implementation succeeding at all levels. Consequently, the faculty has chosen to offer more seminars with the objective of all academic staff with teaching responsibilities participating and in doing so gaining competence in order to be able to take care of the connection between objectives for learning outcomes, teaching methods and forms of assessment - and this will be used as a basis in the planning and implementation of the teaching\(^\text{19}\). The quality seminars are the first step in this process, while the work involving quality assurance of education is continued by the establishment of the Centre for Educational Development, a faculty development for innovative pedagogical and technological education practices in health sciences. This centre shall be advisory and be able to assist with pedagogical support and advice about the programmes of study.

The report from the Faculty of Fine Arts indicates another important factor that must form the basis of the implementation. The faculty outlines that the professional connection between the course and programme level may be ensured by the learning outcome descriptors for the programme of study being drawn up before the details are prepared at the course level. In doing so, the faculty has taken into consideration that the courses must be seen in relation to the programme of study they form part of, and that the course composition must be assessed in terms of the overall learning outcomes the

\(^{18}\) A forum where the Department of Research and Development and the faculties meet monthly to discuss challenges relating to the management of PhD programmes.

\(^{19}\) In addition, the faculty is planning to offer three new seminars in the spring semester in 2013.
programme of study shall provide. How a course is relevant and how it contributes in terms of the programme of study’s overall learning outcomes is, therefore, essential. In other words, the person with course responsibility may not (any longer) only focus on “their” course, but must see it in relation to the programme of study as a whole. Moreover, for programmes of study with a high proportion of elective courses, a thorough assessment will be required of which courses in the programme of study will “bear” the overarching requirements of the qualifications framework. Harmonizing courses with the conditions of the programme of study becomes an even greater challenge when the same course is included in several programmes of study. This places significant demands on academic management, comprehensive thinking, cooperation and flexibility.

A further issue raised in many of the faculty reports is how to ensure that the stipulated learning outcome descriptors are followed up in practice. The report from the Faculty of Law gains distinction by providing specific descriptions of how this further follow-up work will be performed for its programmes of study. The faculty has chosen to use as a starting point that an important objective of the learning outcome descriptors is to clarify to the students (and others) what they will actually learn. Studies of how students and educators perceive the learning outcome descriptors, the extent to which they are actively used, and whether it actually is clear to them the knowledge, skills and competencies the students shall have acquired on completion of the course are conditions the faculty will study as part of the ongoing efforts involving the quality of education. The faculty has decided to have this as fixed points of evaluation. The educators will be asked to what extent they had focused on the learning outcome descriptors in the planning and implementation of their teaching, and the students will be asked about how they perceived the teaching in relation to the stipulated learning outcomes.

On the basis of the faculties’ reports, it may be concluded that the first phase of the implementation work has been accomplished. The faculties have put in a considerable effort. However, it is now important that the work does not end here, but that it has a lasting focus. Many of the faculties report that the responsibility for continued following up and quality assurance has been ascribed to the programme boards. However, only a minority of the faculties are specific about how this shall occur and what the follow-up should involve. The degree to which the university’s various schemes for administration and management of the programmes of study are suitable in relation to fulfilling the significant demands of academic totality, structure and coherence in the programmes of study as the qualification framework requires is significant for how the follow-up work will progress. This will be an important question to ask in connection with the university’s ongoing evaluation of the management of programmes of study (mentioned in Chapter 1).

A well-composed programme of study will provide a qualification that is more than the sum of component courses’ qualifications. Consequently, an adequate implementation requires that work on the development of learning outcome descriptors has involved far more than “textual adjustments” of the existing programme descriptions. Key issues raised in the faculty reports are how to assess which teaching methods will be beneficial for the students achieving the learning outcomes and which forms of assessment should be used to assess whether the expected learning outcomes have been achieved. The development of programme of study and learning outcome descriptors that take care of the academic level, totality and coherence where the learning outcomes of the programme of study are overarching and control the learning outcomes in the component courses is primarily an academic and pedagogical process. Therefore, this work and the quality assurance must be rooted with academic staff, but preferably with administrative staff providing support. The academic group in university

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20 This is outlined further in the university’s quality assurance system for educational activities (Part 5, Chapter 3 Quality assurance of programmes of study and courses).

21 Archive ref. ePhorte 2012/4767.
pedagogy at the new Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (RESULT) is a natural partner where faculties and academic environments can seek assistance on matters of a pedagogical nature (more on this below in the review of the university pedagogy provision at the university).

The committees and boards that manage the programmes of study must have sufficient competence about the qualification framework to be able to assess the quality of learning outcome descriptors. Such competence must be developed, and this will be part of the ongoing work that requires particular follow-up. An important priority will be to arrange for the faculties and programme boards to share their experiences with each other in appropriate arenas. The faculties are still encouraged to continue to participate in internal and external seminars, conferences and the like on the theme of the qualification framework.

The university pedagogy provision

Teaching portfolios were introduced at UiT in 2008 to ensure that academic staff on interim appointments with qualification conditions on the basis of lacking teaching qualifications are able to achieve sufficient pedagogical competence as the basis for permanent appointment. The model was evaluated in 2010/2011 and the University Board decided that further follow-up was necessary, including an investigation of why only a handful of employees complete the pedagogical training22.

The appointment of academic staff is delegated to the faculties. The follow-up of employees on qualification conditions seemed to be very different. The University Director was asked to examine both how the faculties deal with teaching qualifications in the announcement of positions, and how this is followed up by the faculty after appointments are made. In accordance with a resolution of the University Board after the above-mentioned review, the Department of Human Resources and Organisation (POA) has developed guiding descriptions of the procedures for following up employees on qualification conditions. This was sent to all faculties in the spring semester in 2012, and shall ensure that the faculties document and live up to requirements concerning basic competence in university pedagogy23. POA reports that it follows this up continuously, including in connection with the registration of the terms of employment in the university’s payroll and HR system in the transition from interim position to permanent position.

During the evaluation in 2010/2011, it was also pointed out that since 2008 the university pedagogy provision had not contributed sufficiently to strengthening the quality of teaching and the teaching qualifications of employees at UiT. The research group for university pedagogy now reports that the university pedagogy training has become significantly more structured and the throughput has increased24. There is high demand. Even before applications closed 35 applications had been received to participate in the current academic year. However, the current capacity is 25 participants. Participants admitted to the programme are allocated a dedicated person to follow them up. The participants all receive academic supervision on their draft teaching portfolio prior to submission, which has been reported as effective but labour-intensive. In addition, the research group for university pedagogy provides various support services to the units as well as engaging in research.

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22 The evaluation was considered by the University Board in the autumn semester in 2011 in item S 34-11 Evaluering av ordningen med pedagogiske mapper (Evaluation of the arrangements concerning teaching portfolios), archive ref. 2011/1307.
23 Archive ref. ePhorte 2011/1307.
24 In 2012 a total of 29 participants gained approval for their teaching portfolios and in the spring semester in 2013 no less than 24 people had submitted their portfolios for assessment.
centre reports that its total activity is now significant, and that the activity cannot be expanded without increasing the staffing level.

Two surveys of PhD students in 2011 identified a need for courses in supervision of PhD students\textsuperscript{25}. In particular, a survey by Tromsø Doctoral Students (TODOS) showed that the quality of the supervision was variable. Efforts to establish such an educational provision started in 2012, based on the model of an equivalent course at the University of Umeå. The course was developed by the research group for university pedagogy and was held for the first time in the spring semester in 2013 with 23 participants. The main topics of the course are characteristic features of research supervision, UiT’s ethical guidelines for supervision, the relational aspects of the role of supervisor and how a supervisor can contribute to progress in the various stages of the writing phase.

TODOS has previously signalled to the University Director that there is a major need for a separate university pedagogy provision for the PhD candidates with a four-year appointment where 25% required duties form part of the position. Such a provision was developed in 2012 by the research group for university pedagogy. The course was held for the first time in 2012 in Norwegian and in the spring semester 2013 was held in English. Around 30% of PhD students are non-Norwegian speaking, and there is therefore a need for instruction in English. The course includes topics such as the theory of teaching and learning in higher education, as well as reflections on what influences the design of participants’ own teacher role. Completion of the course results in the approval of 50 hours of required duties for the PhD candidate.

The Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (RESULT) was established in January 2013. The centre combines the research group for university pedagogy and the academic part of the University’s Centre for Flexible Education (U-Vett). This move is expected to strengthen the research group for university pedagogy. RESULT will engage in R & D within the fields of teaching, flexible education and university pedagogy, including initiating and supporting the academic groups with technical training and the production of digital teaching materials. The centre states that it also wishes to work closely with the university’s various academic groups in order to assist with supervision, development and support adapted to suit the various challenges the academic groups face. On the basis of the faculty reports on implementation of the qualifications framework, it is obvious to mention the efforts with further quality assurance and quality development of learning outcome descriptors (mentioned above), and how this may be achieved, involves many challenging and in part new and exciting issues and challenges of a pedagogical nature.

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**Learning environment and adaptation**

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The units have reported about how they promote the opportunities for students to provide feedback on conditions relating to the quality of education and the learning environment, the students’ ability to apply for individual adaptation and evaluation of courses and programmes of study with emphasis on learning, learning outcome and learning activities.

The reports from all the faculties devote major attention to a good learning environment. Frequent evaluations are carried out in order to obtain feedback from both students and teachers about how they perceive the learning environment. Many measures are implemented consecutively. Some faculties report challenges in relation to the students not providing feedback and/or that students do

\textsuperscript{25} Implemented by the Department of Research and Development and Tromsø Doctoral Students
not receive feedback about the measures the faculty has implemented as a follow up of the evaluation results. The faculties report several measures and plans to improve the evaluation processes, including increasing the use of midway evaluations and being more thorough and systematic in the efforts involving follow up and feedback to the students. This is in accordance with both the intentions of the university’s quality assurance system and NOKUT’s recommendation that the university should to a higher degree introduce systematic midway evaluations (cf. discussion in the section NOKUT’s evaluation of the quality assurance system for educational activities at UiT). For instance, one of the faculties is establishing a website to provide information about when evaluations shall take place, the type of evaluation and how the evaluation reports will be followed up.

With respect to evaluation of PhD programmes, it is reported that the University Director has regular meetings and close collaboration with TODOS. TODOS provides good suggestions about new PhD programmes, including how the quality of the PhD programmes may be improved. In order to develop the PhD programmes, regular surveys should be arranged to identify challenges and gain an insight into the PhD students' learning environment and academic life in general. For instance, the report states that the time-to-degree for PhD programmes at UiT has increased in recent years – and further investigation should be undertaken of the causes, and of measures that may be implemented to reduce the time-to-degree.

**Adaptation**

The Learning Environment Committee approved the *Handlingsplan for tilrettelegging og tilgjengelighet 2013 – 2016* (Plan of action for adaptation and accessibility 2013 – 2016) at its meeting on 7 February 2013. The plan of action is a revision of the previous plan of action that applied until year-end 2012, and outlines the objectives and measures UiT will focus on in the coming plan period. This includes the duty of universal design (general adaptation) and the duty of individual adaptation. The plan attaches emphasis to UiT working actively to achieve a learning environment that has a universal design so that UiT will be perceived as inclusive and open.

All faculties report that students who need individual adaptations in connection with examinations or the academic situation in general receive such adaptation in accordance with current regulations and to the degree to which the faculties are able to implement this. The extent of applications varies from faculty to faculty, but seems stable from year to year. In order to ensure that efforts involving adaptation are congruent across the faculties, the student and examination advisors meet regularly every semester in the appropriate forum. The purpose of these meeting places is to enhance competence, exchange experiences and discuss appropriate individual adaptation measures for examinations and the academic situation in general. In this way UiT seeks to ensure equivalent understanding and practice of the rules that deal with individual adaptation for students with disabilities. This focus must continue in the merged institution too.

UiT has purchased new laptop computers to use during supervised written examinations as an aid for students with various disabilities. UiT has acquired specially designed software in order to improve the examination situation for students with dyslexia or other forms of reading and writing problems. The software contains spelling checkers, dictionaries, word completion, screen reader and speech synthesis, and can thus provide comprehensive and efficient aid for both reading and writing during examinations.

In the spring semester in 2013 the Department of Academic Affairs produced a new information leaflet aimed at students with disabilities in order to improve information about individual adaptation. This information leaflet will be made available at the student reception at all relevant units. A project
to improve the information about individual adaptation on the university website will commence in the spring semester 2013.

Further information about efforts to improve the learning environment at UiT appears in the annual reports of the Learning Environment Committee\textsuperscript{26}.

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**Supervision from NOKUT of Master’s degree programmes in Humanities subjects**

NOKUT is entitled in its own right to carry out supervision of all established educational provisions at universities and university colleges to assess whether the educational provisions satisfy the requirements stipulated in NOKUT’s *Regulations concerning NOKUT’s supervision and control of the quality of Norwegian higher education*\textsuperscript{27}.

In 2012 NOKUT introduced a new model in which supervision is organized in the following four stages: (1) mapping, (2) reporting, (3) dialogue and development and (4) revision\textsuperscript{28}. In addition to controlling that the quality of education meets the stipulated requirements, it is the objective of NOKUT that the supervision will motivate the institutions to implement further quality development. The supervision of existing programmes of study at the universities will increase. NOKUT has signalled that it will have particular emphasis on the quality of education and the students’ learning outcomes.

In February 2013 NOKUT provided notification of supervision of UiT’s Master’s degree programmes in Humanities subjects based on the new model. Nine other higher education institutions are also covered, including the Universities of Bergen and Oslo. The selection is made based on the NOKUT’s *Langtidsplan for tematiske prioriteringer 2012-2014*\textsuperscript{29} (Long-term plan for thematic priorities 2012-2014), and as such is not based on a result of indications of quality deficiencies failure\textsuperscript{30}. At the University of Tromsø, the following seven Master’s degree programmes are covered (all of which are affiliated with the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education): *Archaeology, Philosophy, History, Documentation Science, Russian Studies, Art History and Visual Culture Studies*. For each of these programmes of study, NOKUT has requested reporting on selected conditions\textsuperscript{31}. It is interesting to note that several of the programmes of study have been asked to elaborate on the following:

- student recruitment and learning environment
- expected scope of work for the students
- learning outcome descriptors
- the relevance of the programme of study for the professional fields and further studies

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\textsuperscript{26}Learning Environment Committee’s website: http://uit.no/Content/307358/%C3%85rsrapport%20LMU%202011-2012.pdf  
\textsuperscript{27}Regulations concerning NOKUT’s supervision and control of the quality of Norwegian higher education: http://www.nokut.no/Documents/NOKUT/Artikkelbibliotek/Norsk_utdanning/Forskrifter_Kriterier_mm/Regulations_concerning_NOKUTs_supervision_and_control_of_the_quality_of_Norwegian_higher_education.pdf  
\textsuperscript{28} NOKUT outlines its new supervision model on the following website: http://www.nokut.no/no/Laresteder/Tilsyn-med-eksisterende-studietilbud/  
\textsuperscript{29}A report about NOKUT’s Long-term plan for thematic priorities 2012-2014 may be downloaded here: http://www.nokut.no/Documents/NOKUT/Artikkelbibliotek/Generell/Om%20NOKUT/Langtidsplan%20%20tematisk%20prioriteringer%202012-2014.pdf  
\textsuperscript{30} Further background information about the supervision is provided in the letter from NOKUT, archive ref. ePhorte 2013/919-1.  
\textsuperscript{31} All the reports may be found in ePhorte under item 2013/919.
opportunities for exchanges/internationalisation
composition of the academic group and their actual contribution to the programme of study, their designation of position, terms of employment, teaching qualifications and any experience from the practice field
the academic group’s network/collaboration and R & D production over the past three years

Of particular interest, this is the first time NOKUT will assess the learning outcome descriptors. NOKUT has already provided feedback to six of the seven programmes of study that the National Qualifications Framework (NKR) contains general learning outcome descriptors, and that learning outcomes descriptors must therefore be designed and adapted for the individual programme of study. Approximate copies of the learning outcomes descriptors stipulated in NKR do not meet the requirements. In light of this, the programmes of study have been asked to provide an explanation of how it has met the requirements of NKR, in particular also concerning academic standards. In their reports the academic groups have largely maintained their existing learning outcome descriptors and provided professional explanation of these. It will be interesting to see NOKUT’s assessments when it publishes its conclusions in mid-June 2013.

The ongoing supervision of Master’s degree programmes in Humanities subjects has now reached stage three (dialogue and development). In this supervision, NOKUT has chosen to conduct dialogue meetings with all the departments involved. In stage four, the most serious cases can proceed to a thorough revision of the accreditation, as far as we are aware today. It is unnecessary to point out the seriousness or consequences for affected students and the university’s reputation if the accreditation of any of the university’s programmes of study were to be withdrawn. NOKUT will prepare a combined report presenting trends and tendencies from the material from each of the 10 institutions covered by this supervision. NOKUT expects to complete this report in the course of November/December 2013.

Firstly, all faculties should take note of the conditions NOKUT has requested, assess the status of their own programme of study and rectify any deficiencies. Secondly, NOKUT’s findings and conclusions from its supervision, which will be presented in the above-mentioned combined report, will be of major interest to all the faculties. NOKUT’s conclusions may also be important to include in the work to be implemented through UiT’s improvement process/efforts involving programme descriptions. Although the improvement processes focuses on administrative development work, and the responsibility of attending to NOKUT’s requirements are to a large degree assigned to the academic management of the faculties and programmes of study, having a competent management with a good knowledge of the extensive requirements for the programme of study will provide important support for the academic groups and the academic management. The latter is being increasingly highlighted as prerequisites for efficient and rational educational management in the sector.

32 The Ministry has set a deadline of year-end 2012 for the implementation of learning outcome descriptors in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework for all programmes of study.
33 The dialogue meeting at UiT was held on 24 May 2013.
34 The university’s quality assurance system for educational activities contains a more in-depth outline of all the points.
35 Website for the Improvement process at UiT and the various processes: http://uit.no/ansatte/artikkel?p_document_id=308212
Summary

The university is required by law to have an internal quality assurance system to ensure and contribute to develop the quality of the entire education, and the system shall cover all conditions that affect the quality of education. NOKUT’s initial evaluation of UiT’s quality assurance system in 2006 focused on the content of the system – that all the required content was covered in a satisfactory manner. The supervision in 2012 was aimed at the use of the system, i.e. that the system is known at all levels of the institution and seems to serve the intended purpose. NOKUT chose to investigate this through meetings with students and academic management at all levels (programme of study, department, faculty and institution) for two selected programmes of study. The system was approved and gained positive feedback. This is far from guaranteed and is something the university should be proud of. It is also a good indication that the university is well on the way to achieving its objective that the systematic effort to enhance quality shall be prioritised, include students, and be well rooted in the academic groups and by the university’s managers at all levels.

The objective in the university’s plan of action that all programmes of study at the university shall be described in accordance with the qualification framework by year-end 2012 has also been attained. However, it is now important that this work is not put aside. The composition phase must be followed by a phase of further development. The framework provides a professional coordinating framework around the courses in a programme of study, and it appears that the academic groups are to an increasing degree recognizing the framework as a long-awaited tool that efficiently contributes to structure the academic quality assurance of the programmes of study. As of the spring semester in 2013, the learning outcome descriptors will be one of the conditions NOKUT will devote special attention to in its supervisory and accreditation work in the sector. As part of NOKUT’s ongoing supervision of the Master’s degree programmes in Humanities subjects, the learning outcome descriptors for the programmes of study at UiT will be subject to external assessment for the first time. NOKUT’s evaluations and conclusions from this will be of particular interest and something all faculties/programme boards should pay close attention to.

All faculties have a major focus on adapting for a good learning environment. Evaluations to receive feedback from both students and teachers about how they perceive the learning environment is an important part of this work. Evaluation activities generally shall be further developed at UiT. Topics of relevance to both the learning environment and learning outcomes must be included in the evaluations. In order for the evaluations to constitute a good management tool to promote the quality of education, it is important that both the students and the faculties have a sustained focus on the response rate, follow-up of evaluation findings and feedback to the students about the specific follow-up efforts. Further, attention must be given to following up the faculties that have not implemented this to ensure that a system and plans for external evaluations of their programmes of study are in place promptly.

