

National Roots - International Ambitions

Report by the working group
appointed to consider NHH's language policy



NHH



31 December 2018

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Report by the working group appointed to consider NHH's language policy

1. Introduction

1.1 The working group's composition and terms of reference

On 3 September 2018, Rector Øystein Thøgersen appointed a working group to consider NHH's existing language guidelines and, if appropriate, produce proposals for changes (see Appendix 1). The working group has consisted of Professor Trine Dahl, Department of Professional and Intercultural Communication (Chair); Professor Gernot Doppelhofer,¹ Department of Economics; Senior Adviser Jorun Gunnerud, Office of Student and Academic Affairs; Communications Adviser Astri Kamsvåg, Office of Communications and Marketing; Associate Professor Aksel Mjøs, Department of Finance; Professor Jarle Møen, Department of Business and Management Science, and student representative Ingelin Uthaug, Head of Academic Affairs in NHHS (NHH's Student Association). Senior Administrative Officer Irene Velle Waraas, Office of Student and Academic Affairs, has acted as secretary for the working group.

The letter of appointment states that:

NHH's language guidelines determine, inter alia, the teaching languages in various programmes, the general administrative language to be used at NHH and language and language-related adaptations in various executive bodies and committees. NHH's new strategy for 2018–2021 specifies that '*NHH shall pursue a language policy that effectively balances NHH's social mission in Norway with its international ambitions*'. The policy includes prioritising the integration of new staff who lack Norwegian language skills when first employed.

The letter goes on to state that:

The current language guidelines are in a compact format. In a series of numbered guidelines, they express clear choices and guidance across a wide range of relevant areas. It would be appropriate to retain this format. In the light of the objectives and priorities specified in NHH's strategy, the working group is requested to:

- consider the present guidelines and, if appropriate, propose changes, including whether any of the guidelines should be deleted or combined.
- consider the need for further guidelines and propose how they might be expressed.
- in particular, discuss whether it is desirable to specify expectations or requirements for permanent staff at NHH to have learnt Norwegian to an acceptable level after a set number of years (including discussion of how this might be implemented).

¹ Appointed after the letter of appointment and terms of reference were produced.

1.2 Method

The working group has had 11 meetings. During the process the working group has gathered information and feedback from different parts of the organisation, for example international staff (mainly in the Department of Economics) and the programme leaders for the BSc Programme in Economics and Business Administration, BØA (Linda Orvedal), the MSc Programme in Economics and Business Administration, MØA (Endre Bjørndal), the MSc Programme in Accounting (MRR) (Kjell Ove Røsok, acting leader) and the PhD programme (Kenneth Fjell, Vice Rector for Research).

The working group thanks Maj-Brit Iden, Adviser in the Office of Student and Academic Affairs, for her dedicated effort in answering our numerous questions and obtaining the material presented in Chapter 3.

1.3 Key concepts

This report, and the language guidelines presented in it, deal only with Norwegian² and English. Other foreign languages are not included.

Some expressions used in the report may be ambiguous or less well known. We therefore present them here, with a short explanation of how the working group uses them.

Recipient-oriented communication: Communication in all areas, where the person writing or speaking has the recipient and the purpose of the communication in mind when formulating the message. The term covers both form and content. The term *plain language*³ is based on this principle, but is most often used when referring to administrative language used in the public sector.

Language variant: Official written form. Official written forms in Norway are *Bokmål* and *Nynorsk*. The Act relating to language usage in the public sector (The Language Act)⁴ regulates the language form to be used in written documents in the administrative part of the organisation. According to the Language Council of Norway (hereafter ‘the Language Council’) neither form of Norwegian shall have less than 25% representation on websites and in job advertisements, reports and other written material.⁵

Parallel language use: A practice whereby two languages are used to communicate information. At NHH the two languages are Norwegian and English. This does not necessarily imply that all information is provided in both languages, or that an equal amount of information about a particular subject shall be provided in both languages. The principle of recipient-oriented communication is an important criterion in this context.

Primary language: The language that shall be used unless special circumstances indicate otherwise.

1.4 Abbreviations

Department names

² ‘Norwegian’ includes both *Bokmål* and *Nynorsk*; other Scandinavian languages have the same status as Norwegian in the higher education (HE) sector.

³ <https://www.sprakradet.no/Klarsprak/>

⁴ <https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/1980-04-11-5>

⁵ <https://www.sprakradet.no/Spraklige-rettigheter/Spraklege-rettar-som-gjeld-bruken-av-norsk/Maallova/>

FIN: Department of Finance
FOR: Department of Business and Management Science
FSK: Department of Professional and Intercultural Communication
RRR: Department of Accounting
SAM: Department of Economics
SOL: Department of Strategy and Management

Study programmes

BØA: BSc Programme in Economics and Business Administration
MØA: MSc Programme in Economics and Business Administration
MMR: MSc Programme in Accounting

Specialisations in the MSc Programme in Economics and Business Administration

BAN: Business Analytics
BUS: Business Analysis and Performance Measurement
ECN: Economics
ECO: Economic Analysis
ENE: Energy, Natural Resources and the Environment
FIE: Finance
INB: International Business
NBD: New Business Development
MBM: Marketing and Brand Management
STR: Strategy and Management

Other abbreviations

MET: methodology course

2. Background

NHH's strategy for the period 2018–2022 and the fact that the present language guidelines were prepared nearly ten years ago, mean that it is expedient to consider whether they are still fit for purpose. As the years have passed, NHH, and the HE sector in Norway as a whole, have become progressively more international, and this has had an impact on language choice for both teaching and administrative purposes. Research has also become more internationalised during this period, with cross-border projects a more or less mandatory criterion for public financing. The research takes place in a global collaborative context and must be of an internationally recognized standard. Similarly, the tuition has to be adapted to increased globalisation, as regards academic content as well as the nature of the student body. Developments in the media, communications and politics also demand a new approach to participation in international arenas. An increasing proportion of newly recruited staff in all categories also come from an international background. The educational institutions have therefore had to work actively at clarifying the relationship between the use of Norwegian and English in all departments and administrative units.

Almost all the institutions in the sector now have a language policy, adapted to the institution's sphere of responsibility. Important fellow contributors to language policy development are the Language Council and Universities Norway (UHR). In 2016, the Language Council and NHH carried out a best practice model project for parallel language use, culminating in the report *Parallellspråk* ('Parallel Language' – Norwegian only) in 2017.

In 2018, the Language Council produced *Veiviser for språkvalg i universitets- og høyskolesektoren*.⁶ ('Guide to language selection in the higher education sector' – Norwegian only). The first section of this guide points out the language-related tension currently being experienced by the HE institutions:

The universities and university colleges must be international, but they must also be rooted in Norwegian society, and the HE sector has a statutory responsibility to sustain and develop Norwegian professional language. This can lead to language-related dilemmas.

In NHH's newly adopted strategy for the period 2018–2021 *We educate the Leaders of the Future*, it is stated under 'Purpose and Vision' that:

NHH shall be a driving force for development in business and society, and shall educate people for the purposes of value creation and sustainable development. NHH aims to be a leading international business school that leads the way in the development and dissemination of knowledge and expertise.

The strategy links this directly with language use: 'NHH shall pursue a language policy that effectively balances NHH's social mission in Norway with its international ambitions' (p. 21).

Like the group who developed the present language policy, incorporated in *Best of both worlds!* (2010), the starting point for our working group has been the delicate balance between a small national language, Norwegian, and the global language – English. NHH has a statutory responsibility to sustain and develop Norwegian professional language in the economic-administrative fields. Having a Norwegian professional language enables our candidates to practise their professions in Norway, in Norwegian. It also equips NHH to act as a driving force in business and social development in Norway. At the same time, the institution has to compete for students and staff in the increasingly competitive international research and education market.

The proposal for new language guidelines presented in this report attempts to take both of these aspects into account. Within the working group, differing opinions and priorities have emerged on two of the guidelines. Both involve strategic decisions about the nature of NHH as an institution. In these cases alternative proposals are presented, which will need to be finally decided by the Board after the consultation round. For some of the guidelines, suggestions for an action plan to implement the guideline are included. These suggestions are incorporated in Chapter 6. Some guidelines also needed expansion or commentary. The clean version of the new language guidelines is therefore presented in Chapter 6, while Appendix 6 contains an annotated version.

In *Kartlegging av språkstrategiske dokument i bruk ved statlige utdanningsinstitusjoner*⁷ ('Survey of language strategy documents in use in public sector HE institutions' – Norwegian only) from August 2018, the Language Council states in its summary that even if most of the institutions have now adopted a language policy, there is less clarity about follow-up and allocation of responsibilities. The working group has therefore included specific guidelines that cover this. Most of the proposed guidelines express NHH's institutional responsibilities, but some focus on the rights and obligations of individuals and groups. When formulating the

⁶ [Veiviser for språkvalg i universitets- og høyskolesektoren](#)

⁷ [Kartlegging av språkpolitiske dokument i bruk ved statlige utdanningsinstitusjoner](#)

guidelines, every effort has been made to specify who bears the responsibility or enjoys the right.

This autumn, several bodies have conducted lively debates about Norwegian as language for teaching, research and dissemination, notably in university newspapers such as *Khrono* (OsloMet), *På Høyden* (University of Bergen) and *Universitetsavisa* (NTNU – the Norwegian University of Science and Technology). Students, staff and management have taken part. In addition to the fact that it is easier to assimilate new knowledge in one's native language,⁸ many of the contributors to the debate express unease about linguistic domain loss and the institutions' ability to manage their social responsibilities in a satisfactory manner. New numbers for Norwegian as a published language also show a downward trend for all fields of knowledge.⁹ This is a natural consequence of the internationalisation of research, but its effect is to increase the difficulty of sustaining and developing Norwegian professional language.