All points of improvement identified in the evaluation of the university pedagogy provision in 2010/2011 have been followed up. The correct teaching competence is important for the quality of the teaching and supervision the university offers, and the increased activity now being reported for university pedagogical activities at UiT is very positive. In this context it is worth mentioning that one of the conditions UiT has had to account for in connection with NOKUT’s supervision of the Master’s degree programmes in Humanities subjects is the teaching qualifications of each employee in the academic groups involved in the respective programmes of study.
The university’s plan of action stipulates that the educational provisions must be adequately quality assured in accordance with the criteria and standards fixed by the Ministry, NOKUT and the university. As mentioned in this chapter, NOKUT notified that supervision of existing programmes of study will increase, and that the focus will then to a high degree be on the quality of education and the students’ learning outcomes. Consequently, NOKUT’s findings and conclusions from its ongoing supervision of the Master’s degree programs in Humanities subjects should be of major interest to all faculties, and something the university should follow up on a wider basis.
CHAPTER 3
RECRUITMENT TO THE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

The University of Tromsø shall be an attractive and reliable disseminator of knowledge and collaboration partner in the region. It is necessary to ensure good and stable recruitment of students. In order for the educational provisions to be clearly visible to prospective students, the university shall renew and strengthen its marketing strategy.

*From the Strategic Document for University of Tromsø 2009-2013*

The overall objective of recruitment activities at the institution during the current strategic period (2009-2013) has been to increase the number of applicants with UiT as their first priority, especially applicants from Southern Norway. In the *Plan of Action for the University of Tromsø* for 2009-2013, the overall objective is specified as: The number of applicants with UiT as their first priority shall increase by 10% each year during the period, which means that in 2013 a total of 3200 applicants will have UiT as their first priority. The proportion of applicants from Southern Norway shall increase to 28% in the current period, which constitutes approx. 900 applicants from Southern Norway.

No specific recruitment targets currently apply for recruitment to PhD programmes. As PhD students must have funding, the number of students on PhD programmes is to a large extent equivalent to the number of university and externally funded PhD positions.

This chapter will deal more closely with recruitment activities at UiT, and the result of this work with respect to both the number of applicants and enrolled students. The recruitment of international students is covered in Chapter 5.

**Recruitment measures**

UiT’s plan of action for the 2009-2013 period specifies a range of recruitment measures to be continued or implemented during the period. The following section deals with the various measures implemented for recruitment for the 2012/2013 academic year.

**Visits to schools, recruitment fairs and UiT campus**

UiT visited virtually every upper secondary school in Northern Norway during the spring semester in 2012. In addition, UiT has participated in local student recruitment fairs that upper secondary schools in some areas have combined to organise.

UiT participated in the major national student recruitment fairs in Oslo, Trondheim, Bodø and Tromsø. Visitor numbers for these student recruitment fairs shows that attendance is stable in Oslo and Trondheim with 14,000 and 10,000 visitors respectively. In Tromsø and Bodø, visitor numbers in the spring semester in 2012 increased by 5000 and 4500 visitors respectively. UiT’s start-of-semester

*The plan of action may be downloaded at: http://uit.no/Content/163115/Handlingsplan_UiT_2009_endelig.pdf*
survey\textsuperscript{37} shows that the importance of student recruitment fairs as a recruitment channel has increased in recent years, and is now the fourth most important source of information following the Internet, friends and family. Even though the national student recruitment fairs do not have as good effect as one could wish in terms of the resources invested, the university chooses to participate nonetheless. Such fairs provide good opportunities to come into direct contact with pupils, not least with pupils in Southern Norway that UiT do not reach through school visits. Consequently, participation in national student recruitment fairs will also be prioritized next year.

UiT is represented by both employees and students on school visits and at the student recruitment fairs. When the university chooses to involve students in recruitment activities, this is related to credibility and being easier to identify with. Surveys of UiT students show that the students are very happy at the university and that a large majority of our students would recommend others to study at UiT. Students who are satisfied with their choice of higher education institution can act with a high degree of credibility when they encounter new applicants. Similarity of age, interests and experience also make it easier for pupils to identify with students than with university staff. The university considers the use of students as ambassadors as positive in recruitment activities and will, therefore, continue this practice in ongoing recruitment activities.

Many schools visit the UiT campus, and in conjunction with the national student recruitment fair in Tromsø, UiT invited final-year pupils from all upper secondary schools in Troms County, as well as from upper secondary schools in Andøya and Hadsel, to an open day on the university campus. Six different presentations were held for around 1000 pupil, and the feedback from the pupils was extremely positive. The upper secondary schools also make direct contact with faculties as they have specific wishes of activities for their pupils. The university regards campus visits as an important recruitment measure, as it provides us an excellent opportunity to showcase ourselves and also to come into direct contact with prospective applicants. There is currently no overall coordination of visits to the UiT campus and consequently this is recruitment measure the university wishes to devote more effort to and professionalize.

The recruitment measure Ambassadør i Sør (Ambassador in the south), whereby UiT students from Southern Norway visit upper secondary schools in or near their home town to talk about UiT and Northern Norway, has proved increasingly harder to implement. Challenges involving putting in place specific agreements with the upper secondary schools amongst other things have led to this recruitment measure being put on hold until further notice.

Social media

Social media has become increasingly important in the communication with potential study applicants at UiT. These activities were prioritized in 2012 with all the different UiT accounts on Facebook being combined into one official UiT account. By year-end 2012, this new Facebook page had more than 5000 “likes”. Many posts aimed at prospective students were published on both Facebook and Twitter in the period from January to the application deadline on 15 April. Social media as a recruitment channel is an area of priority at UiT, and in the autumn semester in 2012 the Department of Communications and Public Relations employed a project manager to develop and coordinate the university’s social media activities.

\textsuperscript{37}Each autumn UiT conducts a survey among new students. The objective is to investigate the conditions of importance for recruitments, as well as the effect of the recruitment initiatives that have been implemented.
TIFF
UiT is the main collaboration partner of the Tromsø International Film Festival (TIFF), and this agreement provides the university with an exclusive opportunity to communicate with final year upper secondary school pupils in Troms. UiT has a presence at film screenings aimed at this target market, makes a brief presentation of the university and hands out the programme of study catalogue. UiT reaches increasingly more pupils through this initiative, and in 2012 a total of 1704 upper secondary school pupils attended the film festival. The collaboration with TIFF will be continued in the future efforts involving recruitment.

Recruitment campaigns spring semester 2012
“Nord-Norge som studentregion” (Northern Norway as a student region) is an RDA-financed collaborative project between the University of Tromsø, Harstad University College and Finnmark University College. The objective of this campaign is to get study applicants from Southern Norway to choose to study in Northern Norway. The main element of the campaign was a competition on Facebook in the form of a game app, where the point was to get as quickly as possible from Southern Norway to Northern Norway by answering questions about Northern Norway. Around 6000 people participated in the competition, the majority of which were in the target group of the 18-24 age group and resident in Southern Norway. The competition winner received a free one year student loan and student apartment. The campaign was advertised with full-page advertisements in the Armed Forces Forum, the A-magasinen in Aftenposten, on UiT’s digital platforms and banner advertisements on the internet, including on Spotify and Friflyt. The campaign received editorial coverage in both the national finance newspaper Dagens næringsliv and the regional newspaper Nordlys just before the application deadline.

In addition to this campaign, UiT has conducted its own recruitment campaign on uit.no, via Adshel (e.g. posters at bus shelters) in Tromsø and Bodø, and advertisements in the Armed Force’s forum and a total of 19 newspapers in Northern Norway.

UiT’s own surveys show that traditional advertising in newspapers and magazines is becoming of increasingly less importance when applicants are making their study choices. Combining this with the newspaper industry’s declining circulation figures mean that newspaper advertising as a recruitment activity is becoming less interesting. Consequently, in recent years UiT has chosen not to invest heavily in advertising as a recruitment initiative.

Programme of study catalogue
The programme of study catalogue, which contains an overview and descriptions of the educational provision at UiT, is available online and in paper format. The programme of study catalogue is an important tool in efforts involving marketing of UiT’s educational provision. UiT’s surveys indicate that the Internet is the most important information channel for study applicants. Consequently, UiT allocates significant resources to efforts involving the online programme of study catalogue.

In January 2012 UiT published the new programme of study catalogue online, and figures show that the number of page views increased by 18% in the period 1 January - 15 April compared with the same period the previous year. In addition, the average browsing time increased by 20%, and the percentage of new visits increased by 5% during the same period. A print run of 15,000 paper copies of the programme of study catalogue were produced, UiT surveys show that the catalogue is still an important source of information among our study applicants.

38 Regional Differensiert Arbeidsgiveravgift (regional differentiated social security contribution)
Recruitment initiatives for PhD programmes

Recruitment for PhD programmes occurs primarily through the announcement of positions. All vacant academic positions, including PhD and post-doc positions, shall be announced via EURAXESS Jobs, which is the EU’s researcher mobility portal. The fact that positions are announced via EURAXESS means UiT reaches a wider, international audience than just through national sources. In addition, UiT has its own stand at Arbeidslivsdagen (Careers day), which is arranged annually at the university, and focuses on recruitment to PhD positions there.

The faculties and research groups responsible for each announcement also make an effort to recruit to the position via their networks. The researchers at UiT have broad cooperation with other researchers nationally and internationally, and these domestic and international networks may be used to disseminate information about vacant positions.

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Number of applications and admissions

Applying via Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service

On a nationwide basis in 2012, a total of 115,800 applied for programmes of study announced via the Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service (NUCAS). This represents an increase of 6.6% compared to the previous year. There have never been more applicants than there were in 2012 and NUCAS points out that the increase is greater than the growth in the youth year groups would indicate. New higher education institutions or more programmes of study cannot explain the growth either. Therefore, NUCAS concludes that there appears to be an increased interest in higher education in the population. UiT benefits from the increased interest in higher education, and the university has a larger growth in the number of study applicants than the growth on a nationwide basis. None of the other general universities can demonstrate the same increase in the number of applications as UiT. Table 1 shows the development in the number of applicants to our first degree programmes announced via NUCAS.

Table 1: The number of applications and admissions for first degree programmes at UiT via Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service (NUCAS)

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<td>Applicants (total)(^{40})</td>
<td>12335</td>
<td>13157</td>
<td>14639</td>
<td>11.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicants (first priority)</td>
<td>3673</td>
<td>3794</td>
<td>4516</td>
<td>19 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers of place (first priority)</td>
<td>3145</td>
<td>3171</td>
<td>3315</td>
<td>4.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers of place (total)(^{41})</td>
<td>4074</td>
<td>4124</td>
<td>4146</td>
<td>0.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepted (total)</td>
<td>2552</td>
<td>2581</td>
<td>2682</td>
<td>3.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. attended (total)</td>
<td>2205</td>
<td>2281</td>
<td>2356</td>
<td>3.2 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service (NUCAS) and National Student Database

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\(^{39}\) Press release from the Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service 13 April 2012

\(^{40}\) As of May in the year of application

\(^{41}\) Offers of place and total acceptance incl. supplementary admissions, topping up and the pool of remaining places
In 2012 UiT had 68 programmes of study announced via NUCAS. This is 13 fewer than the previous year, and the reduction is owing to the fact that the one-year programmes with starting date in the spring semester in 2013 have been moved from NUCAS to local admission. The majority of UiT’s one-year programmes had an increase in the number of applicants with the programme as their first priority compared to 2011. The largest growth is for the three-year engineering degree programmes, followed by the pre-school teacher training programmes. An increase in these subject areas has also been observed at national level. As usual there is a good level of applications for programmes in medicine, law, physiotherapy, aviation, psychology and nursing. All these programmes of study have an increase among applicants listing the programme as their first priority, and there is great competition for places on the programmes. Of the 68 programmes of study announced via NUCAS, nine programmes of study have 10 or fewer applicants listing the programme as their first priority.

With respect to offers of admission to a programme of study, 3315 applicants were offered admission to a programme of study through the general admission on 20 July. This is an increase of 4.5% compared to the previous year. This increase can first and foremost be attributed to more applicants receiving an offer of admission to the programmes in engineering and pre-school teacher training. If one includes offers of admission sent after 20 July (supplementary admissions, topping up and the pool of remaining places), the increase is minimal in comparison with 2011. With respect to applicants who have received an offer of admission to a programme of study and accepted the place, there is an increase of 3.9% in comparison with the previous year. In addition, more of those who have accepted a place on a programme of study have chosen to attend the programme – an increase of 3.2% in comparison with 2011. Increases in the number of applications are always pleasing, but it is only when this results in an increase in registration figures that the university feels it has been successful with its efforts involving recruitment.

The main reason that UiT is experiencing an increase in the number of offers of admission, the number accepting offers of admission to a programme of study and the number that start the programmes may be attributed to UiT in 2012 receiving many new applicants to the open programmes of study. The fact that a programme of study is open means that there is not competition for places on the programmes so that all applicants who are qualified will receive an offer of admission. Increased recruitment to programmes of study with regulated admission is good for ensuring the best qualified applicants, but this does not result in an increase in the number of registered students. A total of 50 of UiT’s 68 programmes of study that were announced via NUCAS in 2012 were open. In 2013 UiT has chosen to regulate admission to more of the open programmes of study, including the three-year programmes in engineering and the training programmes for kindergarten teachers (formerly known as pre-school teacher training), and it will be exciting to see the consequences this will have for the number of offers issued for admission to places on programmes of study at the institution. If UiT shall continue to have an increase in the recruitment of new students, the university will have to recruit well to programmes of study that do not have regulated admission.

Applying via local admission
In addition to programmes of study announced via NUCAS, it is possible to apply for admission to study at UiT via local admission. This includes the preliminary course for programmes in engineering, two-year Master’s degree programmes, further educational provisions and the programme of professional study in psychology. The table below shows an overview of offers sent via local admission divided among different types of admission.
Table 2: Number of applicants for programmes of study and courses announced with local admission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree programmes at all faculties</td>
<td>1182</td>
<td>1451</td>
<td>1841</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health-related continuation education</td>
<td>966</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>-25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further education for teachers</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>-24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmes of study in Fine Arts</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmes of study at NT-fak</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular courses – open studies</td>
<td>1014</td>
<td>1266</td>
<td>1225</td>
<td>-3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible and web-based singular courses</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4576</td>
<td>4814</td>
<td>5275</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Student Database

UiT had an increase of 9.6% in the number of applicants for programmes of study announced via local admission in 2012 in comparison with the previous year. This increase may be attributed to the fact that in 2012 the university announced more flexible and web-based singular courses and Master’s degree programmes in comparison with the previous year. In addition, the university is experiencing increased interest in the three-semester programmes and preliminary courses for programmes in engineering.

The further educational provisions in health sciences had a reduction of 25.6% in the number of applicants in comparison with 2011. Several of the further educational provisions in health sciences have admissions every second year, so the reduction in the number of applicants may mainly be attributed to fewer programmes being announced in 2012 than the previous year. These further educational provisions will be announced next year, and UiT expects that number of applicants will increase. The further educational provisions for teachers also experienced a decline in the number of applicants in comparison with 2011. The decline here is 24.5%, which may be linked to UiT announcing fewer further educational provisions in 2012 than the previous year.

The university had an increase in applications for programmes of study at the Faculty of Science and Technology of 57.5% in comparison with 2011, and this must be connected to the increased interest in programmes in engineering on both a national and local basis.

The number of applications for flexible and web-based singular courses has increased by 56.8% in comparison with last year. This increase may be attributed in the main to the university announcing 20 courses in 2012 in comparison with 15 in 2011. The fact that the university gains more flexible and web-based courses, and as such more applicants, is positive as improving the flexibility of educational provisions is a priority area for UiT.

The pool of remaining places
The pool of remaining places (known as “Restetorget” in Norwegian) is an arrangement by which higher education institutions may fill up vacant places on programmes of study after completion of the general admission. It is up to each institution to determine which educational provisions they wish to

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42 The figure shows the number of offers given for two-year and experience-based Master’s degree programmes announced via the Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service.

43 The figure indicates admission to the three-semester programme, preliminary course for programmes in engineering and the Y-path.
announce in the pool of remaining places. The University of Tromsø normally announces all programmes of study with unfilled places. In the autumn semester in 2012, 44 of a total of 68 programmes of study were announced via NUCAS’ pool of remaining places.

Each year UiT also has a local pool of remaining places. In the autumn semester in 2012, 29 Master’s degree programmes and eight further educational provisions for teachers were announced in the local pool of remaining places. UiT closes the pool of remaining places approximately one week before the start of the semester. The reason for this is that the university wants applicants who are qualified for admission to be offered admission a reasonable amount of time before the start of the semester. Gaining admission after the start of the semester involves students missing out on relevant information about the programme of study, day-to-day student life and, in the worst case, instruction.

The purpose of the pool of remaining places is to give faculties an opportunity to recruit new students to places on programmes of study that have not been filled through the general admission. Moreover, the pool of remaining places provides applicants who did not receive an offer of admission to their first priority in the general admission with a new opportunity to apply for a programme of study with unfilled places. In 2012 a total of 257 of the applicants who applied via the pool of remaining places were registered as attending the programme of study. Earlier surveys of applicants show that UiT recruits new students after the general admission only to a limited extent. The effect of having many programmes of study in the pool of remaining places, measured by the number of new students, is therefore limited. Consequently, the university should continually work to improve dimensioning of the admission capacity in relation to the expected demand. Programmes of study in which the number of budgeted places is in proportion with the expected number of applicants will not normally be announced in the pool of remaining places.

**Applying for PhD programmes**

UiT has 271 PhD positions within its own budgetary limit, 229 of which are combined in a central pot that is allocated to the budgetary units for a period of four years. Normally 50-60 positions are allocated per year. Owing to changes in the budgetary procedures 90 PhD positions were announced in 2012. In addition, the universities have a number of externally funded PhD positions.

There were 1106 applicants for 11544 PhD positions announced with an application deadline in 2012. Many of the applicants were not genuine, as they did not submit the required documentation. Some applicants, primarily in mathematics and natural science subjects, applied for more than one position. A total of 336 applicants were assessed to be suitably qualified for the position for which they applied. This figure includes some applicants who have applied for more than one position, so the figure actually represents fewer than 336 applicants

**Table 3: Number of applicants on grants at UiT in 2012 (figures for 2011)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Applicants</th>
<th>Qualified</th>
<th>Qualified/position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics/ nat. sciences</td>
<td>74 (45)</td>
<td>892 (388)</td>
<td>245 (119)</td>
<td>3.3 (2.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities/soc. sciences</td>
<td>41 (24)</td>
<td>214 (153)</td>
<td>91 (76)</td>
<td>2.2 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>115 (69)</td>
<td>1106 (541)</td>
<td>336 (195)</td>
<td>2.9 (2.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Archive, UiT*

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44 All counting has been done manually, so therefore neither the number of positions nor number of applicants is completely accurate.
There was an average of 9.6 applicants per PhD position in 2012, in comparison with 7.8 in 2011. There were 12.1 applicants per PhD position in mathematics and natural science subjects in 2012 and 5.2 applicants per PhD position in humanities and social science subjects. Many applicants for positions in mathematics and natural sciences do not submit complete applications, and many applicants with foreign qualifications do not meet the requirements relating to the scope of their Master’s degree programme. A total of 66% of the applicants stated that their Master’s degree is from foreign institutions. This applied to 71% of applicants within mathematics and natural science and 45% of applicants within humanities and social science.

A total of 88 PhD candidates were appointed on the basis of the announcements in 2012. Of these, 36 applicants held degrees from UiT, 13 applicants held degrees from other Norwegian higher education institutions and 39 applicants held degrees from foreign institutions. There were no qualified applicants for 14 positions (12% of the positions), or no one accepted the offer of employment for the position. As of April 2013, the employment process was still ongoing for 13 of these positions.

### First time applicants by region

#### Recruitment base

A total of 10,315 first time applicants from Northern Norway have in 2012 applied for admission to programmes of study on a nationwide basis via NUCAS – an increase of approx. 5% from 2011 to 2012. UiT is increasing its recruitment from Norway’s northernmost counties, while UiO, UiB and NTNU are all losing ground among the North Norwegian applicants. In 2011 UiT had a decline in the number of applicants from Nordland with UiT as their first priority, so it is pleasing to see that in 2012 UiT is again increasing its recruitment from this county.

Table 4: The first priority of applicants from Northern Norway through the Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service (NUCAS) divided among selected higher education institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UiT</td>
<td>2718</td>
<td>2737</td>
<td>3161</td>
<td>15.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiN</td>
<td>1069</td>
<td>1314</td>
<td>1353</td>
<td>3.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiO</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>614</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>- 3.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiB</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>- 13.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTNU</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>1065</td>
<td>1012</td>
<td>- 5.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other institutions</td>
<td>3774</td>
<td>3825</td>
<td>3982</td>
<td>4.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9341</strong></td>
<td><strong>9803</strong></td>
<td><strong>10315</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,2 %</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service (NUCAS)

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*Table 3 and 4: Number of applications as of May in the year of application*
Table 5: Applicants from Nordland, Troms and Finnmark with UiT as their first priority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>Change 2011-2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finnmark</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>3.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troms</td>
<td>1707</td>
<td>1768</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>14.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordland</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>29.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of Norway</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>1057</td>
<td>1355</td>
<td>28.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3673</td>
<td>3794</td>
<td>4516</td>
<td>19.0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service (NUCAS)

Around 70% of all applicants in 2012 that had UiT as their first priority came from Northern Norway. This represents a decline of just below 3% in comparison with 2011. The North Norwegian region is, therefore, still the core area for the recruitment of students to UiT.

UiT has an increase in the number applicants with the university as their first priority from all counties outside of North Norway with the exception of Sogn og Fjordane, where there is a slight decline. This is also the county from which UiT recruits fewest applicants. The university recruits the most applicants with UiT as their first priority from Oslo, followed by Akershus, Sør-Trøndelag and Hordaland. The county UiT had the largest percentage increase in is Aust-Agder. In this county the university had an increase of 94% in comparison with 2011, which constitutes a total of 16 applicants with UiT as their first priority.

Table 6 shows the development in the number of registered students by faculty at UiT. These figures do not include PhD students.

Table 6: Registered students for the autumn semester at the various faculties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>Change 2011–2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helsefak</td>
<td>2953</td>
<td>2723</td>
<td>2753</td>
<td>1.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSL-fak</td>
<td>2717</td>
<td>2702</td>
<td>2875</td>
<td>6.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFE-fak</td>
<td>1033</td>
<td>1103</td>
<td>1204</td>
<td>9.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT-fak</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>883</td>
<td>1088</td>
<td>23.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurfak</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>13.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunstfak</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>- 8.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>862</td>
<td>2.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no. registered students</td>
<td>8902</td>
<td>9010</td>
<td>9598</td>
<td>6.5 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Database for statistics on higher education (DBH)

UiT also had an increase in the number of registered students in 2012, meaning there has been a positive development in the number of registered students every year during the current strategic

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46 This figure includes course students at all levels, inbound exchange students and students connected to university programmes in Svalbard and the educational centre of practical theology.
period. The Faculty of Fine Arts is the only faculty that has had a decline in the number of registered students in 2012, while the other faculties have recorded increases.

Table 7: Registered PhD students 2009-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>Change 2010–2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helsefak</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>7.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSL-fak</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>-3.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFE-fak</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>-1.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT-fak</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>7.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurfak</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>3.4 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DBH

Five of UiT’s faculties offer PhD programmes. The figures for 2012 are not currently ready. In spite of the fact that some faculties had a slight decline in the number of students between 2010 and 2011, the number of students overall has increased during this period.

Follow-up of target and assessment of UiT’s recruitment initiatives

It is difficult to measure the effect of each individual recruitment initiative. Therefore, our starting point is that one must look at the combined result of all the initiatives and whether the initiatives collectively have had the desired effect.

UiT had two main targets in the current strategic period for the recruitment of applicants with the university as their first priority. One of the targets is 3200 applicants with UiT as their first priority by 2013, while the other target is that 28% of applicants with UiT as their first priority come from Southern Norway. The first target was reached in 2009 when there were 3627 applicants with UiT as their first priority. The second objective was reached in 2012 when 30% of their applicants with UiT as their first priority came from Southern Norway. The fact that the targets stipulated in UiT’s plan of action for 2009-2013 were already reached in 2009 may indicate that UiT has set targets for the current strategic period that were too modest. However, given a total increase of approx. 20% so far during this strategic period, one can conclude that the university has made some correct choices concerning recruitment initiatives.

Well implemented recruitment efforts will ultimately result in an increase in the number of registered and graduating students, so only then may one describe recruitment efforts as successful. The increase in the number of registered students for the current strategic period has been 14.3%. Consequently, it appears that the increase in the number of students has not been as large as the increase in the number of applicants. This is only to be expected given that many applicants have not received an offer of admission, either because they are not qualified or do not measure up in the competition for places. Based on a 14% increase in the number of registered students, UiT’s conclusion is that all in all the recruitment efforts at UiT have been successful.

Although UiT has taken some correct moves with respect to recruitment, the university still has room for improvement in this area.
**Drop-out among applicants**

In last year’s report on educational attainments, the university examined drop-out among our applicants. Many applicants who seek admission to a programme of study at UiT via NUCAS, and who receive the offer of admission, end up either rejecting the offer or not attending the programme of study. The fact that applicants who have expressed an interest in studying at UiT end up not study here is an undesirable situation. Consequently, in the autumn semester of 2012, UiT implemented a survey of our applicants with the objective of identifying possible reasons why applicants reject an offer of admission or do not register as active students. The survey includes a number of hypotheses about the causes of dropout:

1. that the applicant has accepted the offer of admission to another higher education institution
2. that the applicant is unsure whether he/she wants to pursue higher education
3. that the applicant is unsure of his/her future career choice
4. that the applicant chooses to work
5. that the applicant shall serve compulsory military service
6. that the applicant did not manage to find accommodation in Tromsø
7. that the applicant did not receive satisfactory information from UiT
8. that the applicant received poor service from UiT
9. other (the respondent could specify the reason why he/she did not commence his/her studies at UiT)

The survey was sent to 727 applicants who received the offer of admission to a programme of study, but who rejected the offer. The response rate was just over 45%. The survey was also sent to 267 applicants who received the offer of admission to a programme of study and who accepted this offer, but did not attend the programme. The response rate was just over 45%. There were no major differences between the two surveys. Therefore, the combined results will be referred to.

The results of the survey show that 27.1% and 23.1% of the respondents have accepted the offer of admission at another higher education institution. When applying for admission via NUCAS, one may enter 10 prioritized options. The applicant receives only one offer of admission, but it is possible to be on a waiting list even if the applicant has accepted a place on a programme with a lower priority. As such, an applicant who has accepted an offer of admission from UiT may later receive an offer from another higher education institution that he/she had prioritized higher. One does not know how highly UiT was prioritized among those who have rejected the offer of admission. However, it is known that 2134 of the applicants who received the offer of admission did not have UiT as their first priority. One may therefore assume that many of the applicants that rejected the offer of admission did so because they had other institutions prioritized higher. In order to reduce the number who reject an offer of admission at UiT, the university must continue to market UiT and Tromsø as an attractive place to study, so that more applicants prioritize UiT higher. The higher the applicant prioritizes UiT, the lower the chance that they choose to reject the offer of admission. If UiT is their first priority, applicants who receive an offer of admission will not be able to be on a waiting list at other institutions.

A total of 1.5% and 3.3% of respondents respectively are unsure whether they want to pursue higher education, while 22.9% and 16.5% responded that the reason they rejected the offer of admission was that they were unsure about future career choice. A reduction of the uncertainty related to career choices may contribute to more applicants accepting an offer of admission to a programme of study at
UiT. All UiT’s programme descriptions shall contain about career opportunities, and the online programme of study catalogue also consists of a career catalogue with descriptions of professions connected to UiT’s programme of study. Good descriptions of career opportunities in the programme descriptions and useful information about this when the university meets prospective students can in this respect be seen as an important recruitment initiative.

A total of 21.4% and 24.8% respectively responded that they rejected the offer of admission because they had decided to work. The labour market in Norway is currently in a good position, so it does not come as a surprise that applicants decide to work instead of studying. If UiT and other higher education institutions are able to demonstrate the benefits of pursuing higher education over working one can assume that there is an opportunity to reduce the dropout rate among applicants. Continued commitment to flexible programmes of study at UiT can have a positive effect on the number of students at UiT as this enables students to combine study and work.

Around 3% rejected the offer of admission on the grounds of compulsory military service. A total of 6.3% and 10.7% respectively rejected the offer of admission because they failed to obtain accommodation in Tromsø. The housing situation in Tromsø is extremely strained, so it does not come as a surprise that UiT loses students owing to lack of housing. UiT is aware of students terminating their studies because they did not manage to find a place to live, so the problems associated with the strained housing situation may be worse than this survey indicates.

Only 0.9% and 2.5% respectively indicated that they rejected the offer of admission owing to lack of information from UiT, while 0.3% and 3.3% respectively have rejected the offer of admission because of poor service from UiT. As such, it appears that the information UiT provides to applicants is satisfactory. The fact that some choose not to study at UiT owing to poor services from the university is an undesirable and unacceptable situation.

No less than 47.6% and 42.1% respectively stated other factors as their reason for rejecting the offer of admission. Of these, 30% accepted the offer of admission to another programme of study at UiT, 5% are going to travel or study abroad, approx. 7.5% rejected the offer of admission because they did not get into the programme of study they wanted and approx. 10% stated personal circumstances, e.g. pregnancy, illness, distance from family etc., as reasons for rejecting the offer of admission. Only a small proportion stated that their reason was linked to UiT’s northerly location, the winter darkness and cold climate – myths that the university is already aware of through other surveys and which UiT has already implemented measures to deal with.

**Recruitment after 15 April**

Other recruitment-related challenges may be linked to UiT’s focus in recruitment activities. UiT currently has a primary focus on recruiting up to 15 April, while there has been less attention attached to measures aimed at retaining applicants after 15 April. A short time after the application deadline in the spring semester in 2012, all applicants who had UiT as their first priority received both an SMS and e-mail from UiT encouraging them to follow UiT on Facebook and providing information about how to apply for student accommodation, among other things. The faculties may also make contact with applicants to their programmes of study if they wish. The Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education, for instance, made contact in May/June with all applicants that had a programme of study at the faculty as their first priority and sent an electronic letter welcoming everyone who received an offer of admission to a programme of study at the faculty. The contact with applicants after 15 April

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47This is handled by the Department of Communications and Public Relations in collaboration with the Department of Academic Affairs.
is coordinated to a low degree, and the university currently has no overview of the total contact with applicants. As such, the university risks that the various points of contact between UiT and the applicants after 15 April eliminate each other. The university will make an effort to resolve this challenge and improve coordination of these efforts in the spring semester in 2013.

**Dimensioning of the number of applicants**

None of the other general universities come close to having as many programmes of study in the pool of remaining places as UiT. In 2012, 65% of UiT’s programmes of study announced via NUCAS announced in the pool of remaining places, compared to 74% in 2011 and 72% in 2010. As mentioned, the effect of recruiting via the pool of remaining places is low. More purposeful dimensioning of UiT’s programmes of study in relation to the expected number of applicants will be a measure that will eventually lead to fewer of the open programmes of study being posted in the pool of remaining places. During the establishment of new programmes of study, an assessment shall be made of the expected student recruitment with respect to establishing and maintaining a satisfactory learning environment. When a decision was made to establish the Bachelor’s degree programme in mathematics and finance in 2012, one of the reasons for establishing the programme of study was an increasing requirement for mathematics in the financial sector. On the basis of this, the university assessed that one could expect to fill 15 places on the programme each year. In 2012 five students started the programme of study, and in the autumn semester in 2013 seven applicants chose the programme of study as their first priority. It is important to conduct a thorough assessment of the potential recruitment market before the eventual establishment of a new programme of study to avoid establishing programmes of study for which there is insufficient interest.

**Good announcement texts**

With respect to PhD programmes, UiT should focus on producing announcement texts for PhD positions that are more precise. The requirement of relevant educational background should be stated in a clearer manner so that to the extent possible the university avoids applicants that have insufficient educational qualifications. It can be advantageous to formulate the description of position in a more open manner than is currently the case, so that qualified applicants are not excluded.

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**Summary**

UiT has experienced a positive development in the number of applicants during the current strategic period. The number of applicants recruited to the university that had UiT as their first priority far exceeded the target for the current strategic period. In addition, the university has a large local recruitment that functions as an important recruitment arena. With an increase of approx. 20% in the number of applicants via the Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service (NUCAS) in 2009-2012, and a 14% increase in the number of applicants that start programmes of study at UiT, one may conclude that UiT has largely succeeded in its recruitment efforts. However, the university still has some challenges in order for the institution to ensure good and stable recruitment of students.

There is still a significant distance between the number of applicants and planned number of places for many of UiT’s programmes of study. Several programmes of study already have few students and the lack of new students is unfortunate. It must, therefore, be an objective to maintain year groups at a size that may be justified in terms of academic aspects, learning environment and use of resources in relation to the number of students.
In order for there to be an overall increase in the number of students at UiT, programmes of study with available capacity must recruit more applicants. UiT’s plan of action for 2009-2013 does not contain any provisions about the prioritizing of specific subject areas in recruitment efforts. UiT has focused on broad recruitment, and has to date not focused on specific programmes of study or subject areas. The Faculty of Health Sciences has reported that it will draw up annual action plans for recruitment and the faculty’s recruitment efforts will prioritize programmes of study with low recruitment and new programmes of study. If UiT is to succeed in strengthening recruitment to the institution, the university should follow the Faculty of Health Sciences’ plan and implement recruitment initiatives that are more targeted towards specific programmes of study for next year’s recruitment efforts.

UiT’s primary area of recruitment is Northern Norway. From 2010-2012, the proportion of North Norwegian applicants on a nationwide basis has increased by more than 9%. During the same period UiT has increased the proportion of North Norwegian applicants by 14%. Even though the university is strengthening the number of applications from Northern Norway, UiT is also recruiting more from Southern Norway. The proportion of North Norwegian to South Norwegian applicants in 2012 was 70% to 30%. According to the Report on the status of higher education in Norway for 2011 from the Ministry of Education and Research, Norway will be hit by a youth wave in the next 10 years, and it is expected that this will lead to a significant increase in the number of students. The growth in the youth year groups (the 19-29 age group) will not be equivalent for Northern Norway as for the rest of the country. Given this demographic development, UiT will need to recruit better in Southern Norway in order to continue the positive development in the number of applicants. In light of this, it is pleasing that UiT is experiencing an increase in the number of applicants from Southern Norway.

The university has experienced that there are no qualified applicants for some PhD positions and, as such, recruitment to PhD programmes is unsatisfactory. In 2012 UiT lacked qualified applicants for 12% of the PhD positions announced. In addition, UiT has experienced that many of the applicants are not adequately qualified. Consequently, the university must examine how this recruitment may be developed and, in so doing, strengthened.

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CHAPTER 4
INTERNATIONALISATION OF EDUCATION

The University of Tromsø shall strengthen the international involvement in its programmes of study. The students shall be offered adapted periods of study abroad, and the university must offer the same to international students. Increasing the number of joint degrees with good foreign universities is a target.

From the Strategic Document for University of Tromsø 2009-2013

UiT’s strategy includes a recognition that internationalisation is closely linked to the development of the quality of the educational provision and the academic activities in general. Not least, there is also increased attention attached to developing an international campus, which is central to Internationalisation at Home. This involves clarifying both the international and multicultural aspects of the content of the education and developing further educational provisions in English, which will be of mutual benefit to inbound exchange students, academic staff and students who choose not to travel abroad.

The figures at the end of the current strategic period demonstrate that there is a steady increase in student mobility. The institutional objectives in the area of internationalisation require long term efforts and collaboration between the academic and administrative levels. The challenges identified in this regard still apply, including the fact that incentives are lacking for work that largely does not receive academic credit.

Internationalisation activities at UiT

Internationalisation of education covers mobility for the individual student, researcher and employee, a genuinely international range of courses and programmes of study, a global market for education where students shop for education and, as such, recruitment in a global market.

In the letter of allocation for UiT for 2011, the Ministry of Education and Research writes that “internationalisation is an area of priority for the government, and not an objective in itself, but also a means of promoting the quality and relevance of Norwegian education”. The University Board and management shall promote this effort by paving the way for international cooperation with other higher education institutions, the exchange of students and staff, providing an educational provision and learning environment that promotes internationalisation at home and becoming involved in international organisations with relevant activities.

The Quality Reform and the Bologna Process both provide fundamental guidelines for the activities at UiT. Student mobility is increasing, more educational provisions are being taught in English and there is increased institutional collaboration, including through joint degrees. The number of exchange students at UiT, including both inbound and outbound students, has increased from just over 300 in 2005 to nearly 500 in 2012 (source: Database for Statistics on Higher Education, DBH).
In response to these challenges, a number of higher education institutions, including in Norway, have developed international strategies or plans of action. Additional administrative resources have also been allocated to address these issues. This is often in the form of an international office. UiT does not have a separate plan of action devoted to internationalization, but has stated objectives for this field in UiT’s overarching strategy and plan of action. Achieving the best possible efforts with internationalization at institutions relies on good interaction between the administrative support services and academic groups.

Target figures and results
In 2009 UiT set the target of having 15% international students by year-end 2013, including 140 self-funding Master’s degree students, 300 exchange students and 150 outbound students. In 2012 there were 866 international students studying at Master’s and Bachelor’s level at the institution, i.e. foreign nationals at UiT. This includes students who already live in Norway. This figure has increased by 50 in each of the past three years (there were 767 in 2010) (source: DBH). In 2012 a total of 9511 students were registered at Master’s and Bachelor’s level at UiT, so the proportion of international students comprised 9%.

Consequently, the target figure has not been achieved. This may be attributed in part to the large increase of the total student number during the strategic period and the fact that many of the programmes of study that admit international students have regulated admission. There is a high level of applications for the Master’s degree programmes taught in English (see below). The same applies to the number of applications for inbound exchanges. This involves an extensive admissions process, which may have resulted in the offer of admission being sent out so late that the students have already accepted the offer of admission at another higher education institution. The quality of the applications for the international Master’s degree programmes is not as good as one could wish for (see below). In addition, the housing situation in Tromsø in the autumn semester in 2012 also constitutes a limitation. UiT’s quota of 250 student apartments for international students was insufficient to offer accommodation to the approx. 350 new international students who received an offer of admission in the autumn semester in 2012. Several students chose not to come, while some also went home.

Nearly one-third of the students at PhD level are foreign nationals (218 of 689 at year-end 2012), whereas half of the PhD students who took singular courses in 2012 are international students (97 of 194). The EU regards mobility as a key means of achieving European integration, and the Bologna Process contains the target that 20% of graduates in 2020 having completed a period of study abroad. In the 2010/11 academic year (the latest available statistics), a total of 231,000 students were on exchanges, which constitutes 8.5%.

The Norwegian university with highest proportion of international students in 2011 was the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (UMB), with a proportion of approx. 18%, followed by UiO and UiB. UiT was seventh of this ranking. The study, which was implemented by the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU) and the socioeconomic and policy consultancy company DAMVAD, also shows that only 12% of international students in Norway remain in Norway after completing their studies (EU 9%, non-EU 14%).

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49 In April 2013 the European University Association published a study showing that of the 175 higher education institutions questioned 36% did not have a separate strategy for internationalisation, 13% had producing one as an objective while 30% had it integrated in the overarching strategy.
50 For more information refer to: http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/stat/1011/report.pdf
51 Integrating Global Talent in Norway – what do we know? (SIU and DAMVAD)
Diploma Supplement Label

In the autumn semester of 2012 UiT was awarded the Diploma Supplement Label (for the period 2012-2015). The awarding of this distinction requires that the higher education institution fulfils the requirements for the content of the Diploma Supplement (DS) as stipulated by the European Commission. It is a statutory requirement for Norwegian higher education institutions to issue a DS with the diplomas. The DS must contain sufficient information in order for the reader to gain an overall picture of the candidate’s programme of study, results and competence. The description of the programme of study shall have academic foundation and the learning outcome descriptors shall be detailed and of good quality.