In November this year, the Language Council's Language Policy for the Future Committee produced its report *Språk i Norge – kultur og infrastruktur*,¹⁰ ('Language in Norway - Culture and Infrastructure' – Norwegian only), which is based on *Mål og mening. Ein heilskapleg norsk språkpolitikk*. ('Language and Meaning. A comprehensive Norwegian Language Policy' - a report to the Norwegian Parliament, in Norwegian only). The committee's purpose has been 'to ensure that the Norwegian language [...] continues to have a strong position in all parts of society in the future' (p. 6), and higher education and research is singled out as the most strategically important sector for securing the position of Norwegian as 'a complete national language that underpins our society'. In the chapter on language choice in academia (see Appendix 2), the Language Policy for the Future Committee establishes, inter alia, that at master's level in particular, more and more tuition is taking place in English and that English-language textbooks and teaching material are gaining ground (p. 52). The committee advises developing incentives and resources designed to support Norwegian professional language. In addition, institutions must be measured by the extent to which they fulfil their responsibility to sustain and develop Norwegian professional language, and must be required to define the level of Norwegian and English language skills that students need for their studies and to meet social needs (p. 53).

NHH's allocation letter for 2019 from the Ministry of Education and Research states that:

The universities and university colleges have a statutory responsibility for Norwegian as a professional language and are expected to prepare specific language strategies. The internationalisation of research and the increasing use of English mean that special attention must be paid to this work. The Ministry asks all institutions to focus on the development of Norwegian as a professional language and assess the need for action. The institutions are also required to comply with the Language Act. (p. 6)

The working group's report therefore contributes to NHH's response to the Ministry's instructions.

⁸ See for example Hellekjær, G.O. (2009). Academic English reading proficiency at the university level: A Norwegian case study. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 21(2), pp. 198–222, and Hellekjær, G.O. (2010). Language Matters: Assessing lecture comprehension in Norwegian English-medium higher education. in: Dalton-Puffer et al. (Eds.), *Language Use and Language Learning in CLIL Classrooms*. John Benjamins, pp. 233–258.

⁹ https://www.fpol.no/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Forskningspolitikk-3-2018_web.pdf

¹⁰ <https://sprakinorge.no/>

The rest of the report is then structured as follows: Chapter 3 summarises the development in language-related trends at NHH. Chapter 4 shows the teaching languages used by relevant comparator institutions for NHH in Norway and the Nordic countries, while Chapter 5 contains a summary of Norwegian language skills requirements for permanent staff at other HE institutions in Norway. Chapter 6 starts with a short review of some of the language guidelines from 2010 compared with our proposals, followed by a list of the working group's proposals for new language guidelines, including the two paragraphs where there is dissent. Chapter 6.2 explains the majority's view. The minority's view, on those guidelines where they differ from the majority's, is presented in Chapter 6.3.

3. The development of language-related trends at NHH

3.1 Teaching language and international students¹¹

The internationalisation of NHH's study programmes began in the 1980s. The very first exchange students went abroad in 1982, and to facilitate the admission of foreign students at NHH, courses taught in English had to be offered. In 1986, the Master of International Business programme was launched. In the 1990s, internationalisation of the study programmes became an important and successful part of NHH's strategy and in 1994, 40 per cent of NHH's students went abroad on exchanges. Internationally, this put NHH in the very top tier for student exchanges. At this time the national and European goal was 10 per cent.

Much of NHH's success in this area resulted from offering foreign-language elective courses. In 1997, the internationalisation ambitions took a further step, and an objective of 50 per cent was set for exchanges. By the year 2000, this level had already been achieved. The challenges have been to strike the right balance between outgoing and incoming exchange students and to integrate the international students academically and socially, in order to create a truly international student community.

Data about the proportion of courses run in English in the master's programme for the years 2005 to 2012 were reported to the Ministry of Education and Research in the series of documents titled 'Reports and plans'. In 2005, 37 per cent of the master's courses were taught in English. In the following years, the proportion of courses taught in English increased faster than the goals set during planning. In 2012, the ambition was at least 60 per cent, while the result was 68 per cent. In the academic year 2017/2018, the proportion of courses taught in English was 75 per cent.¹² The proportion of international students on campus was 16 per cent, or 0.86 incoming exchange student per outgoing exchange student.¹³

At the bachelor level, the first twelve courses taught in English were established in 2007. In 2018, 24 courses were offered in English, which corresponds to around 35 per cent of all the courses offered. Measured by the number of credits awarded, the proportion of credits from

¹¹ The first paragraph is based on Chapter 8 of NHH's 75th Jubilee book *Norges Handelshøyskole i 75 år* (Norwegian only) from 2011.

¹² See table A1 in Appendix 3.

¹³ The figures are taken from NHH's annual report for 2017/2018. The proportion of international students on campus measures the number of incoming exchange students and international degree students as a proportion of the number of full-time students in all programmes, excluding outgoing exchange students.

courses in English in the bachelor programme has varied between 9 and 13 per cent in the years 2008 to 2017, without any clear trend. In 2017, the proportion was 12 per cent.

In the same period, the trend in the master's programme has swung markedly towards English. In 2008, 40 per cent of the credits awarded were from courses in English, while the proportion had increased to 59 per cent by 2017.¹⁴

If the numbers from the bachelor's and master's programmes are combined, and the total number of credits awarded for courses in English at NHH is considered, the increase was from 25 per cent in 2008 to 36 per cent in 2017.

Looking at MØA specifically, Figure 1 shows that the proportion of credits awarded for courses in English increased from 51 per cent in 2008 to 69 per cent in 2017. The pace of change has accelerated markedly in recent years. Closer analysis shows that the trend is not driven by the popularity of individual courses taught in English.

The numbers in Figure 1 do not include master's theses. Table 2 shows that 42 per cent of the master's theses are written in English. If credits awarded for theses are included, English accounts for around 60 per cent of the total credits awarded for MØA in 2017.

An increase in the number of incoming exchange students and international degree students almost automatically results in an increase in the number of credits awarded for courses in English. In order to analyse the status of Norwegian as a professional language at NHH, it is therefore more relevant to look at the number of credits earned by students admitted in the national intake. A further analysis, excluding exchange students and international degree students in MØA, shows that the percentage of students whose first language was Norwegian, who took courses taught in English, increased from 31 per cent in 2008 to 65 per cent in 2018.¹⁵ Hence, in ten years, the English proportion has more than doubled.

¹⁴ See Figure A1 in Appendix 3.

¹⁵ See Figure A2 in Appendix 3.

Figure 1: Credits awarded for all MØA courses – distribution between Norwegian and English in the years 2008–2017¹⁶.

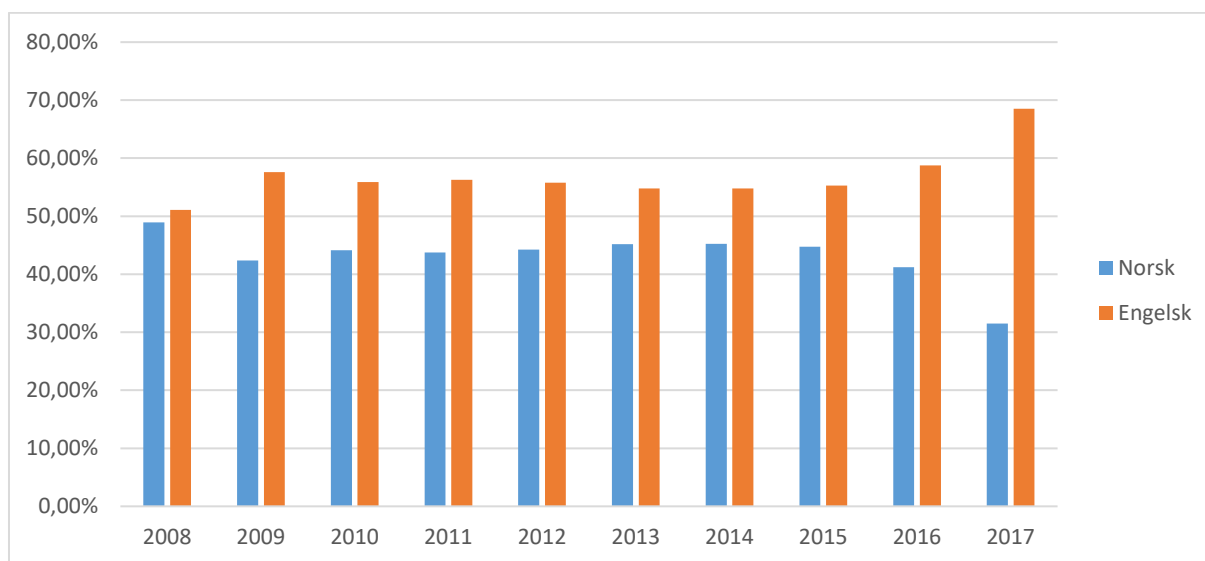
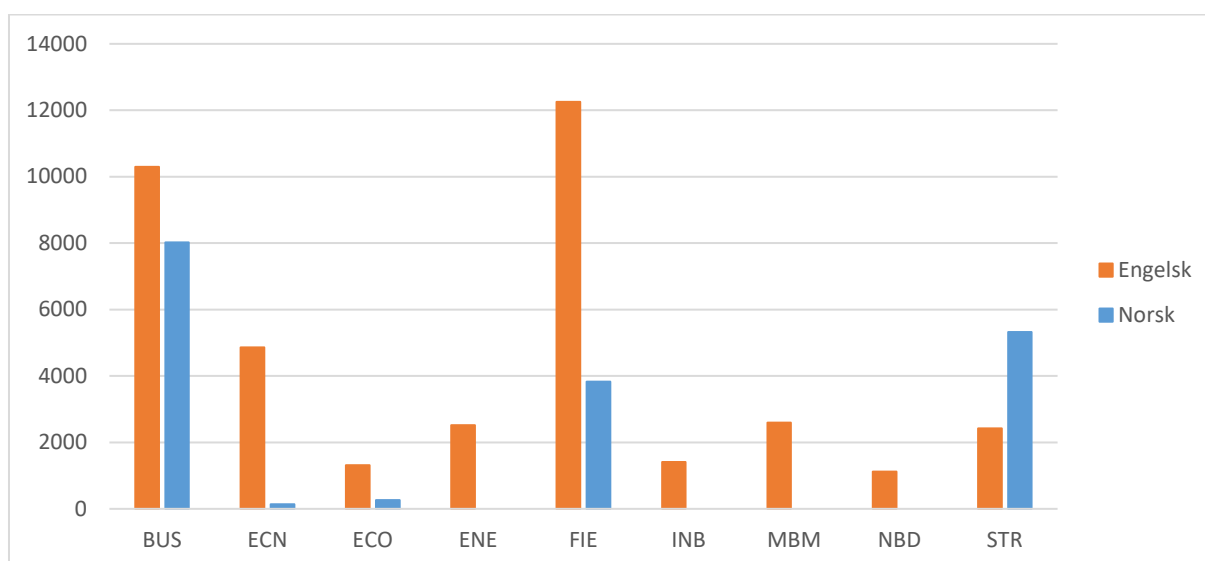


Figure 2: Distribution of credits awarded for courses taught in Norwegian and English for the various MØA specialisations in 2017/2018. Retakes and theses are not included. The courses are sorted by course code, so the figure does not take into account that many courses may be elected across several specialisations.



¹⁶ 2007 and 2018 are not included, because data are only available for one semester.

Table 1: Proportion of credits awarded for courses taught in Norwegian and English, by specialisation, in 2017/2018.

Specialisation code	Proportion English	Proportion Norwegian
BUS (incl. BAN ¹⁷)	56%	44%
ECN	97%	3%
ECO	83%	17%
ENE	100%	0%
FIE	76%	24%
INB	100%	0%
MBM	100%	0%
NBD	100%	0%
STR	31%	69%
Total	69%	31%

Table 2: Language in master's theses, by specialisation, in the academic year 2017/2018

Specialisation code	Proportion English	Proportion Norwegian
BUS (incl. BAN)	20%	80%
ECN	56%	44%
ECO	55%	45%
ENE	80%	20%
FIE	57%	43%
INB	100%	0%
MBM	89%	11%
NBD	22%	78%
STR	20%	80%
Total	42%	58%

The breakdown of the credits awarded for MØA by specialisation in Figure 2 and Table 1, shows that only the specialisation Strategy and Management has more than 50 per cent of credits awarded for courses taught in Norwegian. Of the two large specialisations Economic Management (BUS) and Finance (FIE), the latter is distinguished by a particularly large proportion of credits awarded for courses in English.

Table 2 shows corresponding figures for the master's theses, by specialisation. In the academic year 2017/2018, 42 per cent of the students chose to write their master's thesis in English, while 58 per cent chose Norwegian.

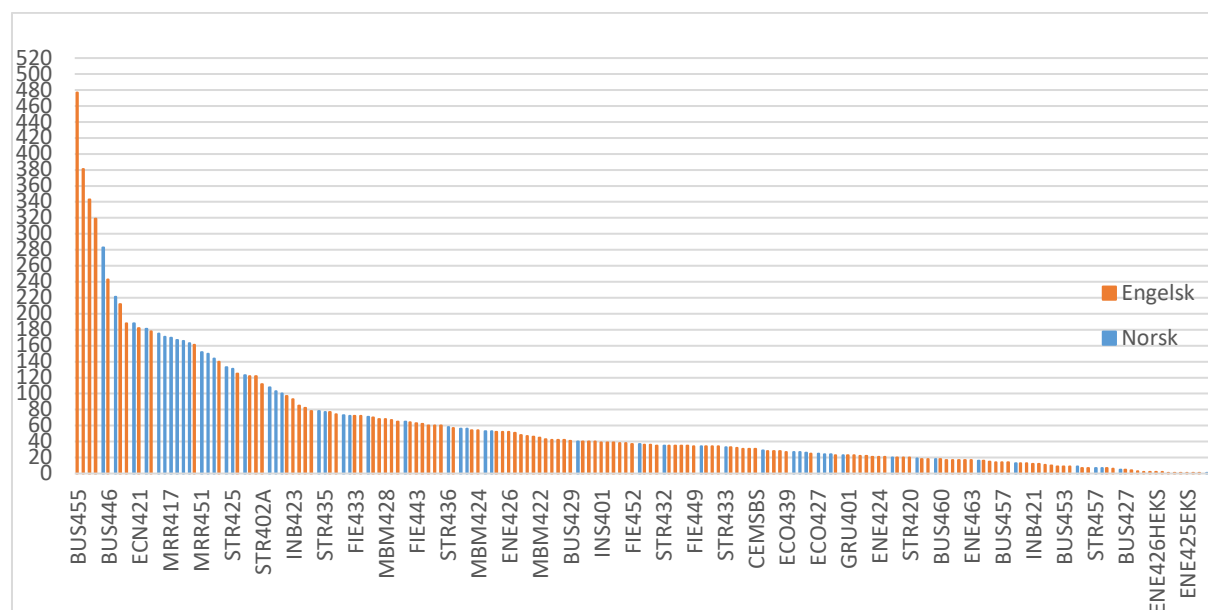
Counting the number of courses instead of credits awarded, we see that 75 per cent of the courses are currently taught in English.¹⁸ When the proportion of courses in English is higher than the proportion of credits awarded for courses in English, this is because the courses in

¹⁷ The specialisation Business Analytics (BAN) was established in autumn 2018.

¹⁸ See Table A1 in Appendix 3.

Norwegian are relatively large, whereas many small courses are taught in English; see Figure 3.

Figure 3: Individual courses in MØA and MRR by size and language in 2017/2018.



3.2 The proportion of international staff in academic and administrative positions

Originally, the growth in tuition conducted in English was driven by the foreign students' need for courses. In later years, NHH's wish to increase the international recruitment of academic staff also became an important factor. International recruits comprised 11 per cent of the academic staff in 1989.¹⁹ In recent years, the proportion was around 19 per cent for several years, before rising to over 26 per cent in 2017.²⁰ The increase is due to the fact that retiring staff are predominantly Norwegian, while new staff are largely recruited internationally. At postdoctoral level the proportion of international staff was 67 per cent in 2017. The proportion has decreased slightly since 2013, when it was 74 per cent.²¹

An informal count of administrative staff in all units in the autumn of 2018, showed that 11 per cent of this group had a native language other than Norwegian.

¹⁹ *Norges Handelshøyskole i 75 år*, p. 238.

²⁰ Annual report 2017–2018, p. 67.

²¹ Annual report 2017–2018, p. 67.

3.3 Trends for English – summarised

Table 3. English as a teaching language at NHH, 2008 and 2017

	2008	2017
Proportion of credits awarded for courses taught in English		
BSc Programme in Economics and Business Admin.	11%	12%
MSc Programme in Economics and Business Admin.	51%	69%
MSc Programme in Economics and Business Admin. national intake	37%	65%
MSc Programme in Accounting	3%	6%
Master's degrees – total	40%	59%
PhD	100%	100%
NHH – all study programmes	25%	36%
Proportion of MØA courses taught in English	47%	75%
Proportion of MØA theses written in English	30%	42%

Table 4. Proportion of international students and academic staff in 2009 and 2017

	2009	2017
The proportion of international students on campus*	11%	16%
Proportion of international staff at postdoctoral level**	38%	67%
Proportion of international members of permanent academic staff**	19%	26%

* The proportion of international students (degree and exchange students) within the total number of full-time students at NHH (excluding outgoing exchange students). The first available figures are for 2009 and are taken from the publication 'Reports and plans 2013-2014'.

** In NHH's statistics, 'international staff' are defined as staff members who are foreign nationals. The first available figures are for 2009 and are taken from the publication 'Reports and plans 2013-2014'.

4. Teaching language at relevant HE institutions in Norway and the Nordic countries

The great majority of NHH's Norwegian candidates wish to find employment in organisations and enterprises in Norway on completion of their education.²² NHH is required to ensure that their education equips them with full command of Norwegian professional language in their fields. However, the present-day HE sector is international, and the institutions are also required to offer international students a satisfactory number of courses in English. Likewise, recruitment to academic positions takes place in an international market, which in turn has implications for the teaching language. This is reflected in the present situation, where institutions may experience being out of step with their adopted language guidelines because the relevant lecturers in a study programme do not have Norwegian language skills.

Particularly at the master's level, the teaching language increasingly appears to be English. The trend seems to be driven by considerations other than strategic language policy; however,

²² [NHH Job market survey 2017](#)

it must be borne in mind that Norwegian students also need to learn English professional language. They will go on exchange and some will choose to take higher degree(s) in another country. Many will also need good command of English for their work.

The current situation regarding teaching language at relevant institutions and programmes in Norway and the Nordic countries is as follows:²³

Bachelor's level:

- BI Norwegian Business School: 14 programmes (including the first part of the business programme (*siviløkonom*)) are taught in Norwegian and two are taught in English²⁴
- NTNU, the bachelor's part of the *MSc in Industrial Economics and Technology Management*: taught in Norwegian
- Stockholm School of Economics: *Business and Economics* is taught in Swedish in the first and second years, while the third year is in English; *Retail Management* is taught in English²⁵
- Copenhagen Business School (CBS): 10 programmes are taught in Danish and 8 in English²⁶
- Hanken School of Economics: The programme is taught in Swedish²⁷
- Aalto University: Two relevant programmes, both of which are taught in English²⁸

Master's level

- BI Norwegian Business School: 7 programmes are taught in English; *Accounting* is taught in Norwegian²⁹
- NTNU, *MSc in Industrial Economics and Technology Management*: Norwegian is the official language, but in practice the fourth and fifth years are taught in English.
- University of Bergen, Integrated Master's/Professional degree in Economics: Taught in Norwegian (English used if the lecturer is not Norwegian)
- University of Oslo, Professional degree in Economics: Taught in English (stated reason: because many of the lecturers are international)
- Stockholm School of Economics: 5 programmes, all taught in English³⁰
- Copenhagen Business School (CBS): 28 programmes are taught in English, 10 in Danish³¹
- Hanken School of Economics: One programme is taught in Swedish and two relevant ones in English³²
- Aalto University: All relevant programmes are taught in English³³

²³ The information in this paragraph comes partly from the institutions themselves and partly from their websites.

²⁴ <https://www.bi.no/studier-og-kurs/bachelorstudier/>

²⁵ <https://www.hhs.se/sv/utbildning/bsc/bscbe/>

²⁶ <https://www.cbs.dk/uddannelse/bachelor-undervisningsprog>

²⁷ <https://www.hanken.fi/sv/node/241949/>

²⁸ <https://www.aalto.fi/study-options>

²⁹ <https://www.bi.no/studier-og-kurs/masterstudier/>

³⁰ <https://www.hhs.se/sv/utbildning/msc/>

³¹ <https://www.cbs.dk/uddannelse/kandidat/kandidat-undervisningssprog>

³² <https://www.hanken.fi/sv/studier/program-och-studier/magisterstudier>

³³ <https://www.aalto.fi/study-options>

5. Norwegian language skills requirements for permanent staff at other HE institutions in Norway

As already mentioned, most of the HE institutions in Norway now have an adopted language policy. Some have had language guidelines for a long time, while others, especially institutions who have changed their status or organisation, e.g. Nord University and the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, have only recently prepared them.