The task of maintaining the content of the DS is a dynamic process in which it is necessary to ensure that the learning outcome descriptors and subject details in the respective degree programmes of study are updated at any given time. During the application process UiT has received feedback on weaknesses and any deficiencies that may further improve the DS. The faculties are requested to take this feedback into account in their future efforts and to adjust the content where this appears necessary so the UiT will also qualify for the DS Label in the future.

Student exchanges

The measures for mobility and internationalisation at Bachelor’s and Master’s level at UiT are to a large extent externally funded. The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU) administers a number of grant programmes on behalf of various ministries and the European Commission. The International Office at the Department of Academic Affairs applies for funding from these to fund exchanges for inbound and outbound students at UiT. The university’s own funds are used to a low degree in the promotion of internationalisation at Bachelor’s and Master’s level. The Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund has nevertheless a grants scheme for students, including to cover language courses in countries where English is not the main language.

At PhD level, there is focus on studying abroad as a part of the PhD programme. UiT has research grant schemes, with the university’s own PhD candidates as the main target group. In addition, the Research Council of Norway and the EU (Marie Curie) also offer grants for fellowship programmes.

There is a growing trend towards developing provisions for students and researchers with a qualitative focus, which are based on academic collaboration, rather than just setting quantitative targets for mobility. This is in line with the vision promoted in the last report on educational attainments, which emphasized that effort involving internationalisation must be internalized at the institution, rather than only striving to reach a target of increasing the volume of exchanges. In order to ensure good academic foundation, emphasis is attached to the significance of seeing research and education in context.

52 The requirements are outlined in the Diploma Supplement Explanatory notes
53 Archive ref. ePhorte 2009/2439-14
Table 1: Total mobility at Master’s and Bachelor’s level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic year</th>
<th>Exchanges inbound/outbound</th>
<th>Self-funding degree students, quota students and free movers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/2012</td>
<td>266/158</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/2011</td>
<td>267/156</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/2010</td>
<td>254/166</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: National Student Database and Database for statistics on higher education (DBH)*

The table above shows that the number of exchange students is stable, including both inbound and outbound exchange students. In 2012 the largest number of exchange students were from Germany (40), followed by Russia and Great Britain. If one considers the Nordic region as a whole, this would have been the largest “country” (41). There is a marked decrease in the number of exchange students from Russia, while there is a marked increase in the number from Great Britain. The decrease in the number of exchange students from Russia may be explained by the fact that unlike previous years very few exchange scholarships for Russian students were granted for that year through north2north. The number of applicants from Russia was equivalent to previous years, but in order to implement an exchange period the majority are reliant on funding in the form of grants.

The total number of inbound exchange students to Norway in 2012 was just over 4300. NTNU and UiO were the higher education institutions that received the most inbound exchange students, with 1375 and 1123 respectively, and were also those that had the most outbound exchange students, with around 1000 each.

Most exchange students to UiT are funded by an Erasmus grant from the European Commission. The year 2012 marked the 25th anniversary of the launch of the Erasmus programme. In 2012 there were 184 Erasmus students at UiT, while 49 used Erasmus grants for outbound exchanges the same year. The European Commission’s Lifelong Learning Programme, of which Erasmus is a part, will be revised in 2013. Various proposals for the design and content of a European programme for education mobility are currently under discussion in the EU’s bodies. The outcome of this could have significant implications for how the higher education institutions work with Erasmus from 2014 up to 2020. The emphasis will remain on the mobility of individuals at all levels of higher education. Two additional columns have been proposed for the new programme: institutional cooperation between education, community and business organisations to develop innovation and best practice, as well as support for policy development and reforms. In order to participate in the new EU programme, the higher education institutions must have an approved European Higher Education Charter that provides an account of how the institutions plan to use the programme to modernize their internationalisation collaboration both within and outside the EU, among other things.

In addition to this, UiT has a number of bilateral agreements with partner institutions outside of the Erasmus programme. A total of 125 students used these agreements for student exchanges in 2012. UiT also manages a number of smaller grant programmes, including Nordplus, north2north and Barents Plus.

The number of outbound exchange students has been fairly stable over the past five years, including 2012. In 2012 approximately the same number travelled on exchanges through Erasmus (49) and bilateral agreements to the United States (47). Fifteen PhD students employed in PhD positions
reported periods of research abroad in 2012 (CRIStIn). The University of California, Berkeley received the most outbound UiT students in 2012, as in previous years.

Over the past three years, efforts have been made to quality assure the exchange agreements and reduce the number. The purpose is to ensure that students travel to higher education institutions that the academic groups at UiT are familiar with and, as such, are aware of the quality. Another objective is to make it easier to fit exchange abroad into a programme of study at home. As mentioned above, it is a stated aim of the government for the institution to see research and education in context. This connection is important in order to safeguard the academic quality of the exchanges, and to promote long-term relationships between the higher education institutions. The task of quality assuring the agreements is being undertaken jointly by the administration and the faculties, and will continue in the next academic year.

Administrative and academic staff members have the possibility of travelling on exchanges via grants from Erasmus, north2north and Barents Plus. These possibilities are used to a certain degree by some faculties, but the potential exists to utilize them far more. Staff mobility between partner institutions can strengthen the professional bonds between institutions in a way that provides greater advantages for the student exchanges.

Supervised professional training exchanges
The last report on educational attainments included the objective of developing a model for supervised professional practice exchanges and the faculties were asked to provide an account of the possibilities for supervised professional training exchanges in programmes of study that do not contain compulsory periods of supervised professional training. (NB: In some subjects supervised professional training is referred to as practical training or clinical practice.)

At the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education, the teacher training programmes, which contain periods of supervised professional training, are the most relevant. In the faculty’s most popular exchange agreement, with the University of California, Berkeley, outbound exchange students may have a fieldwork project approved as their supervised professional training. The kindergarten teacher training programme is also working to be able to offer supervised professional training exchanges in new agreements.

Exchanges for periods of clinical practice are currently extremely popular for both inbound and outbound exchange students at the Faculty of Health Sciences. The faculty also has its own international semester in the programme of professional study in medicine (4th semester), which combines theory and practice. This is extremely popular for Nordic and German students, but also for Norwegian students who then study in an international environment with English as the language of instruction. However, this is not currently registered as a supervised professional training exchange.
International students on English-language Master’s degree programmes and joint degrees

Table 2: Mobility excl. exchanges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic year</th>
<th>Quota students</th>
<th>NOMA/ NORAD students</th>
<th>Self-funding degree students</th>
<th>Free movers (course students in addition to exchanges)</th>
<th>Total mobility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/2012</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Phased out</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/2011</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/2010</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Student Database and Database for statistics on higher education (DBH)

Quota Scheme
The objective of the scheme is to contribute to competence development in recipient countries (developing countries, countries in the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe and Central Asia). By giving students access to Norwegian universities and university colleges, the scheme will provide students with competence, while also linking higher education institutions and the business community in recipient countries with the global knowledge society. The scheme shall also help to strengthen the international cooperation of Norwegian higher education as well as being linked to existing institutional strategies and cooperation. The students receive grants from the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund.

The current three-year period for the Quota Scheme ends after the 2013/14 academic year. After the last round of applications in the autumn semester in 2010, UiT was awarded 51 places per academic year, on 14 English-language Master’s degree programmes and two Bachelor’s degree program. Of these, 28 places are reserved for students from the South and 23 for students from the East. In accordance with the guidelines from the Ministry of Education and Research, the students who are admitted shall come from higher education institutions with which there is well-developed cooperation. The majority of applicants are from Ghana, while Peace and Conflict Transformation is the programme of study with by far the greatest number of applications.

The general rule at UiT is that a quota grant is insufficient as the sole source of funding for a PhD programme to ensure acceptable academic implementation in the given timeframe. This is also a follow-up of UiT’s endorsement of the EU’s Charter and Code. UiT also has many foreign applicants for PhD grants (see above).

Several faculties at UiT have made use of the Quota Scheme as a basis for establishing professional networks for collaborations in education and research. After returning from UiT, the quota students have acted as ambassadors of UiT, and have continued the cooperation in new roles, either within academia or authorities. The current scheme is now in its last phase and will soon undergo evaluation. Pending this evaluation, the quota programme will be extended under the present structure.

English language Master’s degree programmes and joint degrees
There are currently 23 English-language Master’s degree programmes at UiT. The students admitted to these programmes are either so-called self-funding students or part of the above-mentioned Quota Scheme. There has been a large increase in the number of applications over recent years. This may be
attributed to the introduction of tuition fees for applicants from outside Europe in both Sweden and Denmark, among other factors.

In line with international trends, the applicants are mostly from Asian and African countries, while the educational provisions in economics and natural science subjects are attracting large numbers of applications. A decrease in the number of applications was recorded from 2010 to 2011. However, there were 1483 applicants in 2012 compared to 845 the year before. This represents an increase of 40%.

One of UiT’s objectives has been to increase the efficiency of the use of resources in work relating to admissions. Measures of both a policy and administrative nature may be introduced in order to achieve this. Policy measures may include introducing limitations such as increasing the admission requirements or a requirement that the applicants must come from higher education institutions with which UiT has established cooperation, cf. the Quota Scheme.

Possible administrative measures to achieve more rapid administrative procedures may be to further develop the technical tools, in particular the National Student Database. In addition, staff may be delegated duties involving admissions in collaboration with the faculties in the processing of applications, or reorganisation of the department responsible for admissions. This work requires competence in order to assess foreign qualifications as well as knowledge of the National Student Database. Proposals have been sent to the units concerning increasing the requirements for English language proficiency and the average grades for international applicants, with a view to possible implementation for admissions for the autumn semester in 2014. Given the current model for admission to the English-language Master’s degree programmes, it would be unreasonable to expect a decrease in the use of resources.

Diploma forgery is a growing global problem. Experiences at UiT indicate that more time should be set aside for a more in-depth review and control of diplomas and to developing competence in recognising forgeries.

Increasing cooperation between higher education institutions through joint education programmes is a policy request both nationally and within the EU. This may be in the form of integrated or joint degree programmes. The objective of degree cooperation can be to strengthen the educational provision by several joining forces in a programme of study or by strengthening the cooperation with desired higher education institutions. There are several means, both nationally and internationally, to stimulate such cooperation. These are intended as seed capital to stimulate long-term cooperation.

The experiences of Norwegian higher education institutions with such cooperation point to several challenges. The main challenge relates to the design of the content of the educational provision that is established, the recruitment of students, funding and the higher education institution’s prioritising of the cooperation. It is an objective for UiT that each faculty shall be included in a degree of cooperation by year-end 2013. UiT is currently involved in four projects in three different faculties, which are subsidised by various measures. UiT has to a large extent encountered the same challenges as other higher education institutions, particularly with respect to funding and operation. The political objectives of increased degree cooperation are unlikely to be weakened. Consequently, UiT should continue its ambitions on the basis of the experiences it has gained. In all likelihood a strategic focus at the institution will be important; a conscious attitude towards the use of joint degree collaboration as a

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A tool for improving the quality and relevance/societal benefits is required, as is a support network with competence in the area and its regulations.

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**International profiling of educational provision**

UiT is playing a prominent role in the Government’s High North Initiative, which is the most important strategic priority area in the government’s foreign policy. Knowledge is the hub of the High North Initiative, and UiT is the most prominent knowledge actor in and for the High North. This knowledge base constitutes the basis of community and business development in our region and must be developed and maintained through international cooperation. Educational provisions of quality and relevance at UiT combined with outstanding research contribute to realizing the High North Initiative. It is a positive challenge to link the international dimension of student recruitment and educational provisions further towards the realization of the High North Initiative. The strategic cooperation within the University of the Arctic and the three-way collaboration between UiT, Umeå University and Northern Arctic Federal University in Arkhangelsk will be an important platform for this.

The Department of Academic Affairs has responsibility for the recruitment of international students, and the English-language websites aimed at students are key tools. These have significant potential for improvement, but a broad upgrade requires increased resources. UiT has a broad range of programmes of studies at both Bachelor’s and Master’s level, but no English-language Bachelor degree programmes. In addition to the use of its own websites, UiT also has a presence on national and international study portals. The Department of Academic Affairs, together with the faculties, have put in a major effort to review the English-language section of the online programme of study catalogue. It is important that the information is correct and published in a timely manner so that students have sufficient time to familiarize themselves with the educational provisions before the application deadline. This is an area in which UiT has improved after the faculties were asked to implement and report on this in the previous report on educational attainments. A joint workshop for all faculties to review the online programme of study catalogue was held in the autumn semester in 2012. Following this workshop, several faculties have received direct assistance from external course provider to improve their programme descriptions etc. The faculties’ reports are on the whole positive to this measure, but the Faculty of Law points out that the deadline for publishing the programme of study catalogue (Oct. 1) is too early with respect to clarifying new educational provisions for the following academic year. The Faculty of Health Sciences points out that it appears confusing that several programmes of study with various programme options are published, and that an overall solution is required for this.

In 2012 UiT was allocated funding from the Government’s High North Initiative to implement a two-year project, *Global Access to Northern Higher Education*, under the University of the Arctic. The objective of the project is a joint recruitment effort to the member institutions of the University of the Arctic through the development of a joint study portal. Through the new study portal UiT’s education provisions will appear both internally in the network as well as externally, so it is a win-win situation. In addition, it will strengthen UiT’s High North profile.

The level of recruitment to the English-language Master’s degree programmes is good. However, it is still a challenge to reach and recruit the qualitatively good students. Long-term collaboration relationships that have academic foundation will be the best platform for further internationalisation.
It should form the basis of the use of grant programmes, bilateral exchange agreements, the quota scheme and recruitment of students.

Many courses at PhD level have instruction in English and are also open to PhD students from other higher education institutions. Half of the students are international.

Recruitment to the PhD programmes at UiT is to a high degree international even though this is not a distinct objective. The university is assessing measures in an attempt to gain further qualified Norwegian applicants for the PhD programmes at UiT.

Summary

UiT is an international university with a high level of student mobility, good English-language educational provisions and academic staff who are active internationally. This is a result of good work among both academic and administrative staff. In 2009 UiT set the target of having 15% international students by year-end 2013. This target number was not reached, as the proportion of international students was 9% in 2013. An increase in the total number of students during the strategic period, regulated admission to some programmes of study and a pressed housing situation are some of the reasons why UiT has not reached the target. This target figure does not apply to PhD students, where almost one-third of the students are foreign nationals.

It is still a challenge for UiT to create an overall framework for our international cooperation. The scientific interests for international partnerships will vary and be different. At many of the faculties, good and systematic efforts are being made to see education and research in context and to link the activities to selected institutions. For UiT as a whole, it may nevertheless be beneficial to direct the international cooperation towards fewer higher education institutions with which UiT has quality assured agreements and where education and research are seen in context. Given the current administrative capacity, it is difficult to handle a larger volume of student mobility.
CHAPTER 5
COMPLETION AND DROP-OUT

The University of Tromsø shall increase the correlation between the students’ planned course of study and the actual length of study and reduce the actual drop-out from all types of programmes of study.

From the Strategic Document for University of Tromsø 2009-2013

One of the objectives for the current strategic period has been to increase the correlation between the planned course of study and actual length of study, as well as reduce drop-out from all the programmes of study. The term drop-out, as used in the strategic document, may be understood to mean students who terminate their studies without a degree or passing the examination. The students’ planned course of study may be understood to mean the individual education plan the students enter into with UiT during the semester registration.

This chapter examines drop-out and completion in the programmes of study. The methods used are the same methods as those utilized in previous reports on educational attainments. An account is also given of credit production per student compared to other universities and how UiT fulfils the Ministry’s activity requirements. Special focus is attached to the examination of drop-out on two-year and 1.5-year Master’s degree programmes and three-year Bachelor’s degree programmes. In this chapter, a separate section deals with PhD students. In the rest of the chapter, the term student refers to students at Bachelor’s or Master’s degree level.

Credit production

Statistics of the number of credits (ECTS) per student are compiled by the Database for Statistics on Higher Education (DBH) and which describes the quality of education at a higher level. The figures in the table are from 2009, i.e. after the merger with Tromsø University College.

The table shows the development in the proportional number of credits taken per student in the period from 2009 to 2012 at the general universities. Sixty credits is equivalent to one year’s nominal length of study (full-time students).
Table 1: Number of credits per student

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UiT</td>
<td>41,0</td>
<td>41,1</td>
<td>42,3</td>
<td>43,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiB</td>
<td>42,7</td>
<td>42,5</td>
<td>42,6</td>
<td>41,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiO</td>
<td>36,4</td>
<td>37,0</td>
<td>38,4</td>
<td>37,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTNU</td>
<td>42,7</td>
<td>42,7</td>
<td>43,3</td>
<td>42,8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Database for Statistics on Higher Education (DBH)

Over the past two years UiT has had an extremely positive development in the proportional number of credits taken per student. In 2012 UiT had the highest proportional number of all the universities. The figure for 2012 is also higher than for most state university colleges. In the same period, the number of students at UiT has also increased significantly. In the autumn semester in 2009, there were 8373 self-funding students and in the autumn semester in 2012 there were 9598 self-funding students. In a period with an increase in student numbers, the number of credits per student is somewhat misleading as credit production for the whole year is divided by the number of students registered in the autumn semester. The new students in the autumn semester will have only studied for one semester, but are included in the basis of calculation as if they have studied for the whole year. Consequently, the proportional number of credits per student is too low. During periods with stable student numbers, the number of new students in the autumn semester will be equivalent to the number of students who leave after the spring semester and, as such, the credits per student will provide a more accurate picture. During periods with a decrease in student numbers, the number of credits per student will be too high. As UiT has had an increase in student numbers, it means that the proportional numbers for UiT as they appear in Table 1 are somewhat lower than the real figures.

An increase in the number of credits per student is positive if the increase is owing to the students studying more and better. If the increase is owing to the requirements for passing the examination being lowered, this may be a sign of a negative development. Chapter 6 provides an account of the figures for the failure rate. UiT has a consistently higher failure rate than the other universities. Consequently, there are no grounds for saying that the level to pass examinations has changed in the period from 2009 to 2012.

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**Activity requirements**

An activity requirement is a “production requirement” for the first academic year of the relevant programmes of study. The requirements are set by the Ministry of Education and Research in the annual letter of allocation, and only relate to the programmes of study at the Faculty of Health Sciences. The table below shows the degree to which UiT fulfilled the activity requirements in the 2011/2012 academic year. The figures do not include delayed students repeating the first academic year or students in the second year of the programme who have courses they must repeat from the first year of the programme.

---

55 The number of credits per student is the total credit production for the entire year divided by the number of self-funding students registered in the autumn semester. Self-funding students are students admitted to ordinary programmes of study that are funded in full via UiT’s budget. Students and credits taken on fee-based provisions are not included in the basis of calculation.
Fulfilment of activity requirements for the 2011/2012 academic year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme of study</th>
<th>Requirement of 60 credits in 2011-2012</th>
<th>Produced 60 credits in 2011-2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABIOK(^{56})</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical laboratory science</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational therapy</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25(^{57})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physiotherapy</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwifery</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prog. of professional study in psychology</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiography</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental care</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that UiT fulfils the activity requirements in most programmes of study for the 2011-2012 academic year. The programme in radiography made an offer of admission to all qualified applicants in the autumn semester in 2011, but nonetheless did not fulfil the activity requirement. A sufficient number of students started the programme of study, but owing to the drop-out rate in the first academic year the activity requirement was not fulfilled. The ABIOK programmes have irregular admission.

In the spring semester in 2012 new year groups started on most of the ABIOK programmes. The activity requirements for these programmes of study are compared only with the credits produced during the first semester of the programme. The programme in nursing recruits well for both part-time and full-time study. Clinical practice placements must be secured for students admitted to the programmes of study in nursing. The scarcity of clinical practice places makes it difficult to calculate overbooking to ensure the target activity requirement is fulfilled. In the event too many students are admitted and the drop-out rate during the first academic year is lower than expected, one can end up in the situation that not all the students receive the clinical practice placement they are entitled to. Consequently, overbooking during admission must be used with caution. However, the programmes of study in nursing are nonetheless closer to targets for the 2011-2012 academic year than during the 2010-2011 academic year, but still do not fulfil the requirements.