The institutions' requirements for Norwegian language skills for academic staff vary in terms of both level and the importance attached to them. Is it the intention that all permanent staff shall be able to teach and supervise students, as well as disseminate their work in Norwegian? Are all staff required to be able to chair committees, participate in meetings and take part in lunchtime conversations in Norwegian? Or is it sufficient for them to understand Norwegian and speak and write in English? At present, all these levels are reflected in HE sector guidelines (see below). Social integration, and the likelihood of staff being happy in Norway and wishing to remain in their positions for a reasonable period, are factors that argue strongly in favour of them acquiring Norwegian language skills. Mobility, and the inflow of new knowledge and stimuli, are important. However, stability and lasting commitment to the institution are also valuable, as they contribute to thriving academic communities and a smooth-running organisation.

NTNU's guidelines from 2009 mention that the following requirements are included in the contracts of employment for non-native academic staff: "It is a *condition* that within a period of *three years* academic staff shall demonstrate competence in Norwegian or another Scandinavian language equivalent to level three in the course for non-native speakers run by the Department of Language and Communication".³⁴ In the same year, the University of Stavanger decided that "staff in permanent positions *shall usually* become qualified to teach in Norwegian within *three years*. The necessary skills must be proven by taking a language test".³⁵ For the University of Oslo (2010), OsloMet (2013), Nord University (2018) and Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (2018) the respective formulations are as follows:

- "Foreign students and staff should be *offered an introduction* to the Norwegian language"³⁶
- "Staff without adequate skills in Norwegian or another Scandinavian language *shall be offered tuition* in Norwegian within *three years* of engagement, when this is necessary for them to be able to function in their positions or field of work. The same applies to English language skills."³⁷
- "Academic staff who have not learnt Norwegian or another Scandinavian language on taking up employment, *ought to be able to understand* spoken Norwegian, answer questions from students asked in Norwegian and have sufficient Norwegian language

³⁴ <https://www.ntnu.no/sprakpolitiske-retningslinjer>

³⁵ <https://ansatt.uis.no/article.php?articleID=21301&categoryID=5841>

³⁶ <https://www.uio.no/for-ansatte/arbeidsstotte/profil/sprak/retningslinjer/>

³⁷ <http://www.hioa.no/Om-OsloMet/Virksomhetsstyring/Interne-forskrifter-regelverk-og-rutiner/Spraakpolitiske-retningslinjer-for-Hoegskolen-i-Oslo-og-Akershus>

comprehension to take part in meetings run in Norwegian, within *two years* of employment.”³⁸

- “Non-Scandinavian permanent staff in academic or administrative positions *must be able to carry out* their work in Norwegian after *some years* of employment.”³⁹

According to an email reply from the Executive President for Organization and Strategy at BI Norwegian Business School, there are currently “no formalised requirements for foreign staff to have Norwegian language skills, but the practice has been that permanent staff are *expected, after some time, to be able* to read and understand Norwegian while being free to express themselves in English, orally and in writing.”

In the Language Council’s *Guide to language selection in the higher education sector* (in Norwegian only) the recommendation is that:

Internationally recruited staff who have not learnt Norwegian previously should be offered a suitable course during working hours. For example, a requirement could be introduced for them to learn Norwegian to a specified level (e.g. C1 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages - CEFR) within a certain period, e.g. three years after engagement, so that they can at least read Norwegian texts and understand spoken Norwegian. With this level of skill, they would be able to take part in meetings held in Norwegian and answer questions from their students asked in Norwegian, while speaking English themselves. The need to improve bilingual skills should be a standard item in appraisal interviews.

6. Proposal for new language guidelines

To put the working group’s proposal for new language guidelines into context, the starting point is to present the most important differences between the proposed guidelines and the existing ones, which were adopted in 2010.⁴⁰

The great majority of the topics and issues covered by the 2010 guidelines are also included in the 2018 version, though some paragraphs are in different sub-categories. The category headings in the 2010 version were ‘Core language guidelines’, ‘Teaching’, ‘Research and dissemination’, ‘Administrative language’ and ‘Quality of Language’. Headings used in the 2018 version are ‘General’, ‘Teaching’, ‘Research and dissemination’, ‘Administration and information’ and ‘Implementation and management’.

While in 2010 it was established in the general part that Norwegian was the primary language at NHH, the working group’s proposal states that both Norwegian and English are important languages at NHH.

As far as NHH’s statutory responsibility for Norwegian professional language in the economic-administrative fields is concerned, the 2010 version states that the institution *has* this responsibility, while it is now suggested that the institution shall manage this responsibility proactively. A plan must be made to ensure that terminology for important concepts is available in both Norwegian and English, and that new terminology is developed

³⁸ <https://www.nord.no/no/om-oss/lover-forskrifter-retningslinjer/Documents/Spr%C3%A5kpolitiske-retningslinjer-vedtatt-i-styret-18-09-2018.pdf>

³⁹ <https://www.hvl.no/om/sentrale-dokument/reglar/sprakpolitiske-retningslinjer/>

⁴⁰ For a complete version of the list from 2010, see Appendix 4.

when necessary. Not least, the institution needs to work hard at ensuring that the Norwegian terminology is used by both lecturers and students.

Terminology development is also specifically mentioned in guideline 2 of the 2010 list. Terminology work has been undertaken at NHH since 2010, but the development of the 'NHH term base for economic-administrative subjects' has not been prioritised or allocated significant resources from the institution. The NHH term portal, which is a collection of databases containing primarily economic-administrative terminology, has been available to staff and students for a number of years.⁴¹ In 2018, the term portal is part of the website [Terminologi.no](https://www.terminologi.no).

The working group suggests that the Department of Professional and Intercultural Communication (FSK) shall be responsible for initiating and coordinating the work on the terminology used in the compulsory courses at bachelor level. Working jointly with the lecturer(s) responsible for the course, FSK shall ensure that Norwegian-English term lists are prepared for the key concepts used in these courses. The work could, for example, be carried out with the help of student assistants in the course. Quality assurance would be carried out by FSK and the lecturer(s). Procedures must also be developed to ensure that the terms are entered into the term collection that proves to be the most appropriate during the current development period. To keep term lists up to date, they require ongoing review and development. As far as possible, the terminology work ought to be coordinated with other relevant institutions in the HE sector. This collaboration can take place through the institutions nominating contact persons, who will have the opportunity to arrange/participate in meetings and seminars focusing on terminology work.

While the 2010 guidelines recommended that permanent staff *should* have good command of both Norwegian and English, the majority of the 2018 working group proposes that the requirement should be clarified to state that permanent staff *shall* be able to communicate in both Norwegian and English. The present situation is that technical and administrative staff must have good command of Norwegian for permanent employment, while academic staff are not subject to this categorical requirement for Norwegian skills.

The working group's proposal for new guidelines specifies a requirement for Norwegian language skills at the intermediate level B1 on the European Council scale of linguistic skill levels, where level A is the lowest and level C is the highest.⁴² For comparison, it is that noted foreign health personnel have to achieve level B2 (the upper intermediate level) in Norwegian, in order to gain authorisation in Norway.⁴³ We propose that the B1 level shall be attained within three years of permanent employment starting. It is not considered necessary to specify a similar level for English, as level B1 is normally achieved after learning English as a foreign language at school, and most people with higher education will have a skill level of at least B1/B2.

The requirement for Norwegian language skills is supported in the strategy's elaboration that 'NHH shall pursue a language policy that effectively balances NHH's social mission in Norway with its international ambitions' (p. 21). The working group has been given access to

⁴¹ <https://www.terminologi.no/forside.xhtml>. Note that this resource will be subject to system development in 2019.

⁴² https://no.wikipedia.org/wiki/Det_felles_europeiske_rammeverket_for_spr%C3%A5k

⁴³ <https://helsedirektoratet.no/nyheter/nye-krav-til-autorisasjon-for-helsepersonell-med-utdanning-fra-utenfor-eueos>

minutes of meetings, held by the Rector's team during the autumn, with newly recruited researchers from external international institutions. Subjects discussed included the recruitment process and integration. The minutes show that many participants accept that Norwegian language skills are expected after a certain period of time.

However, several aspects of this requirement need detailed consideration. These include tuition, testing and any consequences if skills are still inadequate after three years. Should there be special courses for staff and should they take place during working hours? Should they represent a part of the work duties? Should skills be tested formally or informally? Should a failure to achieve the right level of skills have consequences for the employment relationship?

Regarding tuition, it is proposed that FSK, on behalf of NHH, should develop adapted versions of the current introductory courses NOR10 and NOR11, which in combination educate staff to A2/B1 level. FSK should also be responsible for designing a new, third course to educate staff to B1/B2 level. Whether these should be daytime or evening courses must be decided in consultation with the target group. Clarity is also required about whether Norwegian tuition should be deemed to be part of the work duties. In addition to permanent staff, temporary employees such as postdoctoral fellows, tenure track position holders and assistant professors could take these courses. An alternative to NOR10 and NOR11 is the digital resource 'Norwegian on the Web', developed by NTNU,⁴⁴ which does not require physical presence at pre-determined times.

As regards testing, the present NOR10 and NOR11 have exams, and so could the new, dedicated NOR courses. 'Norwegian on the web' does not have an integrated test. For this digital course to be a realistic alternative, it is therefore proposed that the Norwegian requirement might be deemed to be fulfilled when the member of staff passes the examination in the third NOR course. Alternatively, staff might prove their Norwegian skills through the official Norwegian examinations held regularly in all counties.⁴⁵

The tuition offer, accompanied by the stated requirement that staff must pass an examination, clearly communicates what NHH expects of permanent staff who lack adequate Norwegian skills when first employed.

The institution must arrange for the tuition to be completed within the set time limit. In cases where the target is not achieved, it would be problematic from a legal point of view to suggest that a mere lack of language skills could ultimately lead to termination of employment. Lack of language skills might, however, have other consequences, for example that it becomes a topic in appraisal interviews and/or is taken into account in local salary negotiations.