Students who started in the autumn semester in 2011 – survey of drop-out

National surveys show that the drop-out rate is highest at the start of a course of study, and the drop-out rate during the first three semesters at UiT is investigated below. The basis for the survey is students who started a programme of study in the autumn semester in 2011. The figures cover new

\(^{56}\) Further education provisions in anaesthesia, paediatric, critical care, surgical and oncology nursing (known by the Norwegian abbreviation ABIOK)

\(^{57}\) A proportion of students received specific recognition for courses in the first academic year and accordingly took courses other than those specified in the programme description. If one only takes into account the courses that are included in the programme description, as is the case for the other programmes of study, the figure would be 19.
students who in the autumn semester in 2011 registered on programmes of study with a length of more than two semesters.

Figure 1: Drop-out among students that started in the autumn semester in 2011

After two semesters the drop-out rate from the programme of study they started in the autumn semester in 2011 is 26%, while the drop-out rate from the institution is 19%. Significant proportions (one-fifth) of all students who begin a programme of study lasting several years do not continue studying at UiT after the first academic year. Figures from a similar survey for the 2009 year group show that the drop-out rate from UiT has been stable during the period, while the drop-out rate from the programme of study has dropped from 29% to 26%. This means that of the students starting in 2012, fewer are switching programmes of study during the first two semesters.

Degree of completion for Bachelor’s degree programmes for the 2003 year group to the 2009 year group

Since the introduction of the Quality Reform in the autumn semester in 2003, seven year groups of Bachelor degree students have studied for six semesters or more. Figures are presented below showing the degree of completion for these year groups. The number of students participating in the survey from the autumn 2003 year group to the autumn 2009 year group has almost doubled. The figure for the 2009 year group is 1100. This increase may be attributed in part to changes in the registration of students on some of the programmes of study at the former Tromsø University College (HiTø)\textsuperscript{58}, but also to a general increase in the number of Bachelor degree students at UiT during the period. The students in the survey have been followed up to the end of the spring semester in 2012.

\textsuperscript{58} Prior to the autumn semester in 2006 it was not a requirement for students at HiTø to confirm their individual education plan during semester registration. One of the requirements for participation in this survey is that the student confirms his/her individual education plan for the programme of study he/she is admitted to. This requirement was introduced to reduce sources of error in the survey.
This figure shows that between 40% and 50% of the students who start a Bachelor’s degree programme attain a degree. The drop-out rate for all the year groups is in excess of 50%, with the exception of the 2006 year group. In the report on educational attainments for 2009/2010, an equivalent survey was implemented, which enables the 2003-2007 year groups to be followed for a further two years. The figures show that many students complete Bachelor’s degrees long after the nominal length of study has expired. This may indicate that a significant proportion of Bachelor degree students do not have their academic studies as their main activity for the entire course of study, but that for periods of the programme of study they have studied either part-time or taken a break.

Degree of completion for experienced-based and two-year Master’s degree programmes

This report provides an account of the status of the initial eight year groups on experience-based and two-year Master’s degree programmes. This has been done by counting the number of students who have completed their Master’s degree, as of the end of the spring semester in 2012. The number of students still on the programme of study in the spring semester in 2012 and had not attained a degree or who had dropped out without attaining a degree was also counted. This survey is identical to surveys in previous reports of educational attainments.
This year’s survey shows the same tendency as in previous years. Around 70% of the students who start on a Master’s degree programmes complete the programme. The vast majority of Master’s degree programmes at UiT have a satisfactory degree of completion, and the greatest challenge on these programmes is to reduce the time-to-degree. The degree of completion for the Master’s degree programmes is significantly higher than for the Bachelor’s degree programmes.

Comments about the degree of completion on Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programmes

Over the past four years UiT has had a positive development in the number of students and credits per student. This means that there are more students at UiT and that these produce more credits per semester. However, the surveys in this chapter do not show any signs of improvement in the degree of completion in the nominal length of study, either for Master’s or Bachelor’s degree programmes. Surveys carried out at the University of Oslo in 2006 showed that 83% of those admitted to the Bachelor degree programmes had plans to complete the programme on which they were admitted. There is reason to believe that the situation is equivalent at UiT. If this is the case, UiT has a significant proportion of students who are using the educational provisions at Bachelor level for something other than that for which they were intended. The question that may be asked is whether UiT’s educational provision meets the students’ needs. Some faculties offer separate one-year programmes, and in addition all open courses are announced as a provision for course students. In this context it is worth mentioning that establishing new types of educational provisions may be problematic as these may come in direct competition with the existing provisions at UiT. Students will be spread over several programmes with low numbers of students, which is challenging from a learning environment perspective.

The drop-out measurements have not taken into account the group of students who have other objectives for studying than completing a degree. As a consequence of this, the drop-out rate, particularly on Bachelor’s degree programmes, will appear far greater than it is in reality. Given the methods currently used to measure drop-out, a drop-out rate of 0% is an unrealistic target. Some drop-out must be accepted. The challenge for the faculties will be to attempt to define an acceptable drop-out rate from their programmes of study, and to set realistic targets for reducing the drop-out rate. One way to solve this challenge may be to compare the drop-out rate for programmes of study that are roughly equivalent. If the drop-out rate varies between the programmes of study, one may
investigate the cause of this and set a target of reducing the drop-out rate on the programmes of study with the highest drop-out rates. The Ministry of Education and Research compiles statistics on drop-out rates in its annual *Report on the status of higher education*\(^{59}\). The report provides national figures for drop-out and completion in the nominal length of study for Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programmes. The figures are divided into areas of education. This enables UiT to compare its programmes of study with the average for equivalent programmes of study at other higher education institutions. Such an approach requires the higher education institutions to register their student data in the academic administration program in more or less the same way.

In Chapter 2 the qualifications framework is discussed, and emphasis is attached to the significance of developing programmes of study in which the courses collectively fulfil the learning outcome descriptors of the programme of study. The students’ behaviour, which involves frequent switching between programmes of study at Bachelor’s level, is challenging in this regard. This makes strict demands on programme design and academic management in order to ensure that the students still achieve the total learning outcome of the programme of study.

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**Results for PhD programmes**

The number of doctorates taken at the universities has increased significantly in recent years, from 1075 in 2009 to 1376 in 2012. This represents an increase of 28%. However, the number of doctorates taken at UiT has stabilized during the period. UiT’s proportion of the disputations has reduced, from 10.2% in 2009 to 8.0% in 2012. Of Norway’s general universities, NTNU has experienced the largest increase in the number doctorates, with an increase of 44.4% during the period. Table 2 shows the spread of doctorates at the universities in the period 2009 – 2012.

**Table 2: Overview of doctoral degrees taken at the universities in the period 2009 – 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Proportion (%)</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Proportion (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTNU</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiB</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiO</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>37.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiS</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiT</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMB</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiN(^{60})</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>1075</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1105</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Database for Statistics on Higher Education (DBH)

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\(^{60}\) The University of Nordland is included in the statistics from DBH as of the spring semester in 2011 in connection with the awarding of university status.
Table 3 shows the spread of the 110 doctorates completed at UiT in 2012 among the faculties. The Faculty of Fine Arts does not have its own PhD programme and is, therefore, not included in the table. The table shows that the number varies from year to year at all the faculties, and the same applies for the units’ proportion of the doctorates. The number of new students on PhD programmes over the past five years has remained virtually unchanged. Consequently, an increase in the number of doctorates in the next few years is not expected.

Table 3: Number of disputations at the faculties in the period 2009 – 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Disputations in 2009</th>
<th>Disputations in 2010</th>
<th>Disputations in 2011</th>
<th>Disputations in 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Proportion (%)</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Proportion (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFE-fak</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helsefak</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSL-fak</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurfak</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT-fak</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Database for Statistics on Higher Education (DBH)

The PhD programme is a three-year programme, but only a small number of students manage to complete the programme in the nominal length of study. Table 4 shows the development in the time-to-degree at UiT and the other universities in the period 2009 – 2012. As the table shows, PhD candidates at UiT have spent somewhat longer than the average time-to-degree at the universities throughout the entire period. In particular, one can see this trend in 2011 and 2012. With the exception of NTNU, the time-to-degree varies somewhat over time at other universities.

Table 4: Net time-to-degree (net full-time equivalent work years) of PhD programmes at the Norwegian universities in the period 2009 – 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NTNU</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiA</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiB</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiO</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiS</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiT</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMB</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UiN61</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Database for Statistics on Higher Education (DBH)

The variation in time-to-degree is also reflected at the faculties. Table 5 shows the net time-to-degree at the faculties in the period 2009 – 2012. One may see in particular that the time-to-degree has increased at the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education. As the disputations at the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education account for 68.2% of the total number of disputations at UiT in 2012, this will

61 The University of Nordland is included in the statistics from DBH as of the spring semester in 2011 in connection with the awarding of university status.
have an impact on the overall time-to-degree at UiT. The time-to-degree is longest at the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Science and Technology, and is above the average for the universities.

Table 5: Net time-to-degree (net full-time equivalent work years) of PhD programmes at the faculties in the period 2009 – 2012.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BFE-fak</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helsefak</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSL-fak</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurfak</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT-fak</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average for UiT</strong></td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A total of 34 people attained the degree of Dr. Philos. (doctor philosophiae) in Norway in 2012. For the first time, there were none at UiT. Two dissertations were rejected in 2012, and both were for the degree of Dr. Philos.

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**National comparisons on drop-out and completion rates**

Figures for the time-to-degree on Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programmes are published in the Ministry of Education and Research’s Report on the status of higher education 2012. Table 6 shows the completion rate for Bachelor’s degree programmes at the universities in Norway, within the nominal length of study for the 2008 year group. The figure for Finnmark University College is also included.

The base data for the table is all students who have attended a Bachelor’s degree programme in the autumn semester in 2008, i.e. students who have received and accepted an offer of admission and registered for the programme of study. Students are regarded as having dropped out if they are not registered at the higher education institution in the spring semester in 2011. The student is not regarded as having dropped out if he/she switches programmes of study internally at the institution. A completed degree is registered if the student fulfils the requirements for a Bachelor’s degree and this is registered by the institution in the student database. The degree must be registered during the spring semester in 2011. This means that the institution’s procedures for registering degrees will have a major impact on the figure for completed degree within the nominal length of study.
Table 6: Drop-out and completion in the nominal length of study for the year group autumn 2008 on three-year Bachelor degree programmes (full-time) per institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Autumn semester 2008</th>
<th>Spring semester 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Admnition</td>
<td>No. completed degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnmark University College</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum state university colleges</td>
<td>14517</td>
<td>7524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian University of Science and Technology</td>
<td>2284</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian University of Life Sciences</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Agder</td>
<td>1606</td>
<td>712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Bergen</td>
<td>2058</td>
<td>540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Nordland</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Oslo</td>
<td>4100</td>
<td>997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Stavanger</td>
<td>1602</td>
<td>701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Tromsø</td>
<td>1059</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum universities</td>
<td>13715</td>
<td>3913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum all institutions</td>
<td>30524</td>
<td>12623</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Report on the status of higher education for 2012

Among the traditional general universities, UiT has the highest proportion of Bachelor’s degree students who complete their degree within the nominal length of study (33.1%). In comparison, the state university colleges have a significantly higher proportion of students who complete their degree within the nominal length of study (51.8%). There are also differences from programme area to programme area in the proportion of students who complete their degree within the nominal length of study. The Bachelor’s degree programme in nursing has the highest proportion (58.3%), while the programmes in the Humanities have the lowest (18.8%). UiT has the lowest drop-out rate among the general universities with a registered drop-out rate of 29.3%

Table 7 shows the drop-out and completion within the nominal length of study for students admitted to two-year Master’s degree programmes (full-time) in the autumn semester in 2009. Students are regarded as having dropped out if they are not registered at the higher education institution in the spring semester in 2011. The student is not regarded as having dropped out if he/she switches programmes of study internally at the institution.
Table 7: Drop-out and completion in the nominal length of study for the year group autumn 2009 on two-year Master’s degree programmes (full-time)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Autumn semester 2009</th>
<th>Spring semester 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Admission No.</td>
<td>No. completed degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian University of Science and Technology</td>
<td>1385</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian University of Life Sciences</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Agder</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Bergen</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Nordland</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Oslo</td>
<td>1650</td>
<td>603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Stavanger</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Tromsø</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sum universities</strong></td>
<td><strong>5657</strong></td>
<td><strong>2178</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sum all institutions</strong></td>
<td><strong>8214</strong></td>
<td><strong>2974</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Report on the status of higher education for 2012

UiT has the second lowest proportion of completion within the nominal length of study with 31.9% of all the universities, while the University of Bergen has the highest proportion with 48.8%. UiT has the highest drop-out rate among the universities. Consequently, at Master’s degree level, the situation at UiT is opposite to that for Bachelor’s degree programmes as UiT emerges worse here than the other universities. The reason why the figure for Master’s degrees at UiT is so poor in the status report should be investigated further. UiT’s own survey of the Master’s degrees shows a significantly lower drop-out rate than is the case in the study published by the Ministry of Education and Research. The completion rate within the nominal length of study also seems to be higher than the figures in the study published by the Ministry of Education and Research.

The Ministry of Education and Research’s summary of 10 years’ experience of the Quality Reform concluded, among other things, that one of the main objectives of the reform, which was to reduce the drop-out rate and the time-to-degree, has not succeeded. The Ministry has provided notification that it will investigate this. In the future it will be important for UiT to ensure that the parameters in which the institution is measured provide an accurate picture of drop-out and time-to-degree on the various programmes of study. The procedures for registering student data should be reviewed in order to isolate any sources of errors. An example mentioned in the status report as a possible source of error for the time-to-degree is the proportion of students who complete their Bachelor’s degree after they have started on their Master’s degree. These students will be measured as delayed even though they complete the full course of study within the nominal length of study.
Efforts involving drop-out at the faculties

The Faculty of Fine Arts reports a very high percentage of completion and does not regard drop-out as a problem in its programmes of study. The faculty follows up the students closely throughout the entire programme of study.

The other faculties report comprehensive and continuous efforts to prevent drop-out and to reduce the time-to-degree. The majority of measures are designed to connect the students more closely to the institution, both academically and socially, e.g. the Department of Computer Science at the Faculty of Science and Technology works on the principle that the students should be met, seen, heard, respected and liked. The faculties are working actively to map at what stage of the programme the students drop out and the reason for dropping out.

Several programmes of study at the Faculty of Health Sciences have their own activity requirements stipulated by the Ministry of Education and Research (see separate section above). The faculty reports that all programmes of study that have activity requirements now take these into account when they are dimensioning the admission. In the autumn semester in 2011, the faculty took special measures for the programmes in medicine and dentistry in order to meet the activity requirements. In the spring semester in 2012, the faculty implemented measures to ensure that sufficient offers of admission are sent out to fulfil the requirements activity. The challenges in relation to increased admission are primarily the lack of lecture halls and clinical practice places. The faculty has now begun holding lectures later in the afternoon in an attempt to remedy the problem. The faculty is also investigating various solutions for the problem of limited clinical practice places.

The faculty reports show that they are working well to reduce the drop-out rate and increase the completion. The work involving the drawing up of the measures has been mainly delegated to the departments and this appears to be correct. The measures must be adapted for each programme of study. Several of the faculties compile their own analyses and statistics on drop-out and completion, but it is obvious that the university lacks a good method for measuring the impact of the various measures. This means that the faculties cannot conclude unambiguously whether the measures have any effect.

Summary

Over the past two years UiT has had an extremely positive development in the ratio of completed credits per student. In 2012 UiT had the highest ratio of all the universities. The figure for 2012 is also higher than for most of the state university colleges. No clear improvements in the rate of completion and time-to-degree have been measured during the strategic period 2009-2013. The objective in the strategic document of increasing the correlation between the students’ planned course of study and actual length of study and reduce drop-out from the programmes of study does not appear to have been fulfilled. However, it is clear that the academic intensity of the students has increased during the strategic period. UiT now has more students and these produce more credits per semester.

A study of the drop-out of students at the start of their course of study shows that the drop-out from UiT is just as high for students who started in 2012 as it was for students who started in 2009. However, there has been a slight decrease in the number of students dropping out of the programme.
of study they started. This means that fewer of the students who started in 2012 have switched programmes of study during the first two semesters. Several of the students on Bachelor’s degree programmes complete their degrees well after the nominal length of study, but only 40% to 50% of students who start a Bachelor’s degree programme actually complete it. The majority of Master’s degree programmes at UiT have a satisfactory degree of completion of approx. 70%. For these programmes of study, the challenge is to reduce the time-to-degree. National comparisons among the general universities show that UiT has the highest proportion of completion of Bachelor’s degrees within the nominal length of study (33.1%). However, at Master’s degree level, the same national survey shows that UiT has the second lowest proportion of completion within the nominal length of study (31.9%). The faculty reports show that the faculties are working well to reduce the drop-out rate. The majority of measures implemented by the faculties are designed to connect the students more closely to the institution, both academically and socially.

The number of doctorates taken at UiT has stagnated in the period 2009-2012, and UiT’s proportion of doctorates nationally has reduced. The net time-to-degree on PhD programmes has also increased over the past two years, and is slightly higher than the national average.

Activity requirements are “production requirements” set by the Ministry of Education and Research. The requirements cover most major programmes at the Faculty of Health Sciences. In the 2011-2012 academic year, UiT fulfilled these activity requirements for the vast majority of the programmes of study.
CHAPTER 6
EXAMINATIONS AND LEARNING RESULTS

The University of Tromsø shall operate its activities in accordance with high professional and ethical standards.

From the Strategic Document for University of Tromsø 2009-2013

Ten years after the introduction of the new grading system, the findings from the annual national surveys implemented by the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions shows that efforts to harmonize the use of grades must continue. A greater degree of common understanding about the use of the grading scale has been developed in the sector, but the objective of the scale being used in the same way across subjects, levels and institutions has not been fulfilled. In this chapter focus is attached to the monitoring and analysis of the use of grades as an important part of the university's efforts involving quality assurance and quality development. Awareness about examination offences and the challenges associated with this are also central themes. It is also important to carefully monitor the types of appeals raised by students in connection with examinations, the scope of these, and the extent to which decisions made by the university’s appeals committee are in accordance with the administrative discretion exercised by the university's case officers.

Distribution of grades 2011/2012 – at UiT and nationally

The figure below shows the distribution of grades at UiT compared with the other Norwegian universities in the 2011/2012 academic year.

Figure 1: Distribution of grades for courses with the grading scale from A-F in 2011/2012

![Distribution of grades graph]

Source: Database for statistics on higher education (DBH)

The figure shows that the average for all grades is near C, both for UiT and for all the universities combined. Students at the UiT are less frequently awarded the grades of A, B and C compared to
students at the other universities combined, while more UiT students are awarded the grades of D, E and F (fail). There are slight changes in the distribution of grades from the 2010/2011 academic year to the 2011/2012 academic year. During this period, UiT has a decrease in the grades E and F, and an increase in the grades B and C.

Figures 2 and 3 show the distribution of grades by faculty at UiT for Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees respectively.

Figure 2: Distribution of grades with the grading scale from A-F for first degree courses in the 2011/2012 academic year

![Bachelor's degrees graph]

Source: Database for statistics on higher education (DBH)

Figure 3: Distribution of grades with the grading scale from A-F for Master’s degree courses in the 2011/2012 academic year

![Master's degrees graph]

Source: Database for statistics on higher education (DBH)

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All courses in the integrated Master’s degree programme in law are regarded as Master’s degree courses and, as such, the Faculty of Law is not represented in Figure 2.
The average grade for first degree (Bachelor’s) examinations in the 2011/2012 academic year is C. The Faculty of Fine Arts stands out from the other faculties with a significantly higher proportion of the grades A and B, also in this academic year. The Faculty of Nature and Technology and the Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics have a higher proportion of the grade F at first degree level than the other faculties.