The last important point that the working group wishes to highlight from the comparison between the 2010 and 2018 versions is the teaching language for the MSc Programme in Economics and Business Administration (MØA). As with the requirement for Norwegian language skills, the working group has a divided opinions on this.

The 2010 version established that Norwegian and English should both be important languages for MØA. The majority (Dahl, Gunnerud, Kamsvåg and Møen) wishes to retain this wording. They also suggest a new target whereby neither courses offered in English, nor those in

⁴⁴ <https://www.ntnu.edu/norwegiancourse/norwegian-on-the-web>

⁴⁵ See <https://www.kompetansenorge.no/norskprove/#>

Norwegian, shall account for less than 1/3 of the credits awarded. Micro-management at course level is not planned, but the historical trend shows that increased focus on the balance between Norwegian and English is required, if the aspiration is for Norwegian to continue to be used as a professional language at master's level in the future. The majority's opinion is that a target figure and reporting requirement will also be consistent with the signals from the Ministry of Education and Research in the allocation letter for 2019, where it asks NHH and the other HE institutions to 'focus on the development of Norwegian as a professional language and assess the need for action.'

The minority (Doppelhofer, Mjøs and Uthaug) considers that English should be the primary language for MØA. They refer to the strategic vision for NHH to be a leading international business school, and contend that the ability to recruit academic staff in an international market is the decisive factor in this context.

A clean version of the working group's proposal for new language guidelines is presented in Chapter 6.1. The working group's thinking is also presented in more detail in Appendix 6, which is an annotated version with comments on individual guidelines. In the annotated version, both the guidelines and sub-guidelines are numbered for ease of reference during the consultation round. We suggest that the sub-guidelines in the list that is finally adopted be presented in indented form, perhaps marked off by dashes, as in the clean version below.

6.1 Proposal for new language guidelines

The language guidelines shall contribute to realising NHH's strategy and its objective to be "a driving force for development in business and society", and to be "a leading international business school that leads the way in the development and dissemination of knowledge and expertise".

"NHH shall pursue a language policy that effectively balances NHH's social mission in Norway with its international ambitions".

(Strategy 2018–2021)

General

1. NHH shall use high-quality, recipient-oriented language in all communication.
2. Norwegian and English are both important languages at NHH.
3. NHH shall use the Norwegian language variants *Nynorsk* and *Bokmål* as stipulated in the Language Act. Staff and students whose primary language variant is *Nynorsk* are encouraged to use this variant.
4. NHH shall practise parallel language use where appropriate.
5. Permanent staff at NHH shall have sufficient Norwegian and English language skills to enable them to communicate with students, staff and external contacts in a satisfactory manner.
 - Permanent staff who lack Norwegian or other Scandinavian language skills when first employed, shall learn Norwegian to intermediate level B1 within three years of their permanent employment starting.

Uthaug supports the main part of guideline 5, but not the sub-guideline.

Doppelhofer and Mjøs do not support guideline 5 in its entirety.

6. NHH shall offer its staff the opportunity to upgrade relevant language skills.
7. NHH shall actively manage the maintenance and development of Norwegian professional language within the economic-administrative fields, in order to fulfil its statutory responsibility.

Teaching

8. Norwegian is the primary teaching language in NHH's bachelor's programme.
 - The general rule is that compulsory courses shall be taught in Norwegian.
 - The prescribed readings for the compulsory courses shall be in Norwegian if good Norwegian textbooks exist. When the prescribed readings for these courses are in English, the course description should list supplementary readings in Norwegian.
- 9a. Norwegian and English are both important teaching languages in NHH's MSc Programme in Economics and Business Administration.
 - It shall be possible to take all specialisations in English.
 - The aim is that neither the courses offered in English, nor those in Norwegian, shall account for less than 1/3 of the credits awarded.
 - If the number of students makes it necessary to offer the course twice, the course should be given in both Norwegian and English.

The majority of the working group (Dahl, Gunnerud, Kamsvåg and Møen) support this version of guideline 9.

- 9b. English is the primary teaching language in NHH's MSc Programme in Economics and Business Administration. Choice of language is governed by academic and pedagogic considerations.

The minority of the working group (Doppelhofer, Mjøs and Uthaug) support this version of guideline 9.

10. Norwegian is the primary teaching language in NHH's MSc Programme in Accounting.
11. English is the primary teaching language in NHH's PhD programme.
12. Information about the study programmes shall be available in both English and Norwegian.
13. The course description shall clearly state the teaching language for each course.
14. Exam questions will be set in the teaching language for the course, unless otherwise stated in the course description.
- The students may choose whether to answer exam questions in a Scandinavian language or in English, unless otherwise stated in the course description.
15. NHH shall ensure that Norwegian and English terms for the key concepts in the compulsory courses in the bachelor's programme are accessible in a national term portal.
16. NHH shall offer tuition in communication principles and academic writing in order to ensure that linguistic, textual and genre competence is developed in all study programmes.
17. NHH shall offer courses in Norwegian language, culture and social affairs to foreign students.

Research and dissemination

18. Research shall normally be published in English. Research of particular interest to the Norwegian-speaking public should also be published in Norwegian.
- NHH shall contribute to sustaining Norwegian-language academic journals in the economic-administrative area.
19. NHH shall disseminate research-based knowledge to the general public, the private sector and the public sector in both Norwegian and English.
- NHH's social responsibility implies that the main focus when disseminating information is on the Norwegian-speaking public. Dissemination to this audience shall normally be in Norwegian.
20. NHH shall offer tuition in disseminating research results in Norwegian and English.
21. A popularised summary of all PhD theses shall be published in both Norwegian and English.

22. NHH shall offer linguistic quality assurance for research publications and dissemination pieces.

Administration and information

23. The administrative language at NHH is Norwegian.
- Subordinate organisational units may choose English, subject to Board approval.
24. NHH shall ensure that all staff and students receive relevant information in a language they can understand.
25. In external communications and official documents written in English, NHH shall use British English.

Implementation and management

26. The implementation and management of the language guidelines shall be anchored in the NHH leadership at all levels.
27. Establishing practices that ensure compliance with the guidelines is a line management responsibility within the organisation.
- The responsibility includes developing action plans and progress reporting procedures.

6.2 The majority's view

As the entire report promotes the importance of finding a good balance between Norwegian and English in all parts of the organisation, the majority of the working group, i.e. Trine Dahl, Jorun Gunnerud, Astri Kamsvåg and Jarle Møen, restrict themselves here to summarising the most important arguments for proposing guideline 5 and guideline 9, alternative a.

The starting point for guideline 5 is that staff at a workplace in Norway, where the administrative language is Norwegian, must be able to communicate in both Norwegian and English. The majority therefore considers that NHH's permanent staff must have both languages at their command, up to at least intermediate level. This implies being able to communicate coherently in familiar situations that arise in connection with their work.⁴⁶ Three years is considered to be sufficient for staff who lack skills in a Scandinavian language when first employed, to achieve the required competence. In the slightly longer term, Norwegian language skills can be enhanced, so that this group of staff can also contribute to courses taught in Norwegian and disseminate their work in Norwegian. Norwegian language skills are also seen as important for integration into Norwegian society, increasing the probability of international staff settling down happily and staying in their jobs for longer.

The majority's opinion on guideline 9, alternative a, is that there are several arguments in its favour. Firstly, the HE institutions' statutory responsibility for Norwegian professional language suggests that more specialised courses taught in Norwegian are also required at

⁴⁶ Ingelin Uthaug supports the majority's view on the main part of guideline 5. Her opinion on the sub-guideline is that the exact level must be agreed between the manager and the staff member in each individual case, and that an absolute requirement would work against NHH's strategy.

master's level, in order to avoid linguistic domain loss in the economic-administrative fields. Such courses will also be able to focus on Norwegian issues and Norwegian material, which will be particularly relevant for the many students who wish to work in Norway after completing their education. The majority considers it important for a business school in Norway to have special expertise in Norwegian business and social affairs and cannot see that recruitment in which a deliberate balance is struck between Norwegian/Scandinavian candidates, and candidates with other linguistic backgrounds, will undermine academic quality at NHH.

The majority also stresses that today's students are being educated for an international labour market, which means that courses taught in English are also important. The value of having a diverse body of teaching staff, comprised of both Norwegian speakers and those who use English as a *lingua franca*, is also acknowledged.⁴⁷ This ensures that the students are taught by the best subject experts, regardless of linguistic background.

When the majority also suggests a target figure for credits awarded for courses taught in Norwegian that roughly corresponds with the present situation (around 1/3), it is because 1/3 is regarded as the minimum level for sustaining Norwegian as a teaching language in MØA in the years to come. The courses offered, and thus the number of credits awarded per language, will vary naturally from year to year, so the target figure is a guiding principle, not a cast iron rule.

6.2 The minority's view

As shown in the proposed language guidelines, the minority of the working group, consisting of Gernot Doppelhofer, Aksel Mjøs and Ingelin Uthaug, has a different view on the requirements for Norwegian language skills for permanent staff⁴⁸ and the primary language for the NHH MSc Programme in Economics and Business Administration. The minority's main motivation is that the majority's proposals for Norwegian language skills for permanent staff (guideline 5), and a minimum proportion of Norwegian teaching in the master's programme (guideline 9a), place too many conditions on NHH's recruitment of academic staff. The reasoning is as follows:

- NHH's task is to deliver excellent research, teaching and dissemination to Norwegian society. The unique position granted to NHH in Norwegian society means that these tasks must be accomplished to the highest quality possible. NHH's own strategic vision is to be a leading international business school, where the production of more top-quality research is a key priority. Active international recruitment processes are therefore a strategic priority for NHH, and the institution should therefore refrain from all practices that may be a hindrance to success in the international job market. Ranking, remuneration, size, location and status are known challenges in many academic fields. Internal regulations, including those related to language, must be adapted so that they fit in with the international recruitment objective.
- Ambitious international recruitment is important in order to constantly improve academic standards, ensure healthy diversity, challenge the research communities (not least the Norwegian ones), build networks and be able to offer sufficient breadth and depth of tuition. NHH faces international competition when recruiting international

⁴⁷ This last group naturally also includes the Norwegian-speaking staff, when they teach in English.