The average grade for second degree (Master’s) examinations in the 2011/2012 academic year is between B and C. The Faculty of Fine Arts and the Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics have a higher proportion of students with the grade B.

**The Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions’ surveys of the distribution of grades in the sector as a whole**

*Grading scale from A-F*

The annual surveys implemented by the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR) analysis group show that during the entire period 2004-2011 there have only been minor changes in the distribution of grades⁶³. The total distribution for all higher education institutions and academic levels assessed using the grading scale from A-F for 2011⁶⁴ is as follows: A: 11.3%, B: 26.4%, C: 30.8%, D: 15.7%, E: 7.5% and F: 8.2%.

It is still the case that the distribution of grades for Master’s theses is significantly different to other courses⁶⁵, but the proportion of the grade A still appears to be decreasing at the majority of institutions and in the majority of subject areas. The decrease in the proportion of the grade A from 2010 to 2011 is relatively high compared to the other years. Economics/Business Management and Law subjects still deviate with an extremely high proportion of the grade A, even though it has also decreased in these subjects. UHR emphasizes that the figures can indicate that different cultures exist with respect to grading. However, the Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics’ own surveys shows that the proportion of students awarded the grades A and B at this faculty is significantly lower (approx. 60%) than the national average for this type of education (> 80%).

*Scale pass/fail*

UHR’s analysis group has found the following distribution for examinations from all higher education institutions and levels that in 2011 were assessed on the scale pass/fail: Pass: 94.8% and fail: 5.2%. It is worth noting that the proportion of “fail” has decreased by over 7% in the period 2004-2011⁶⁶.

The analysis group points out that there are major differences between programmes of study and institutions over the use of the scale pass/fail and that there appears to be a need for national coordination. In contrast to grading scale from A-F, no general or specific descriptions have been developed for the grading scale pass/fail. UHR wishes to follow this up in the course of 2013.

It was pointed out again this year that there are major differences in the programmes in medicine. UiT, UiO and NTNU use the grading scale pass/fail to a large extent, while UiB mostly uses the grading scale from A-F. The grade data for 2011 shows that there is considerable variation in the scope of

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⁶³ The reports for the annual surveys may be found on the UHR website: [http://www.uhr.no/index.php?objectId=3899&method=contents](http://www.uhr.no/index.php?objectId=3899&method=contents)

⁶⁴ The surveys for 2012 are not yet available.

⁶⁵ Courses at Master’s and other levels

⁶⁶ Some of the decrease may be attributed to changes in reporting, so these figures do not provide a completely accurate picture of the development.
“fail”: UiB: 0.8%, NTNU: 4.9%, UiO: 8.3% and UiT: 17%. The Faculty of Health Sciences should make note of this in its work involving monitoring the use of grades.

Table 1 provides an overview of the failure rate at the Norwegian universities over the past 11 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>5.4</td>
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<td>8.3</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: DBH*

The failure rate at the universities has remained relatively stable over the past four years. However, the failure rate should be interpreted with caution. A decrease in the failure rate can mean higher quality as more students have achieved the required learning outcomes. On the other hand, a low failure rate can mean lower quality if it is the case that more students get through without having attained a satisfactory learning outcome.

There are some major differences between universities. The average for the universities in 2012 was 7.3%. UiB has the lowest failure rate with 5.2%, while UiT was second highest with just under 9%. There have been some changes over the past four years, but the main trend is that the universities in Bergen and Oslo have been below the average. This is also noted in the Ministry of Education and Research’s *Report on the status of higher education 2012* 67.

After two years of increase, the failure rate for all faculties as a whole decreased from 2011 to 2012, and is now at 8.9%. The decrease during this period has been greatest at the Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics and the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education. The Faculty of Fine Arts experienced an increase from 2011 to 2012, but this faculty still has the lowest failure rate of all the faculties. There was also an increase at the Faculty of Science and Technology, and this faculty stands out from the other faculties with a higher failure rate.

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67 The report may be found at: http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd/dok/rapporter_planer/rapporter/2012/tilstandsrapport-for-universitets--og-ho.html?id=681130
Table 2 shows the failure rate of the respective faculties. Owing to the reorganisation of UiT after 2009, it is not possible to produce a table of the historical figures for each faculty.

Table 2: Failure rate at the faculties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
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<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
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</thead>
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<td>4.0</td>
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<td>9.3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>10.8</td>
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<td>8.9</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Science and Technology</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DBH

As of 2012 UHR has made changes in the national survey of grades (cf. the section above about the national distribution of grades). In the period 2012-2016, the programmes of study will be grouped into subject areas, and the surveys will be thorough and more targeted than previously. Furthermore, joint reports will be prepared for the subject areas, both as a basis for discussions across institutions and subject areas, and as a basis for the annual national conferences about grading. The faculties have been informed about when the various subject areas will be studied, the relevant issues and the deadlines that apply for the various subject areas in the years up to and including 2016.

In 2012, the social sciences were studied. The National Faculty Meeting for Social Sciences has selected issues for the surveys on the basis of proposals from UHR. The faculty meeting has had a deadline to report on the results of the surveys by 1 February 2013. UHR’s analysis group will prepare a joint report that will be available in the spring semester in 2013. This report will be presented at the national conference about grading in the autumn semester in 2013. The Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education and the Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics are asked to pay special attention to this.

Further, it is of particular interest to the Faculty of Health Sciences that in 2013, the subject areas of medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, psychology, education and health and social sciences will be studied. In 2014, the subject areas to be studied are teacher training, economics/business management and sport science.

UHR’s analysis group is also working on a report of the grading scales in Nordic and some European countries. Furthermore, in 2013 it will be assessed whether the descriptions of grades should be connected directly to the learning objectives in the qualifications framework. This is expected to contribute to clarifying the nuances in the grading scale and, as such, will be able to contribute to

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68Further information about UHR’s surveys of grades, and the related letter from the Ministry of Education and Research, may be found on the following website: http://www.uhr.no/index.php?objectId=3899&method=contents and in ePhorte in item 2011/5723.
Grading that utilizes the entire scale of grades. The use of grades in Master’s theses will also be a particular area of focus in the upcoming reporting year.

Grades from higher education are important for the candidates’ transition to the labour market and for fair admission to, for example, Master’s degree or PhD programmes. The Ministry of Education and Research’s Report on the status of higher education 2012 states that the Ministry is in the process of implementing a new analysis of the contribution of the use of grades, quality and the programmes of study to the students’ learning in higher education. The analysis will include the following three parts:

1. Map the connection between admission grades and examination results at various higher education institutions and for a wide range of programmes of study
2. Study whether there are major variations between the institutions’ assessment of the same type of performance. This part of the project will cover a selection of subject areas offered at several institutions.
3. Calculate the contribution of the institutions to the students’ learning, corrected for different practices for grading

The results from this study will be interesting to follow and also to see in context with UiT’s own surveys of grades.

The faculties’ monitoring of the use of the grading scale

As of 2011 the faculties were assigned the responsibility of monitoring the use of grades at the respective faculty and received, via the Report on educational attainments for 2009/2010, a specific instruction to develop procedures and procedure descriptions for this monitoring in the course of 2011. The faculties’ reporting to last year’s Report on educational attainments showed that none of the faculties had developed routines for monitoring the use of the grading scale, but that some of the faculties had started this work. The Faculty of Law, which has a monitoring system that is regarded as ideal, is exempt from this. Consequently, the faculties that had not completed this work received a reminder to develop procedures and procedure descriptions for efforts involving the monitoring of the use of grades for courses and programmes of study in the course of 2012.

The Faculty of Fine Arts refers to the fact that it predominantly uses external examiners, but does not report on any system or procedures for efforts involving the monitoring of the use of grades.

The Faculty of Science and Technology reports that it has still not developed procedure descriptions and procedures for efforts involving the monitoring of the use of grades, but that it will start on this work in the spring semester in 2013.

In early 2012 the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education adopted procedures for the monitoring of the use of grades, and these procedures have then been followed up each semester. The procedures involve the departments, programme boards and academic administration staff.

The Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics refers to the fact that it has particular focus on the use of grades for Master’s theses in economics/business management subjects. Master’s theses in

69 Moreover, the heads of department have had formal responsibility for arranging annual meetings on the use of grades since 2007.
biology are discussed in relation to the introduction of new subject-specific descriptions of grades for the MNT subjects (cf. separate section below). In addition, the faculty notes that it does not have good reporting and systematic monitoring of the use of grades, and that the programme boards and departments will continue their efforts on this work in the course of the spring semester in 2013.

The Faculty of Health Sciences has taken overviews of the use of grades at the faculty as a whole over the past four years. The faculty refers to the normal distribution of grades. For the record, the faculty is asked to be aware of the fact that both the grading scale from A-F and the scale of pass/fail are absolute scales, i.e. the grades are not set in relation to a given distribution (“normal distribution”). With respect to the monitoring of the use of grades at programme of study level, the faculty refers to overviews from the Department of Medical Biology and Department of Community Medicine. In addition, the faculty refers to the new subject-specific descriptions of grades for Master’s theses in the MNT subjects, noting that this is something it hopes will be an inspiration for more of the academic environments at the faculty. The section dealing with “National distribution of grades” earlier in this chapter mentions the major differences in the use of grades in the programmes in medicine in Norway and that UiT differs from the other higher education institutions with a much higher proportion of “fail”. The Faculty of Health Sciences does not mention this specifically, but notes that the four universities have appointed participants to a UHR-appointed committee that will in the spring semester in 2013 start work on developing separate subject-specific descriptions of grades in medicine.

This year’s reports show that the faculties have progressed further in their efforts to monitor the use of grades, but some of this work still remains to be done. Monitoring of the use of grades over time, identification of any discrepancies, and not least, analyses of this are an important part of the systematic quality assurance and quality development. The reported findings from the national surveys confirm this. UHR recommends that its surveys of grades are dealt with and closely linked with the institutions’ own efforts involving quality so that there is also focus on issues and matters relating to the use of grades at the individual institution. In the future the faculties will be closely involved in the surveys of grades in connection with the new national arrangements (outlined earlier in this chapter).

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**Implementation of new guidelines for grading of Master’s theses in mathematics, natural science and technology**

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, statistics based on figures for several years show that the grading of Master’s theses has not utilized the entire grading scale. This applies to all subject areas. A working party appointed by the National Faculty Meeting for Science and the National Council for Technological Education has developed new common descriptions of grades for Master’s theses in addition to guidelines and instructions for examiners and supervisors. These are tools that will contribute to a common understanding and practice of grading of Master’s theses in these subject areas – also across the higher education institutions.

The guidelines and descriptions of grades come into effect from the 2012/2013 academic year, and shall contribute to the entire grading scale being utilized. In addition, these documents clarify the relationship between the grading and the learning objectives as outlined in the national qualification framework for higher education. At UiT this applies to natural science subjects at the Faculty of Science and Technology and the Master’s degree programmes in Biology at the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics. The Faculty of Science and

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70 Archive ref. ePhorte 2012/2301
Technology has made the most progress with implementing this, and has also been given a special responsibility to follow-up the further implementation efforts at UiT.

The Ministry of Education and Research and the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR) have highlighted this as an example to be followed, and have encouraged other subject areas to develop corresponding descriptions of grades and guidelines for grading. The Department of Academic Affairs has also established a special website containing history, a description of and links to relevant documents. There is also a video presentation of high quality in which the chair of the national working party presents the arrangements during a visit to UiT in the spring semester in 2012. This presentation will be useful for all subject areas in their efforts with grading, and it is recommended that it be shown at faculties/departments/programme boards on occasions where grading is a theme.

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**National templates for diploma and Diploma Supplement**

Proposed national templates for diplomas and Diploma Supplement (DS) have been sent out for comment in the sector. The responses to this consultation process were in agreement and in the spring semester in 2012 the UHR Board gave its approval to a common template for Norwegian diplomas and DS, and encouraged the member institutions to use this template.

The basis for UHR’s recommendation of a common template is that Norwegian diplomas are to a steadily increasing extent being assessed by foreign higher education institutions, employers and recognition authorities. Further, it is important that the Norwegian diplomas reflect the candidate’s education and results in such a way that anyone assessing the candidate is able to form an accurate picture of the education, performances and competency. A common template contributes to quality assurance of the documents.

UHR’s Education Committee is cooperating with the National Student Database (FS) and NOKUT to implement the national template in FS. Introduction of grading tables, learning outcome descriptors and the establishment of a national diploma database is also of significance to the content and design of the diplomas. The national working party has been working to clarify details after the national template was sent to the higher education institutions. In light of these clarifications, in the spring semester in 2013 an updated short version will be prepared that will be sent to the higher education institutions. The date for complete implementation depends to a large extent on when the above-mentioned processes in FS are completed. UiT has started on the work in accordance to UHR’s recommendation.

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71 The website containing these documents may be found at: http://uit.no/ansatte/organisasjon/artikkel?p_document_id=324334&p_dimension_id=88203&p_menu=42374

72 The higher education institutions received the short version with the supplementary report from UHR on 16.5.2012. Archive ref. ePhorte 2011/2084

73 Archive ref. ePhorte 2011/2084
The Appeals Committee at UiT deals with the following type of cases:

- Appeals relating to individual decisions that affect students or applicants to programmes of study at UiT
- Complaints about procedural errors in connection with examinations, cf. Section 5-2 of the Act relating to universities and university colleges
- Cases pursuant to Sections 4-7 Annulment of examinations or tests, 4-8 Exclusion, 4-9 (5) Exclusion owing to criminal offences and 4-10 Exclusion following aptitude assessment of the Act relating to universities and university colleges

Cases for appeals

The Appeals Committee dealt a total of 64 cases for appeal in 2011, of which 54 were rejected, three were upheld in full or part and seven were dismissed. In 2012 the Appeals Committee dealt with 51 appeals, of which 46 were rejected, four were upheld in full or part and one was dismissed. Two of the appeals in 2012 were from PhD students. Both appeals dealt with decisions concerning termination of the programme of study. Neither of the appeals was upheld. All of the decisions reached by the Appeals Committee in cases for appeal were unanimous. The number of cases for appeal in 2011 and 2012 involve a relatively large increase in comparison with the number of cases for appeal in recent years. Prior to 2009, the number of cases for appeal was around 30 per year.

Annual fluctuations may be owing to coincidences and the figures may therefore not be particularly suitable as the basis for analysis. One natural explanation for the increase is that following the merger with Tromsø University College in 2009, the University of Tromsø as a whole now has far more students. However, the increase in the number of cases for appeal seems to be greater than the increase in the number of students, so questions may be raised about whether there are other reasons for this increase.

The Department of Academic Affairs studied the individual cases for appeal in 2011 and 2012 in more detail in order to see if there are any factors that stand out and that may provide an explanation for the increase in the number of cases for appeal.

Cases for appeals by faculty in 2011 and 2012:

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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Science and Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

74 A separate report on the activities of the Appeals Committee is prepared annually and considered by the University Board. Further information is contained in this report.

75 Cases for appeal dealt with by the Appeals Committee at the University of Tromsø
Of the faculties, the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education have the most cases for appeal. This is also natural as they have the most students. Seven of the cases at the Faculty of Health Sciences in 2011 were related to admission to the new Master’s degree programme in health science. In 2011 and 2012 there were a total of seven cases for appeal relating to admission to continuing education programmes in special education at the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education. With respect to the Department of Academic Affairs, most of the cases for appeal are related to admission on the basis of prior learning and work experience and exemptions from registration deadline.

Cases for appeals by type of case in 2011 and 2012:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of case</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to sit an examination</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special adaptations during examinations</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural errors in connection with examinations</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD programmes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2011, during the initial admission to the new Master’s degree programme in health science, there was some uncertainty among the applicants concerning the admission requirements. This resulted in several cases for appeal. In 2012, there were no similar cases. With respect to complaints of procedural errors, there were five cases in 2012 concerning the course MED-500 Medicine unit 3 and 4 at the Faculty of Health Sciences.

Most appeals were not upheld by the university’s Appeals Committee. In 2011, 95% of complaints were not upheld. The equivalent figure in 2012 was 92%. A low percentage of cases being upheld may be perceived as positive in the sense that it expresses that the decisions appealed were in fact correct, and that the Appeals Committee supports the administrative discretion that has been practiced. However, there is still reason for concern that many students appeal the university’s decisions in administrative cases. Firstly, the processing of cases of appeal is resource intensive. Secondly, this may indicate that the students who appeal do not have confidence that the decisions that are made are actually correct.

A review of the cases of appeal in 2011 and 2012 shows that many choose to appeal because they have the opportunity and right to do so. When the university makes a decision, the person concerned must be informed of their right to appeal. The review also shows that the reasons for the decision were omitted or formulated in a general manner, in several of the cases. This is done in order to improve the efficiency of public administration. In some instances, information is provided that more details on the grounds will be given on request. If all unsuccessful applicants had received brief, individual grounds for the decision, there is reason to believe that the number of cases of appeal would have been reduced. An individual reason for the decisions will reduce misunderstandings and strengthen the level of confidence in the assessment that has been implemented. Consequently, it will be better to use resources to state the grounds of rejection rather than on processing appeals.

Several of the cases of appeal are linked to discretionary assessments in the regulations. This applies to admission to the Master’s degree programmes of 120 credits and admission on the basis of prior learning and work experience, among other examples. In the case of prior learning and work
experience, the programmes of study stipulate minimum academic requirements, which positively state what is sufficient in order to gain admission. If one also informs applicants about what is insufficient in order to gain admission, this could reduce the number of applications that clearly do not fulfil the admission requirements and, in turn, reduce the number of cases of appeal.

In the review of the cases of appeal in last year’s Report on educational attainments, it was pointed out that there appeared to be a necessity to increase the administrative competence of the staff at UiT with respect to individual decisions. Formulation of good reasons for the decisions will reduce the use of resources devoted to processing appeals and also create more confidence among the students. A proposal was made for the Department of Human Resources and Organisation (POA) to initiate a specially adapted course/training programme in the course of 2012 as a measure to increase administrative competence of case officers and decision-makers in the education administration.

POA informs that a total of 22 measures in some way related to administrative procedures were implemented in 2011-2012 by the departments that comprise the university’s central administration. The plan for 2013 is to establish a comprehensive training programme at UiT to cover administrative procedures, which will be managed by POA. This training will ensure that the case officers receive basic knowledge about administrative procedures at UiT, and provide sufficient insight into the university’s various administrative areas. This will provide the basis for an efficient and high quality execution of duties at all levels of the organisation. It will be interesting to follow the development in cases of appeal once this training in administrative procedures has started.

Examination offences
In 2012, the university’s Appeals Committee dealt with five cases of suspicion of committing examination offences. Four of the cases related to plagiarism in home examinations and one in a supervised written examination. The Appeals Committee concluded that examination offences were committed in all these cases. In four of the case, the Appeals Committee concluded that the students had acted intentionally and in the other case that the student had acted with gross negligence. In three of the cases the students were suspended from the University of Tromsø for two semesters, in one case the examination was annulled and in the other case the students received a warning.

Cases for appeal dealt with by the university’s Appeals Committee that relate to suspicion of committing examination offences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of cases</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplinary reaction</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The problem involving plagiarism during home examinations has been documented in the university’s Report on educational attainments in recent years, and all the faculties have previously reported that they have implemented specific measures. In relation to the number of students who sit examinations there are relatively few cases of examination offences at the university and the number of cases has also stabilized in recent years.

Plagiarism is a complex theme. The problem of plagiarism may not be solved by a few simple measures alone. It is important to view this as an educational and ethical challenge, not a legal one. Academic writing must be shown as a natural part of all programmes of study at the university. Moreover, all lecturers regard it as appropriate to provide academic supervision and feedback regarding the students’

76 Cases of appeals dealt with by the Appeals Committee at the University of Tromsø
evaluation of sources and referencing techniques throughout the course of study. The students must in turn be made aware early on in their studies that the proper evaluation of sources/source referencing is one of the learning outcomes of the programme of study and one of the assessment criteria for examinations. What constitutes good evaluation of sources and acceptable referencing technique in the subject area in question is something that requires maturity, and it is natural that the requirements and the depth increase gradually during a programme of study. The most highly regarded method for learning this is to write in a process involving feedback from, and discussions with, fellow students and the lecturers.

The University Library of Tromsø and the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (RESULT) are developing a web-based teacher training course in plagiarism prevention, which will be a resource for educators at UiT who wish to work on the prevention of plagiarism in student works. The objective of this course is to contribute to increased focus on methods that can prevent students turning to plagiarism or unconsciously ending up by committing plagiarism.

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Summary

There have only been minor changes in the total distribution of grades for all higher education institutions and academic levels throughout the entire period 2004-2011. The distribution of grades for Master’s theses still stands out significantly from other courses. New descriptions of grades and guidelines designed to utilize the entire grading scale and to provide a common understanding and practice of grading for Master’s theses have been implemented in natural science and technology subjects. The Ministry and UHR have highlighted this as an example to be followed in all subject areas. UiT has developed a website as a resource for faculties/departments/programme boards.

The proportion of “fail” has decreased by over 7% during the period 2004-2011. There are major differences between programmes of study and higher education institutions in the use of the grading scale pass/fail and there appears to be a need for national coordination. Analyses of the failure rate between the universities also show some major differences, and UiT has a high failure rate. Monitoring and analysis of grading, including findings from national surveys, are an important part of the efforts involving quality assurance and quality development. The faculties that still do not have this in place must prioritize this.

The number of cases for appeal in 2011 and 2012 represents a relatively large increase in the years since 2009. It is important to clarify whether there are other reasons for these increases than coincidences or an increase in the number of students. The majority of the appeals were not upheld by the university’s Appeals Committee. This may express that the decisions appealed were in fact correct, and that the Appeals Committee supports the administrative discretion that has been practiced. However, there is still reason for concern that many students appeal the university’s decisions, and it may appear to be necessary and resource-saving to increase the administrative competence of the staff at UiT with respect to individual decisions. Training in administrative procedures was called for in last year’s Report on educational attainments. It is pleasing that in 2013 the Department of Human Resources and Organisation is planning to establish a comprehensive training programme to ensure that the case officers receive basic knowledge about administrative procedures at UiT. This will provide sufficient insight into the university’s various administrative areas as the basis for an efficient and high quality execution of duties at all levels.
CHAPTER 7
FLEXIBLE EDUCATION

The University of Tromsø shall be a national leader and innovator in decentralized and web-based education, so that larger sections of the region’s population may be reached with relevant educational provisions.

From the Strategic Document for University of Tromsø 2009-2013

An important part of UiT’s role in society is to facilitate lifelong learning. A greater share of the population shall have access to relevant educational provisions, regardless of age, place of residence and circumstances of life. By exploiting the potential of today’s technology, the educational provisions may be made available on a large scale.

UiT emphasizes that increasing the flexibility of the programmes of study shall give the population greater access to education, contribute to recruiting more students, create opportunities for the reuse of learning resources, technology-based learning by doing, an increased repertoire of teaching methods and adaptation of the educational provisions to the societal and professional fields.

In order to achieve the goal of being a national leader and innovator in decentralized and web-based education, one of UiT’s main priority areas is the Fleksibel utdanning (Flexible education) project.

The “Flexible education” project

The Flexible education project began in 2011 and is designed to promote the work in this area by allocating NOK 3 million annually for four years to academic environments that develop ICT-supported educational provisions. The steering committee for the project is chaired by the Vice-Rector for Education and secretariat function is attended to by the newly established Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (RESULT).

The preliminary work was to formulate the objectives and strategies for the project. The following definition of flexible education is used as a basis:

“Flexible education is a collective term that covers different perspectives and grounds. In this context, the term is given the meaning of adapted educational provisions that may be used by students on campus as well as students outside the institution. Flexible educational provisions make it possible to learn regardless of time and place, and in different ways. The use of new technology (ICT) is an important tool to attain such independence. Technology can also help to developing and adopting new teaching and learning methods. Pedagogical reflection about learning activities is a prerequisite for being able to adapt and utilize the technology in the best possible manner.”
The steering committee submitted its progress report for the project in February 2013 some of the main points from this report are outlined later in this chapter77. Digital examination is an important part of flexible studies and the steering committee for Flexible education has appointed a work group to examine this. The status of the work involving digital examinations at UiT is presented below.

Project status
The project has ambitious goals and, among other things, aims to make half of the programmes of study at Bachelor’s and Master’s level flexible. According to the steering committee, UiT is well on its way to attaining this goal. A total of 40 projects have received financial support through grants in the period 2011-2013. More than 200 staff and just over 2000 students are involved through programmes of study that receive financial support from the project.

Most projects are still ongoing and consequently it is too early to make a final and overall assessment of the project’s results. However, the experiences to date indicate that the project has a positive impact on the development of flexible educational provisions at UiT. Teaching and learning methods are being discussed, new educational models are being created and many digital teaching materials are being developed. All projects receiving financial support are followed up by the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology and the Department of Information Technology. The degree of follow-up and supervision varies from project to project and mainly covers areas such as project supervision, production and technical support, and training and educational guidance.

The projects that receive funding have different approaches to flexible education. They have developed and tested various measures, which in the report are divided into the following categories:

- educational provisions developed as purely web-based courses/studies
- partially web-based provisions with sessions locally or on campus
- traditional campus-based provisions that to an increasing extent supplement the teaching with digital teaching resources
- different mixed models with a combination of campus-based teaching (lectures and/or seminar groups) supplemented by different digital teaching materials, and where students may choose between a campus or web-based variant

This report shows that there is a clear trend that increasingly more campus-based studies wish to be supplemented by digital teaching materials and web-based student activities. Such a development contributes to gradually reducing the distinction between campus-based studies and various flexible study models.

Many of the projects that have been established or are under development contain innovative elements. One example is the course HEL- FEL (HEL-0700) at the Faculty of Health Sciences, which is a response to the challenges the cooperation reform for the health service creates for the programmes of study. The course aims to make students aware that health work is patient-focussed team work and that some of the knowledge gained in the health sciences is common and fundamental to all of them. The students will also experience flexible conditions affecting study and arrangements that stimulate active learning and critical thinking. Another example is the experience-based Master’s degree programme in Business Administration at the Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics, which is a programme of study that is largely web-based. This programme of study will be as accessible as possible to students both on and off campus. It has adopted a range of technologies and has received

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77The report may be downloaded here: http://uit.no/Content/333562/FLEX%20rapport%20final.pdf.
funding through *Flexible education* to develop an application that may be used on tablets and smartphones.

Fronter, WebTV, video conferencing and Adobe Connect are key tools for the production of digital teaching resources at UiT. In addition, there are a number of other tools that supplement and complement these. The technology is constantly evolving and changing, which creates many challenges with respect to motivation, training and support, among other things, for the staff involved. However, the production capacity is currently the greatest challenge regarding technology. With an ever increasing number of projects, the demand for film production is also increasing. In the future, there will probably be a need for a greater degree of standardisation and automation of technological solutions in order to be able to meet the demand.

In most of the projects, major emphasis is also placed on pedagogical and didactic adaptation of the courses with the use of ICT. In this context, it is important to understand how ICT may be adapted to meet the content and education-related challenges of the individual subjects. Solutions that function well in one subject cannot necessarily be copied to other subjects as the nature and scientific approach may be extremely different.

The administrative work related to flexible education is often overshadowed by scientific, technological and educational aspects. However, experience shows that administrative staff plays an important role in this work and the importance of this is emphasized in the criteria for the allocation of funds from the project. The report from the steering committee refers to the implementation of several measures to raise the profile of the administrative work. One example is the project "*Utvikling av fleksible førstesemesterstudium*" (Development of flexible first semester course) at the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education that focuses on an overall organisation whereby staff from various academic groups collaborate on projects. Further, the faculty has appointed an administrative coordinator for flexible education.

**Experiences**

Although only a small number of projects have so far been completed, the steering committee refers to some experiences that are of significance for future work.

The committee points out that the specific work involves tasks from adaptation of the programme of study to the introduction of new work and assessment forms. The main focus has been on the production of web-based teaching resources, but the projects have also dealt with other issues and the report points out that the fields of education, technology, subject and administration are closely related.

The projects are followed up to varying degrees by the faculty and department management with respect to the facilitation of the work for the staff so that the project may be implemented in a good manner. The issue of temporary “lease” of the staff members’ services and the use of substitutes is closely linked to this challenge. Some projects use their financial support to lease the time equivalent to the staff members’ own teaching duties, which is necessary to make progress with the project. The problem related to finding substitutes is a challenge for many departments. Planning and budgeting of future activities are also identified as challenges. Some projects are in practice far more resource-draining and labour-intensive than was initially imagined.

Rooting and ownership in the academic environments is important in order to succeed with the projects in *Flexible education*. The experiences show that it is important to involve several specialists in
both the development and implementation of the projects to make them as robust as possible. Several faculties are considering various solutions to achieve an overall integration of flexible studies. The Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education has commenced efforts to make flexible education part of the faculty’s normal activity. The Faculty of Health Sciences has also implemented a comprehensive investment in flexible education and no fewer than nine of the 25 applications for project funding in 2013 were from the Faculty of Health Sciences.

Despite the fact that the exchange of knowledge is emphasized in the project’s funding allocation criteria and several academic environments are showing great willingness to share and cooperate, there are so far few tangible examples of this occurring in practice. Consequently, the project will work more to create the opportunity and motivation for the sharing of experiences between the different projects.

Continuation of the project
The steering committee has highlighted the positive impact the project has had for the development of flexible studies at UiT and recommends that the project Flexible education be continued for a further four-year period from 2015. The main focus should then be to see how web-based courses can contribute to improving the quality of education and learning outcomes by focusing on the connection between learning outcomes, teaching and learning methods and form of examination. The committee also points out that problems relating to scaling and automation raise a number of interesting issues that go far beyond the technological aspects.

The project has established a number of effect and performance measures to demonstrate how UiT as an institution shall succeed with the main objective of becoming a national leader. The committee points out that it may create challenges to use these measures as a basis for reporting. Consequently, work should continue on finding the best way for UiT’s scope of flexible studies to be reported. Given that to a large extent it is ordinary campus-based studies that are being made flexible, this initiative is not being highlighted enough in the university’s official reporting to, for instance, DBH.

The University Board considered the steering committee’s progress report and recommendation of continuation of the project in item S 25-13 Underveisrapport og videreføring av prosjektet “Fleksibel utdanning” (Progress report and continuation of the “Flexible Education” project) in April 2013. It is worth pointing out that UiT will have new management and a new board from autumn 2013. The current strategic period is also in its final year and, as a result of the merger process with Finnmark University College, the budget allocation for 2014 was postponed to the board meeting in October 2013. A continuation of the Flexible education project must be seen in connection with the university’s upcoming strategy process. It was, therefore, decided to appoint a work group to prepare for the development of a strategy for flexible education. The group’s work was to be completed by 1 September 2013. Further, an item concerning the continuation of the Flexible education project will be presented in the university’s budget in October 2013.

Digital examination

The holding of digital examinations is an area that is gaining increasingly greater focus. There are several activities and initiatives at Norwegian universities and university colleges, but these efforts are fragmented and poorly coordinated even though the requirements are to a high degree concurrent. The sector has also been somewhat expectant because many assess that agreeing on a national solution for full digitalisation of examination implementation would be the most appropriate step.
National coordination is also important for the progress of this work. UiT is participating in a national work group on digital examination, which was established under the auspices of UNINETT’s work with eCampus\(^78\). The work group aims to make recommendations of technical solutions for digital written examinations on the student’s own computer. Information will be obtained through various pilot projects. Further, a national team of experts on digital assessment and examination has been established under the auspices of Norway Opening Universities (NOU) and UHR. This team of experts will arrange for cooperation between UNINETT, eCampus, DBH, FS and other partner institutions. Organisational, technological, educational and legal aspects will be assessed. UiT is following this work closely.

Through last year’s Report on educational attainments, the faculties received the task of adopting (during 2012) a greater diversity of forms of examination - carefully adapted to the programme of study’s learning activities and learning outcomes. Experiments with digital forms of examination should also be assessed, preferably through the university’s Flexible Education project\(^79\) in order to secure the transfer of competence, the sharing of experiences and requirements for infrastructure.

All the faculties report that they are utilizing digital forms of examinations via Fronter, either for submission of coursework requirements or for home examinations. The Faculty of Fine Arts utilizes digital examinations for several courses, and also conducts oral examinations using video conferencing. Since the spring semester in 2011, the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education has implemented a total of 10 digital written examinations without examination support material in addition to digital examinations with all examination support material available. The Faculty of Health Sciences reports that for several years the Department of Community Medicine has held supervised written examinations using computers, and the faculty wishes to expand the use of digital examination in the future. The Faculty of Law reports good experiences after several years of implementing home examinations, written coursework requirements and assignments digitally. The faculty has also recently completed a pilot supervised written examination on the university’s computers during which the students did not have access to other examination support material than in a traditional supervised written examination implemented with pen and paper. The pilot went extremely well, and the faculty wishes for supervised written examinations to be implemented digitally in the future. The Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics has also implemented a digital supervised written examination. The Faculty of Science and Technology is the only faculty that did not report on the use of digital forms of examination.

Of the Norwegian higher education institutions, UiT, the University of Agder (UIA), the University of Oslo (UiO) and BI Norwegian Business have made the most progress in their efforts to investigate and test various solutions for digital examination. As part of UiT’s Flexible education project, a work group was appointed in the spring semester in 2012 to focus on digital examination implementation at UiT. The work group has to date prepared two reports: Digital eksamen ved Universitetet i Tromsø - forslag til kortsiktige tiltak\(^80\) (Digital examination at the University of Tromsø – proposals for short-term

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\(^78\)UNINETT is owned by the Ministry of Education and Research and delivers internet and network services to universities and university colleges, as well as dealing with other national ICT tasks. Refer to: https://www.uninett.no/ecampus

\(^79\) Refer to the website: http://uit.no/publikum/prosjekter/prosjekt?p_document_id=245068

\(^80\) Refer to the report: http://uit.no/Content/313969/Digital%20eksamen%20ved%20UIT%20-forslag%20til%20kort%20tiltak%20-%20SB%20-%20forslag%20til%20kortsiktige%20tiltak%5B1%5D.pdf
measures) and Digital eksamen som pedagogisk, administrativ og teknisk prosess\(^*1\) (Digital examination as an educational, administrative and technical process).

These reports provide an overview of different variants of digital forms of examination, technical solutions, possibilities, estimated costs, quality assurance, challenges, examples and recommendations, and proposals for both short-term measures and long-term objectives. In order to provide support for the faculties, the work group has also prepared a website containing practical information about the implementation of digital examinations in Fronter.

These reports also discuss the close connection between the implementation of digital examinations and a larger debate about changing the examination culture and investing in new and varied forms of examination that are in accordance with the stipulated learning outcomes. The latter is an academic-educational change project that also involves the need to stimulate the development of new competence among the academic staff. In this context it is a paradox that, 10 years after the introduction of the Quality Reform, the vast majority of supervised written examinations at UiT are still implemented with pen and paper. The work group is clear that academic-educational considerations must provide the framework for the chosen solution for the form of examination, including digital examination, not administrative and technical factors. It is natural that the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (RESULT) must be closely associated with this work.

A common feature of the supervised written examinations that are currently implemented digitally is that few candidates sit these examinations. The greatest challenge involved in offering computer-based supervised written examinations on a larger scale is suitable premises and infrastructure. Experience to date shows that the functionality of the current Fronter\(^*2\) is neither suitable nor sufficiently stable. In order for UiT to be able to scale up the number of digital supervised written examinations, there is a need for a new technical solution that is well integrated with FS, and which deals with the entire examination process digitally. A separate technical/administrative group led by Department of Information Technology will, in the course of the spring semester in 2013, implement a pilot project to test a system called WISEflow\(^*3\). No higher education institutions in Norway currently have good large-scale solutions, and the national team of experts on digital examination and UNINETT/eCampus have also decided to test and investigate WISEflow more closely.

Over the past year UiT has made significant progress in its efforts involving digital examination implementation. The conclusion of the work group to date is that there is a need for continued prioritisation, educational innovation and investment in buildings and infrastructure in order to get closer to realizing the ambitions of a cost-effective and fully digitalised system that handles the examination process from start to finish.

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**Summary**

The Flexible education project has to date provided financial support to 40 projects. Of the 25 projects that received funding in 2011 and 2012, the majority are on track in relation to the project plan. More than 2000 students are involved in studies that receive financial support through the project, which accounts for over 20% of the total student population at UiT. This is a major deviation from the figures

\(^*1\) Refer to the report: [http://uit.no/Content/326074/Digital%20eksamen%20ved%20UIT%20%20Rapport%20II.pdf](http://uit.no/Content/326074/Digital%20eksamen%20ved%20UIT%20%20Rapport%20II.pdf)


\(^*3\) For more information on WISEflow, visit: [http://www.uniwise.dk/site/index.php/products/wiseflow/about-wiseflow](http://www.uniwise.dk/site/index.php/products/wiseflow/about-wiseflow)
presented in the *Tilstandsrapport for høyere utdanning 2013* (Report on the status of higher education 2013) from the Ministry of Education and Research, in which the corresponding figure for UiT is less than 5 percent. This shows that the extent of UiT’s efforts is not sufficiently visible in the official reporting. The project has had a positive impact on the development of flexible education at UiT, but problems relating to reporting and measurement of the activity to date make it difficult to assess UiT’s position in relation to the objective of being a national leader and innovator.

The university’s efforts involving digital examination has progressed significantly over the past year. Short-term measures and long-term objectives have been set for the institution as a whole. Fruitful collaboration has been established between appropriate stakeholders at several levels, and the faculties have gained new and valuable knowledge and experiences that are of importance for future work. However, the scope of digital examination implementation is still modest compared to the overall examination portfolio. Academic-educational considerations must provide the framework for the chosen solution for the (digital) examination implementation. The Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (RESULT) will have a special role in this respect. Educational innovation, buildings and infrastructure, as well as a technical solution that can handle the entire examination process digitally, have been identified as key prerequisites for increasing the volume of digital examinations at UiT. Ongoing testing of new technical solutions is exciting, but at the same time UiT must continue to follow this work closely along with the coordination being implemented at the national level.

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*Tilstand for høyere utdanning 2013* (Report on the status of higher education 2013), Ministry of Education and Research
CHAPTER 8
DEVELOPMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROVISIONS

The University of Tromsø shall educate candidates that are attractive on the national and international labour market. The development of relevant programmes of study shall occur through good interaction with societal and professional fields.

From the Strategic Document for University of Tromsø 2009-2013

UiT shall develop the educational provisions in line with the needs of society and the university’s overarching profile and strategy. For several years the management signals have been that UiT’s programme portfolio is too large in relation to demand and recruitment base. Consequently, during the current strategic period, a comprehensive review of the programme portfolio has been undertaken. This work is outlined in item S 19-11 Gjennomgang av studieprogramporteføljen ved Universitetet i Tromsø og forslag til studieprogramportefølje for studieåret 2012/2013 (Review of programme portfolio at the University of Tromsø and the proposed programme portfolio for the 2012/2013 academic year) and was discussed in the previous Report on educational attainments. The work carried out by the faculties was varied and as a whole the result did not constitute a major effect on the scope of the total programme portfolio at the university, which is still large. Moreover, the number of educational provisions will increase further from the autumn semester in 2013 as a result of the forthcoming merger with Finnmark University College.

The review of the programme portfolio has been followed up by several board items in which various issues related to the further development of the educational provisions were discussed. One challenge pointed out in this context is that little is indicated in the strategic plan for 2009-2013 about which subject areas were to be prioritized. Another challenge raised is that proposals for new educational provisions are often detached from the rest of the university’s budgetary and planning processes, which is especially challenging when developing new research and educational fields and other studies that require financial allocations over and above the university’s existing budget. Consequently, the University Board has decided that investments in new education fields and the affiliated reach environment shall be incorporated in the long-term budget and that the priorities shall be discussed in the Råd for samarbeid med arbeidslivet (Council for Cooperation with Professional Fields). The priorities have so far not been finally decided and these should be included in the work on the new strategic plan, which shall be prepared in the autumn semester in 2013.