⁴⁸ See footnote 46 for Uthaug's view on the requirement for Norwegian language skills.

talent. Language use must be functionally oriented and help NHH to achieve its strategic goals.

- NHH's responsibility for Norwegian professional language in the economic-administrative fields is an *institutional responsibility*, not an individual responsibility for all permanent staff.
- A specific requirement for Norwegian language skills at the time of/after permanent employment will definitely reduce NHH's attractiveness in the job market for the most talented international candidates, for whom NHH could otherwise have competed. It is also very uncertain whether the policy will have any real effect on the language skills of permanent staff:
 - Temporary staff who achieve permanent employment will have been here for 4 to 7 years. Many will establish families and have a general desire to integrate further into Norwegian society, irrespective of any formal requirement. In this situation it is important for NHH to be able to offer language tuition that is perceived to be relevant and effective.
 - Recruitment of senior permanent employees does not happen often, but can be decisive for the development of an academic community. If the language policy creates situations where staff become ineligible because of the Norwegian language requirement, this may have very undesirable reputational consequences and may also obstruct specific recruitments.
- Choosing English as the primary language in MØA will ensure that the students meet the full spectrum of talented NHH lecturers, regardless of language. This experience of professional English is also relevant for working life in Norway, as well as elsewhere, and for further education. The use of Norwegian professional language is ensured in the bachelor programme. By having English for the master's, NHH will avoid the language requirement becoming a serious hindrance when recruiting academic staff. The alternative, where a set proportion of the courses have to be offered in Norwegian, will mean that language requirements could override academic quality requirements, especially as the proportion is very close to the requirement at present. Moreover, many of NHH's PhD students are international⁴⁹ and assist with teaching master's degree courses, so a specific Norwegian language requirement could affect the intake of PhD students. A requirement for a proportion of courses to be in Norwegian will neither help to develop NHH's long-term strategy to be a leading international business school, nor help to deliver the best possible research, teaching and dissemination to Norwegian society. The review of other institutions' language policies in Chapter 4 shows that all comparable top ranked master's programmes are taught in English. Societal challenges require NHH to achieve the highest possible quality in its contributions, and this must always be the key criterion for all recruitment.

⁴⁹ According to NHH's annual report for 2016/2017, the proportion of international PhD students (measured by the percentage of new doctoral agreements) was 46% in 2016.

Appendix 1 Letter of appointment and terms of reference

NHH's current language policy stems from the language guidelines that were adopted by NHH's Board in 2010. The guidelines are available on <https://www.nhh.no/en/about-nhh/language-guidelines/>

NHH's language guidelines determine, inter alia, the teaching languages in various programmes, the general administrative language to be used at NHH and language and language-related adaptations in various executive bodies and committees. Significant effort has been invested in developing the language policy at NHH over many years. In 2017 a comprehensive parallel language project was implemented, so a solid knowledge base for evaluating the language policy already exists. NHH's new strategy for 2018–2021 specifies that '*NHH shall pursue a language policy that effectively balances NHH's social mission in Norway with its international ambitions*'. The policy includes prioritising the integration of new staff who lack Norwegian language skills when first employed.

The time is now ripe to carry out a review of the current language policy and make any necessary amendments or additions.

The following working group is appointed to consider the language guidelines adopted in 2010 and prepare proposals for any necessary amendments:

- Professor Trine Dahl, Department of Professional and Intercultural Communication (Chair of the working group)
- Senior Adviser, Jorun Gunnerud, Office of Student and Academic Affairs
- Communications Adviser Astri Kamsvåg, Office of Communications and Marketing
- Associate Professor Aksel Mjøs, Department of Finance
- Professor Jarle Møen, Department of Business and Management Science
- A student representative at master's level, to be appointed by NHHS.

The current language guidelines are in a compact format. In a series of numbered guidelines, they express clear choices and guidance across a wide range of relevant areas. It would be appropriate to retain this format. In the light of the objectives and priorities specified in NHH's strategy, the working group is requested to:

- consider the present guidelines and if appropriate propose changes, including whether any of the guidelines should be deleted or combined.
- consider the need for further guidelines and propose how they might be expressed.
- in particular, discuss whether it is desirable to specify expectations or requirements for permanent staff at NHH to have learnt Norwegian to an acceptable level after a set number of years (including discussion of how this might be implemented).

The working group is requested to submit its evaluation and proposals to the Rector by 31 December 2018. A consultation round will then be held within the organisation. Proposals for new language guidelines are due to be laid before NHH's Board in February 2019.

NHH, 3 September 2018
Øystein Thøgersen, Rector

Appendix 2 ‘Language choice in Academia’, chapter from the report *Language in Norway – Culture and Infrastructure* (2018)⁵⁰

He sits in the middle of the lecture theatre in a Norwegian university and listens to the lecturer presenting the day’s assignments in English – not even good English – but all the textbooks are in English and so is all the terminology. He knows he will be writing his master’s thesis in English. In his field hardly anyone writes in Norwegian now. He thinks: ‘The books are in English and all the terms are in English. It is almost easier to have the lectures in English, too.’ One problem is that he has begun to fall behind when he has to translate in his head, in order to understand the technical terms used by the lecturer. Nevertheless, he believes he will become more versatile and find it easier to deal with international challenges at work. But how likely is it that he will work outside Norway, and how many of his fellow students will do so?

‘Internationalisation’, replies the Rector when asked why the requirement for Norwegian has suddenly disappeared from the job advertisements. Strictly speaking, it is also more practical. If all the teaching and literature is in English, why not just as well go abroad for your education? Or is there something about studying in a Norwegian institution that is valuable and relevant for Norwegian society?

Background

The report to the Norwegian Parliament *Language and Meaning. A complete Norwegian Language Policy*⁵¹ singles out higher education and research as the most strategically important sector for securing the position of Norwegian as ‘a complete national language that underpins our society’. It is also contended that it is in this sector that competition from English is perhaps most pressing. *Language and Meaning* emphasises that it must be possible to use Norwegian to exchange and disseminate specialised knowledge, if the language is indeed to continue to underpin society. This means that effective and fully developed Norwegian professional language must exist in both *Bokmål* and *Nynorsk*.

Ever since the first Norwegian university was established in Christiania in 1811, higher education in Norway has been a multilingual domain. Yet in recent years the trend has been towards less linguistic diversity in the sector. Since *Language and meaning* was published in 2009, the use of English in higher education and research has continued to expand. This results from political decisions to increase internationalisation in the Norwegian university and university college sector. Internationalisation in this context has largely meant more use of English at the expense of Norwegian and other languages. For example, very few master's and doctoral degrees are awarded in languages other than English and Norwegian, while fewer and fewer students are studying traditionally important languages such as French and German.⁵²

⁵⁰ <https://sprakinorge.no/>

⁵¹ Report No 35 to the Storting (2007–2008) *Mål og mening. Ein heilskapeleg norsk språk politikk* – in Norwegian only.

⁵² Report No 25 to the Storting (2016–2017)

The provision that the teaching language in higher education should normally be Norwegian disappeared in 2002.⁵³ The aspiration was to clear the path for more internationalisation, inter alia through teaching in English. Some years later came a further report to the Norwegian Parliament, *Internationalisation of Education in Norway* (2008–2009), which also specified clear guidelines for expanded internationalisation of the sector.⁵⁴

The focus on internationalisation has led to increasing unease about *linguistic domain loss* in this sector. Linguistic domain loss is experienced when one language is squeezed out and replaced by another, as the means of communication in a certain part of society. In order to prevent this from happening in higher education, universities and university colleges have had a statutory responsibility since 2010 to sustain and develop Norwegian professional language. The requirement is incorporated in the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges.⁵⁵

The institutions therefore have a responsibility for Norwegian professional language, but whether and to what extent they fulfil this responsibility is not measured. Neither is there currently any special incentive to encourage increased use of Norwegian in universities and university colleges. On the contrary, there are several incentives for increased internationalisation and increased use of English. This leads to less priority being given to work on Norwegian professional language, in favour of tasks where the institutions are actually measured. This is also one of the areas where language policy suffers because it does not apply to the sector as whole, as provided for in *Language and Meaning*. Emphasis on internationalisation by the Ministry of Education and Research trumps the same Ministry's requirement for the Norwegian language to be widely used.

Education patterns and job selection

It is established that the use of English is increasing in higher education in Norway. But what about the students' job prospects? To what extent do Norwegian students visualize working outside Norway on completion of their education?

According to the Graduate Survey 2016, aimed at students in the Bergen region, international career prospects are not an important criterion when choosing a job: 33 per cent saw them as 'very unimportant', 27 per cent as 'fairly unimportant' and only 7 per cent as 'very important'.⁵⁶ The Norwegian School of Economics's (NHH) job market survey in 2017 also shows that barely 5 per cent of the NHH candidates end up working abroad, while 93 per cent of the students report having found work where they wanted it.⁵⁷ This means that the overwhelming majority choose to work in Norway. It also means that these students will in all probability require Norwegian professional language skills in working life.

⁵³ The Act relating to Universities and University Colleges of 12 May 1995 contained the following paragraph: 'The teaching language is usually Norwegian.' (Section 2-7)

⁵⁴ Report No 14 to the Storting (2008–2009)

⁵⁵ Ministry of Education and Research (2005)

⁵⁶ Høgestøl and Dahle (2016) *Kandidatundersøkelsen 2016* – in Norwegian only

⁵⁷ NHH (2018)

The needs of the job market

So what are the needs of the employers and the job market? Higher education policy has clearly moved in the direction of more internationalisation and more English. Employers, meanwhile, are looking for master's candidates with a high level of Norwegian language skills,⁵⁸ as shown in *NHO's competence barometer 2018*: When employers are asked how important language skills are for their business, Norwegian language skills emerge as the most important.⁵⁹ Fluency in spoken Norwegian is important for 82 per cent of firms, while the ability to communicate in writing in Norwegian also scores very highly: 78 per cent of the firms say this is 'very important' or 'fairly important'. Around 50 per cent reply that foreign languages are important. English comes first, but for 13 per cent, German is also an important foreign language; several other European languages such as Polish, Spanish and French also score highly.

Dutch or English - yes please, both!
English language skills are higher among the Dutch population than anywhere else in the EU, and English is becoming the *de facto* second language in the Netherlands. In view of this development, the *University of Amsterdam* has made a conscious decision to be a bilingual university, and this is reflected in their internationalisation strategy. It establishes that 'linguistic competence in both Dutch and English at an academic level is considered to be a key competence, enabling the students to integrate and take part in society and working life'. The various sections of the strategy expand upon this, and the policy is applied throughout the institution. The *University of Amsterdam* has more than 30,000 students and is one of the two large universities in Amsterdam.

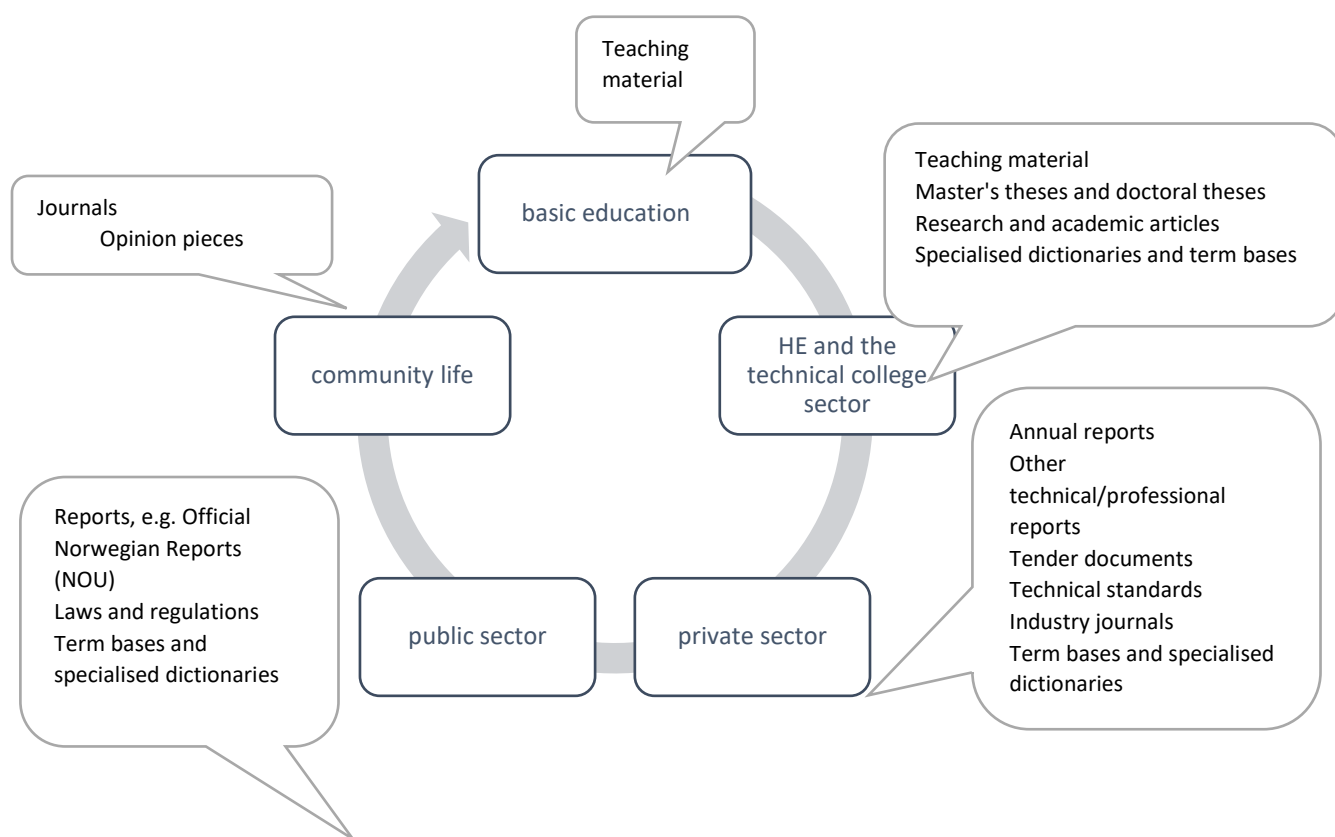
University of Amsterdam (2017) and European Commission (2012)

The professional language circle

Knowledge is not the sole preserve of any one sector, but is managed and used in many different parts of society. The professional language accompanies the knowledge. If professional language is not developed in one sector, it may have consequences for the rest of *the professional language circle*. A break in the circle may occur if there is a language shift from Norwegian to English in one of the sectors of society. The university and university college sector is especially important here. Students use professional language to learn their professions and then take it with them into working life. Moreover, research creates new knowledge and therefore new concepts and terms. If teaching and research in a field or discipline takes place in English instead of Norwegian, it becomes difficult to sustain Norwegian as a professional language in that field in the other sectors of society.

⁵⁸ Schwach and Elken (2018)

⁵⁹ Rørstad et al. (2018)



Language policy - the 'sleeping beauty'

The Ministry of Education and Research has determined that the responsibility for Norwegian professional language delegated to universities and university colleges means that they must shape their own local language strategies. The language strategies shall be based on the language policy platform adopted by Universities Norway, where *parallel language* is the key principle.⁶⁰ In brief, this principle is about striking a balance between Norwegian as a national professional language and English as an international professional language.

A survey carried out by the Language Council in spring 2018 shows that 14 out of 20 institutions have a language strategy consistent with the Universities Norway platform.⁶¹ However, the survey also shows that there are few indications that the institutions are working proactively to cultivate Norwegian as a professional language. Once again, it seems that if tasks are not subject to measurement or reporting, they are given low priority.

⁶⁰ UHR (2011)

⁶¹ This number does not include the Sami University of Applied Sciences.

Guide to language selection

To help the institutions to strike a balance between English and Norwegian, the Language Council, in cooperation with the Norwegian School of Economics and based on the reports from the Nordic Group for Parallel Language Use, has prepared a best practice model for parallel language use in higher education. The *Guide to Language Selection in the Higher Education Sector* gives specific advice about language selection for teaching, research, dissemination and administrative work and provides examples and advice on implementation.

The Western Norway University of Applied Sciences was the first institution in the sector to establish strategic language guidelines based on the recommendations in the guide. The sector should start to use this guide, preferably in collaboration with Universities Norway so that implementation is coordinated across institutions.

More English in most areas

To summarise briefly, Norwegian is being used less and less in higher education in Norway, though the proportion of Norwegian differs greatly between subjects. In 2017, Norwegian was hardly used in research publications within science and technology, while it had a share of around 30 per cent in the humanities and slightly less than 25 per cent in social science. However, within these fields, too, Norwegian is being used less than before, and there has been a significant decline since 2011.⁶² At PhD level, 90.8 per cent of the theses were written in English and 8.5 per cent were in Norwegian, with 7.7 per cent in *Bokmål* and 0.9 per cent in *Nynorsk*. The Romance languages accounted for 0.4 per cent and other languages 0.3 per cent.⁶³ As for prescribed readings, there are marked variations between subjects, but for most subjects, they are largely in Norwegian.⁶⁴

It is important to point out that when 'Norwegian' is referred to in this context, it is primarily *Bokmål* that is used. For example, only two per cent of Norwegian master's theses are written in *Nynorsk*. The corresponding figure for *Bokmål* is 54 per cent. Thus *Nynorsk* is now in a very exposed, if not marginalised, position in Norwegian higher education.

Several other indicators show that the position of English in academia is being strengthened at the expense of Norwegian:

- The number of master's theses written in Norwegian has declined markedly in the last twenty years, in favour of theses written in English.⁶⁵
- The total number of courses offered in English is increasing.⁶⁶
- More and more teaching takes place in English, especially at master's level.

⁶² The Research Council of Norway (2018)

⁶³ NIFU (Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education) (2018)

⁶⁴ Gregersen (2014)

⁶⁵ The Norwegian proportion has been reduced from 83 per cent in 1986 to 56 per cent in 2016, while the proportion of English has increased from 9 per cent in 1986 to 43 per cent in 2016 (Schwach and Elken 2018).

⁶⁶ The proportion in English has increased from 8.9 per cent in 2007 to 19.6 per cent in 2016 (Schwach and Elken 2018: 18).

- English is gaining ground in teaching materials and prescribed readings.⁶⁷

Quality of language in higher education?

While the use of English in Norwegian academia is increasing rapidly, we know little about *what kind* of English is used. It seems that most of the institutions lack systematic tuition in English professional language, for both staff and students. Meanwhile, Norwegian professional language is being treated as low priority. In the worst case this may result in a situation where the students lack a satisfactory and functional professional language in both English and Norwegian.

There are also grounds for questioning the quality assurance of language used in higher education in other areas. Every year, several dozen students want to sit their examinations in *Nynorsk*, but their linguistic rights are not respected. A survey of examinations at the University of Oslo also showed that questions set in *Nynorsk* contain many linguistic errors, and there was no quality assurance system for *Nynorsk* exam questions.⁶⁸

Norway lacks a research community that works systematically on collating knowledge about the relationship between internationalisation and language use in higher education. By comparison, this type of research is carried out in Denmark under the auspices of the *Centre for Internationalisation and Parallel Language Use (CIP)* at the University of Copenhagen. A similar research community in Norway will be important for obtaining more knowledge about what is happening in language development, as internationalisation in the sector takes shape. A community of this nature can also contribute to increased attention being paid to linguistic quality, in both Norwegian (*Nynorsk* and *Bokmål*) and English.

The committee recommends

- that top-level, effective incentives and resources should be developed to support the use of Norwegian professional language in the HE sector
- that the institutions must be measured by the extent to which they fulfil their statutory responsibility to sustain and develop Norwegian professional language, and
- that the institutions must define the Norwegian and English language skills required by students, both for their studies and to meet the needs of society.