85 Board item S 32-11 Utvikling av studieprogram porteføljen ved Universitetet i Tromsø (Development of the programme of study portfolio at the University of Tromsø) and Board item S 14-12 Oversikt over nye planlagte utdanningsfelt og tilhørende forskningsmiljø ved Universitetet i Tromsø (Overview of new planned education fields and affiliated research environments at the University of Tromsø)
The scope of the educational provision

The table below provides an overview of the development in the number of programmes of study at UiT from the autumn semester in 2009 to the autumn semester in 2013. The number of PhD programmes has not been included in this overview in previous Reports on educational attainments. Consequently, the total number of programmes of study has been adjusted for the entire period.

Table 1: Development of the programme portfolio

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Autumn 2009</th>
<th>Autumn 2010</th>
<th>Autumn 2011</th>
<th>Autumn 2012</th>
<th>Autumn 2013</th>
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</thead>
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<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree programmes and</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year general teacher educations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree programmes (1.5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and 2 years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Master’s (5 years)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmes of professional study</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>culminating in degree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD programmes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: FS and DBH

Several one-year and Master’s degree programmes have been established during this period, while there has been a reduction in the number of Bachelor’s degree programmes. Following the merger between UiT and Tromsø University College, the number of PhD programmes reduced from 10 to six. This may be attributed to the merger of the former faculties and a general idea about better management of the PhD education by reducing the number of programmes. Since 2010 there has been one PhD programme per faculty at UiT, with the exception of the Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics, which has two PhD programmes. The Faculty of Fine Arts does not have its own PhD programme.

The figures above include programmes of study that will be discontinued, but which still have students with the right to complete the programme of study they have begun. This means that it will take some time before any discontinuations are reflected in the university’s total portfolio, while newly established programmes of study are counted from the first year of admission.

The number of programmes of study in the National Student Database (FS) and Database for statistics on higher education (DBH) may differ from the actual number of programmes of study for technical or administrative reasons. For instance, it may be necessary to register both a full-time and part-time version of the same programme of study in the system, in order to administrate the students in an appropriate manner. The same may apply for programmes of study offered at various campuses. Therefore, the overview of the number of programmes of study at the various levels, as shown in the

86The table only contains an overview of programmes of study that are 100 % internally financed via the university’s basic allocation. In addition, the university has a number of continuing education provisions and externally financed educational provisions of various scopes.

87Educational provisions starting in the autumn semester in 2013 were approved by the University Board in December 2012.
Table above, will differ from the actual number of programmes of study so that UiT appears to have a slightly larger programme portfolio than is actually the case. However, this applies only to a limited number of educational provisions, and consequently the figures shown above provide a good picture of both the scope and development.

Table 2 shows the number of active courses at UiT the past three academic years. These figures do not include continuing education courses.

### Table 2: The development of the course portfolio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s and Master’s degree level</td>
<td>2099</td>
<td>2149</td>
<td>2093</td>
<td>2186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD level</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>637</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FS

This table shows that there is an annual variation in the number of courses at Bachelor’s and Master’s degree level. This variation is closely connected with changes in the programme of study that lead to the establishment of new courses, while it takes some time before the old courses are phased out.

The number of courses at PhD level has increased steadily in recent years. UiT is obliged to provide the PhD students an adequate provision of courses at PhD level in order to meet the requirements stipulated in the PhD Regulations. All the PhD students must have compulsory training in the philosophy of science and ethics, but the scope of this training is not stipulated. The faculties have established various compulsory courses to be included in the instruction component, which includes training in philosophy of science, ethics and communication. These new compulsory and optional PhD courses provide students with a greater choice of courses that may be included in their instruction component. In addition, courses providing transferable skills have been established.

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**Continuing and further education**

Continuing education does not result in formal qualifications in the form of credits and it is, therefore, difficult to extract data that indicates the scope and content of UiT’s continuing education provision. The Ministry of Education and Research also points out the uncertainty around the institution’s reporting of continuing education and sheds no light either on this field in its status report for 2013.

Further education results in formal qualifications in the form of credits, and thus has a better basis for reporting than is the case for continuing education.

The majority of further education provisions at UiT are affiliated with Faculty of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education. This may be attributed to that fact that...

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88The figures are obtained from FS 220.001 Course table and are based on the first and last period of teaching in the courses. Decisions to discontinue a course often occur some time after the last instruction is actually held. Consequently, a course may be discontinued in the National Student Database retrospectively, i.e. that the period for the final instruction is registered in retrospect. Courses that are registered as discontinued may also be reinstated. Consequently, the details in the course table will not be static data.

89Tilstand for høyere utdanning (Report on the status of higher education), Ministry of Education and Research
teachers and health care professions are the target groups for a large percentage of UiT’s further education provisions. Most of these further education provisions are generally financed by UiT.

Other continuing education provisions at UiT are developed on request from professional fields in Northern Norway. These educational provisions are developed based on the client’s competence requirements and are normally financed with external funds. During the current strategic period, UiT has the aim of increasing the recruitment of external continuing education students. The table below shows the development in the number of externally financed students at UiT in the period 2010-2012.

Table 3: The number of externally financed students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Externally financed students</td>
<td>569.8</td>
<td>231.4</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, the number of externally financed students has decreased significantly during the period. However, there was still an increase from 2011 to 2012. This is in accordance with the nationwide development. According to the Ministry of Education and Research’s status report for 2013, there has been a decrease in the proportion of externally financed students nationwide during the period, followed by an increase from 2011-2012. Some of the decrease in the number of externally financed students at UiT in this period may be attributed to several externally financed experience-based Master’s degree programmes not admitting new students, being phased out or switching to being internally financed by UiT.

UiT is also offering an increasing number of fully or partially web-based educational provisions and ordinary educational provisions are offered decentralized in regions with competence requirements and a sufficient recruitment base in the relevant field of education. The various categories are overlapping increasingly more, and this development makes it difficult to distinguish traditional continuing education from other flexible forms of education. When ordinary educational provisions become more flexible, they also become more accessible as continuing education, e.g. for people who are employed and who have a wish or requirement to acquire new competence of relevance to their job. Increasing the flexibility of education is one of UiT’s main priority areas and is outlined in more detail in Chapter 7. However, UiT has no intention of toning down its activities in continuing and further education. The development shows that it is first and foremost ordinary educational provisions that are being made more flexible and accessible, while further education is still offered with traditional teaching methods and forms of examination. In order to increase the recruitment, it is essential that UiT succeeds in making all education more flexible, also traditional continuing and further education.

The university’s Centre for Continuing and Further Education (U-vett) has for many years played a key role in the development of continuing and further educational provisions at UiT. In recent years, U-vett has also played a central role in UiT’s efforts involving flexible education. The centre is well known throughout the region and has developed a large network. On 1 January 2013 U-vett was restructured. Parts of the centre now form part of the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (RESULT) at the University Library of Tromso. U-vett’s function as a point of contact with the outside world has been moved to the newly established Senter for karriere og arbeidsliv (Centre for Careers and Employment), which is a section of the Department of Communications and Public Relations. The

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90Figures from DBH. Some educational provisions are partly financed with external funds. The basis for counting the number of externally financed students is the funding percentage stipulated for the educational provision. Consequently, figures may include decimals.
centre will take care of the role U-vett had as a liaison and coordinator between UiT and societal and professional fields, while the faculties have the strategic, organisational and academic responsibility for continuing and further education provisions they offer.

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**The 2012 Candidate survey**

One of UiT’s objectives is to offer vocationally relevant programmes of study that create attractive candidates for employment\(^{91}\). In order to follow up this ambition, a candidate survey was implemented at UiT in 2011-2012 (the 2012 survey) as a follow-up of the candidate survey at UiT in 2009-2010 (the 2010 survey)\(^{92}\). By implementing regular candidate surveys, the university receives systematic feedback from former students about their attachment to working life, their assessment of the programme of study they completed at UiT and the programme’s relevance to working life. This knowledge is important as an indication of the degree to which the objectives in the university’s strategies are fulfilled. Further, this knowledge will be able to be used as a basis for strategies and measures for the development of educational provisions, strengthening of the candidate’s position in the labour market and the recruitment of new students etc.

The 2012 candidate survey focuses on three main areas: (1) current work situation, (2) the transition from study and work, and (3) the relevance of the programme of study. Some of the main findings are discussed below.

**Major findings**

The survey shows that the employment rate among the UiT candidates remains high. At the time of the survey 86% of the candidates were employed, which is an increase of 3% from the 2010 survey. The majority of candidates remain in the region after graduating. Overall, 69% are employed in Northern Norway and more than 50% work in Troms County. The majority of the candidates who were employed gained employment within just four months of completing the programme of study, and only 6% of the candidates used more than six months to gain employment. This suggests that the labour market for newly educated UiT candidates is good, and that for most people the transition to working life is a short phase.

More than 50% of the candidates started searching for a job while they were studying, others continued in a position they had already, while some were headhunted. No less than 68% of the candidates worked while studying, but most of these candidates believe that the part-time work did not lead to an extension of the length of study.

Good learning and development opportunities, a strong academic environment, a stable and secure job and a high degree of freedom to influence their own duties are important characteristics of a job, according to the candidates questioned. An extremely high number stated that they had one or more forms of study-related contact with the working life during their course of study through compulsory practice placements, subject-related summer work or part-time work, cooperation with enterprises as part of their thesis or other assignments or voluntary work experience (internship/trainee). In other words, the degree of the contact and cooperation with working life through their studies is extensive.

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\(^{91}\) Strategic document for the University of Tromsø 2009-2013  
\(^{92}\) The full survey is contained in the document Kandidatundersøkelsen 2012 for Universitetet i Tromsø (The 2012 Candidate Survey for the University of Tromsø), which is published on the university’s website: http://uit.no/Content/307339/Kandidatunders\%C3\%B8kelsen2012_ferdig.pdf
and 38% of the candidates stated that this had an impact on them getting their first job. The proportion of candidates that have not had any form of study-related contact with the professional fields is low.

The majority of the candidates state that their job expectations have been met in their first job after completion of their studies and 90% responded that they have landed a relevant job in terms of the programme of study they have taken. This is a pronounced increase from the previous survey in which the equivalent figure was 82%. Part of the explanation for this increase may be that UiT now has a higher proportion of students on programmes of professional study or vocation oriented training than was the case before the merger with Tromsø University College.

The candidates also believe that career counselling, closer cooperation with the working life and more and better supervised professional training are measures that can contribute to improving and strengthening the transition from study to work. Emphasis is also attached to a better connection between practice and theory.

On the whole, the results of the candidate survey show that UiT educates candidates that are satisfied with both their programmes of study and their overall assessment of UiT.

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**Cooperation with societal and professional fields**

The designing of educational provisions that are attractive to both students and the labour market shall occur through good interaction with societal and professional fields. All faculties have focus on the relevance of the provisions to society and on contact with the relevant business and industry. This is stated as a goal in the faculties' strategic documents, and is increasingly being considered when making changes to existing educational provisions and in the development of new ones.

A number of measures to strengthen coordination with societal and professional fields have been implemented at various levels in the organisation at UiT. This covers everything from agreements for supervised professional training and other employment-related activities at the programme of study level to the activities and the establishments at the institutional level. Some established measures that are of importance for UiT’s public relations are presented below.

**Establishment of Senter for karriere og arbeidsliv (Centre for Careers and Employment)**

As of 1 January 2013 UiT has restructured the support functions for coordination with the community through the establishment of the *Senter for karriere og arbeidsliv*\(^{93}\) (Centre for Careers and Employment). The centre becomes a new section of the *Department of Communications and Public Relations*, and has the following mandate:

- be the university’s liaison between societal and professional fields and the academic environments
- be the university’s portal towards the region’s business community, municipal councils, county councils, organisations and enterprises
- internal and external information concerning cooperation with the working life

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\(^{93}\) Resolved by the University Board in item S 5-12 *Organisering av sentrene under styret* (Organisation of the centres under the board)
support the institutional and faculty management in external cooperation processes
secretarial functions for the Råd for samarbeid med arbeidslivet (Council for Cooperation with Professional Fields)

The university’s interaction with business and industry is complex and occurs along many dimensions and at many levels of the university organisation. A challenge in this context has been the partially overlapping responsibilities and roles in the university’s external work, with functions delegated to the Office of the Rector and University Director, U-vett, Department of Communications and Public Relations and the faculties. In recent years, the focus of systematic public relations has increased, including through the work of the Råd for samarbeid med arbeidslivet (Council for Cooperation with Professional Fields). Increased attention around the university’s social role and cooperation with societal and professional fields has highlighted the need to strengthen the internal organisation of this field.

The objective of establishing the Senter for karriere og arbeidsliv (Centre for Careers and Employment) is to develop UiT’s relationships with external partners through overall coordination, drawing new partners to UiT and providing students, academic environments and external actors good follow up and support in collaborative relationships. The centre shall be a clear gateway to the university for participants in societal and professional fields.

Based on the positions from the former U-vett, former Careers Centre, switchboard and Office of the Rector and University Director, in the course of the year the centre will have a staffing level of 14 positions. The centre will be located in the Upper Pavilion (Øvre lysthus), which is central for students, staff and visitors alike.

Internships
The internship scheme provides voluntary practice placements for students from UiT and enables them to work in the public or private sector for a limited period. An internship enables the students to combine practical work experience with testing out professional competence, and the enterprises that offer internships are given the opportunity to seek solutions for relevant business-related issues, and in doing so acquire knowledge about students’ competence.

There has been a significant growth in the number of students and enterprises that have participated in the internship scheme during the 2011-2012 academic year. In the course of the period, 44 students have had internships at a total of 16 enterprises.

For the students, the internship scheme is a cooperation initiative with business and industry that will contribute to competence development, networking and highlighting of job opportunities that require higher education. This scheme is steadily becoming better known and more popular among the students, which is reflected in the number of applicants for the various positions. The enterprises that are part of the scheme have continuously given good reviews. Examples of positive feedback include the professional benefit, the impulse of having students look at the enterprise with fresh eyes, and closer cooperation between the university and business and industry.

The enterprises participating in the scheme include the Arctic Council, Dyrøyseminaret, the United Nations Association of Norway, Google, Grønn hverdag, HK reklame, If Insurance, Kongsberg Satellite Services, The Science Centre of Northern Norway, the Norwegian Seafood Council, Norinnova Technology Transfer, Troms Chamber of Commerce and OliVita.
The internship scheme is a contribution project that is mainly financed with RDA funds. This finance expires in 2013. After an external evaluation of the project is completed, a decision will be made concerning how the internship scheme will be continued at UiT after the project period.

Arbeidslivsdagen (Careers Day)

Careers Day is the university's official meeting place for students and employers. The event prepares for cooperation and contact through a trade fair with stands, business presentations and lectures. In 2012 Careers Day was held for the seventh year in succession, and the event is now recognized as the region’s largest recruitment event. In 2012 more than 80 enterprises from the public and private sectors were represented and an estimated 1500 students attended the event. As usual there were also a series on themes such as recruitment and entrepreneurial activity. A new feature this year was the breakfast seminar “What skills does the working life require? Would Einstein have got a job today?” in cooperation with Tromsø Doctoral Students.

A variety of industries and enterprises are represented at the event, and many North Norwegian fields of competence participate year after year. The interest in this type of arena is increasing and increasingly more enterprises are contacting UiT to participate in the event. Consequently, efforts are underway to assess how Careers Day may be developed further in the future, including with respect to the timeframe, exhibition area and development of the content.

Næringslivsdagen (Business and Industry Day)

UiT had strong representation at the annual Business and Industry Day in Tromsø also in 2012, with 40 students participating. The interest from and influx of students wishing to participate at the Business and Industry Day is great, and having the opportunity to participate in the meeting places of the professional fields is clearly something that is popular among many groups of students. UiT regards this event as an excellent opportunity for students to develop contacts and a network in the Tromsø business community.

The industrial PhD Scheme

In 2009 the Research Council of Norway established the Industrial PhD Scheme, which is designed to ensure recruitment of researchers for business and industry. The scheme shall ensure long-term industry-oriented research of the same scientific quality as the ordinary organized research training. The objective is to strengthen cooperation between companies and research institutions and also contribute to more industrial research. The companies apply directly to the Research Council of Norway, and receive the funding for the PhD student. The companies must enter into a binding relationship with a degree-conferring institution. The PhD student is employed by the company, and will work at the company after completing his/her doctorate. The students gain admission to a PhD programme at a degree-conferring institution. The hours of work shall be divided between both parties, and the students will have supervisors from both the company and the degree-conferring institution. UiT now has 10 industrial PhD students, according to data from the Research Council of Norway. These students are on PhD programmes at the Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics, the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Science and Technology.

Other

The Norwegian Entrepreneurship Programme (Gründerskolen) started in 1999 and is a joint venture between the universities and a number of university colleges in Norway. The Norwegian Entrepreneurship Programme is a course (30 credits) with a focus on entrepreneurship. The course consists of a theory component and a practical component. The students receive an introduction in the start-up of high-tech companies through a preliminary course at the Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries
and Economics. The practical component consists of a three-month period abroad with a work placement in a high-tech start-up company. Typical destinations include Boston, San Francisco, Singapore and Cape Town. Since 2002 around 60 UiT students have participated in the Norwegian Entrepreneurship Programme. In 2012, three UiT students participated in the programmes.

UiT has several educational provisions of particular relevance to and connection with business and industry. One of them is the Master’s degree programme Business Creation and Entrepreneurship (BCE) at the Faculty of Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics. This is a business-oriented programme of study in an international learning environment. The students acquire valuable competence in how to protect their own ideas and develop these into business opportunities. The students may either develop their own ideas, UiT researchers’ ideas or partner with an established North Norwegian company. The focus of the programme is creativity and innovation projects. There are now several examples of former BCE students who have important roles in local start-up companies.

Further development of the educational provisions

The programme portfolio at UiT has undergone an extensive review during the current strategic period. Despite the fact that changes were made that created turmoil and debate, the result of the review had little impact on the scope of UiT’s total portfolio. The faculties’ plans for further development of the educational provision are far reaching, and the university’s current strategic document governs the prioritizing of subjects and resources to a low degree when new programmes of study are proposed. A new merger leads to a further increase of the university’s programme portfolio, without a particular increase in the recruitment base.

It is a demanding task to maintain the status as general university while at the same time developing the programme portfolio in line with the needs of society, demand, the university’s profile and strategic assessments. Economic considerations and more strategic and long-term thinking must form the basis. It is easier to establish new programmes of study than to discontinue existing ones. Ongoing discussions concerning the university’s programme of study in language and visual cultural studies exemplify this. A high level of closeness to the academic environments means such decisions can be very challenging for faculty management, and it may be appropriate that the institution level has to a greater extent made purposeful priorities for the further development of the portfolio. This should be assessed in conjunction with the drawing up of a new strategic plan. Efforts to link priorities for further development of the programme portfolio more closely to other planning and budgetary processes at the institutional level should also be continued. This applies particularly to the development of new research and education fields where realization depends on long-term budgeting and financial allocations over and above the university’s existing budget.

Summary

UiT shall be a general university offering both traditional university degree programmes and programmes of professional study. The programmes of study shall be attractive to both applicants and the professional fields, and they must be continually developed in line with changes in the society’s competence requirements. The development of programme portfolio is both challenging and demanding, and the efforts made during the current strategic period demonstrate that there is a need
for a greater degree of purposeful prioritizing at the institutional level. Stronger provisions regarding the subject areas to be prioritized are required so that the development of programme portfolio can to a greater extent be based on strategic assessments and highlighting of the university’s special priority areas and profile.

UiT’s cooperation with societal and professional fields is steadily developing and a lot occurs at various levels in the organisation. The new *Senter for karriere og arbeidsliv* (*Centre for Careers and Employment*) shall unify and coordinate public relations efforts and contribute to clarifying the distribution of responsibilities and roles connected with this work. Results and experiences acquired through new and established measures to strengthen the vocational relevance of the programmes of study and UiT’s contact with societal and professional fields must be utilized in the further development of programmes of study at UiT.