⁶⁷ The Language Council of Norway (2017)

⁶⁸ Thingnes (2015)

Appendix 3: Numerical material from NHH - development trends

Figure A1: Credits awarded for all master's courses (MØA and MRR) divided between Norwegian and English in the years 2008–2017.⁶⁹

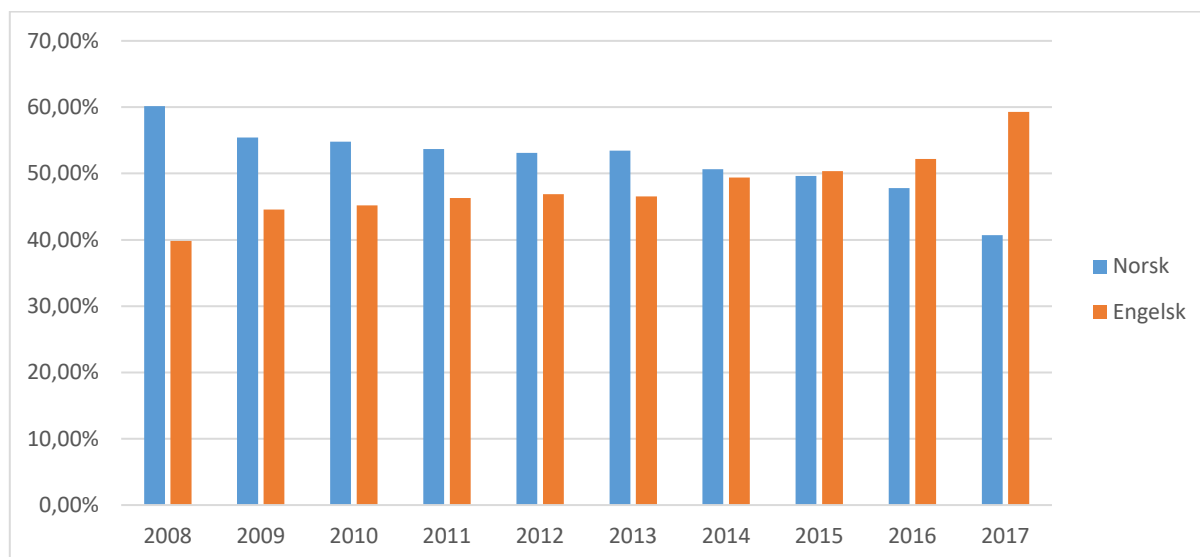
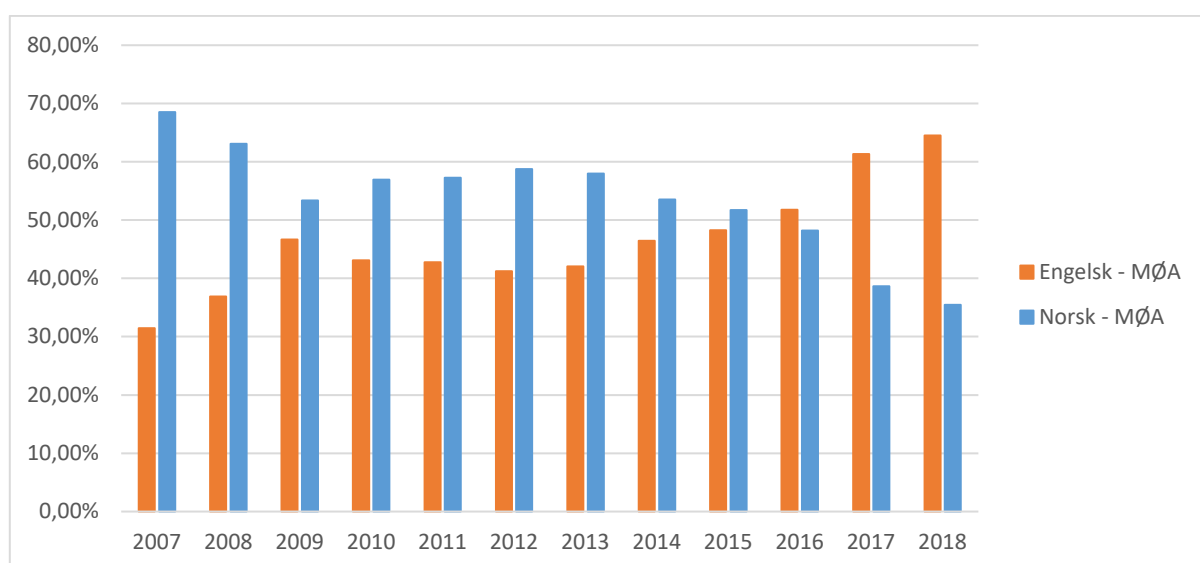


Figure A2: Credits awarded to students in the national intake to MØA divided between Norwegian and English in the years 2007–2018.⁷⁰



⁶⁹ 2007 and 2018 are not included because data are only available for one semester.

⁷⁰ Credits awarded to master's students, excluding exchange students, international degree students and MRR students. Note that 2007 only includes courses from the autumn semester and 2018 only includes courses from the spring semester.

Table A1: Proportion of credits awarded for courses taught in Norwegian and English, by specialisation, in the academic year 2017/2018

Specialisation code	Proportion English	Proportion Norwegian
BAN	100%	0%
BUS	57%	43%
ECN	79%	21%
ECO	74%	26%
ENE	100%	0%
FIE	76%	24%
INB	100%	0%
MBM	79%	21%
NBD	100%	0%
STR	61%	39%
Total	75%	25%

Appendix 4: NHH's language guidelines from 2010

NHH shall endeavour to ensure high-quality language usage in all communication, irrespective of language.

Core language guidelines

1. Norwegian is the primary language of NHH. Norwegian includes both *Bokmål* and *Nynorsk*.
2. NHH has a national responsibility to uphold and develop Norwegian as a professional language within the economic-administrative fields. The NHH Norwegian-English term base shall continue to be developed and expanded to become a national term base for economic-administrative subjects.
3. NHH shall endeavour to ensure high-quality language usage in all communication, irrespective of language.
4. All communication should take place in the language best suited to the intended recipients of the communication.
5. NHH shall practise parallel language use where appropriate.

Teaching

6. Norwegian is the primary teaching language in NHH's bachelor's programme. The general rule is that compulsory teaching shall be in Norwegian.
7. Norwegian and English are both important teaching languages in NHH's MSc programme in Economics and Business Administration. There shall be a broad variety of courses taught in Norwegian within the specialisations that have courses taught in both Norwegian and English. Norwegian is the primary teaching language in NHH's MSc Programme in Accounting. The main part of the teaching shall be in Norwegian, but English may be used, subject to academic considerations.
8. English is the primary teaching language in NHH's PhD programme.
9. NHH shall practise parallel language use in communication with students where appropriate. All information about courses, course titles, course descriptions etc. shall be presented in parallel in Norwegian and English. The course description shall clearly state the teaching language for each course.
10. Term lists (Norwegian-English) shall be made for key concepts in all economic-administrative fields at NHH. These term lists shall be incorporated into the NHH term base.

Research and dissemination

11. The choice of publication language shall be based on the target readership.
12. In order to ensure that NHH fulfils its social responsibility to disseminate research-based knowledge to the general public, research results should also be presented in Norwegian.
13. Research at NHH shall be presented in Norwegian and English on the school's websites.

14. Norwegian and English summaries shall be produced for all PhD theses.

15. A short summary (including keywords) of research articles and other publications registered in Forskdok should be produced, in both Norwegian and English.

Administrative language

16. Norwegian is the primary administrative language at NHH.

17. NHH shall practise parallel language use where appropriate, in order to ensure that all employees and students have access to relevant information in a language they are familiar with.

18. Permanent employees at NHH should have good command of both Norwegian and English.

Quality of language

19. In order to ensure high-quality language in all forms of communication, NHH shall offer its employees skills upgrading, including:

- relevant language tuition – in both Norwegian and English
- courses in academic writing
- courses in research dissemination, including how to write opinion pieces and media courses
- proof-reading and quality assurance of articles, summaries, etc.

Appendix 5: Prescribed readings for compulsory courses in the BSc Programme in Economics and Business Administration (BØA: from course description H18)⁷¹

Subject	Norwegian	English
IKE1 Introductory course in ethics	X	
RET1 Legal studies for economists	X	
BED1 Introduction to business administration	X	
BED2 Financial accounting	X	
BED3 Investment and finance	(X)	X
BED4 Business economic decisions		X
BED5 Economic systems and economic management		X
SOL1 Psychology in organization and leadership	X	
SOL2 Marketing	X	
SOL3 Organisational theory		X
SOL4 Strategic management	X	
SAM1 Introduction to economics		X
SAM2 Introduction to microeconomics		X
SAM3 Macroeconomics	(X)	X
SAM4 International trade and welfare theory	X	X
MET1 Mathematics for economists	X	
MET2 Statistics for economists	X	
MET3 Data processing for economists	X	X
MET4 Empirical methods		X

⁷¹ A cross in brackets means there is a small amount of literature in the language concerned.

Appendix 6: Proposal for new language guidelines, with comments

<p><i>The language guidelines shall contribute to realising NHH's strategy and its objective to be "a driving force for development in business and society", and to be "a leading international business school that leads the way in the development and dissemination of knowledge and expertise". "NHH shall pursue a language policy that effectively balances NHH's social mission in Norway with its international ambitions". (Strategy 2018–2021)</i></p>		
General		Comments
1.	NHH shall use high-quality, recipient-oriented language in all communication.	
2.	Norwegian and English are both important languages at NHH.	
3.	NHH shall use the Norwegian language variants <i>Nynorsk</i> and <i>Bokmål</i> as stipulated in the Language Act. Staff and students whose primary language variant is <i>Nynorsk</i> are encouraged to use this variant.	The Language Act, see https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/1980-04-11-5
4.	NHH shall practise parallel language use where appropriate.	See Chapter 1 of the report for the definition of parallel language use.
5.	<p>Permanent staff at NHH shall have sufficient Norwegian and English language skills to enable them to communicate with students, staff and external contacts in a satisfactory manner.</p> <p>i. Permanent staff who lack Norwegian or other Scandinavian language skills when first employed, shall learn Norwegian to intermediate level B1 within three years of their permanent employment starting.</p> <p>Uthaug supports the main part of guideline 5, but not the sub-guideline.</p>	<p>For descriptions of the levels, see https://no.wikipedia.org/wiki/Det_felles_europeiske_rammeverket_for_spr%C3%A5k</p>

	Doppelhofer and Mjøs do not support guideline 5 in its entirety.	
6.	NHH shall offer its staff the opportunity to upgrade relevant language skills.	This guideline does not necessarily mean that NHH itself will offer this tuition, but that staff may be offered relevant language training in Norway or elsewhere.
7.	NHH shall actively manage the maintenance and development of Norwegian professional language within the economic-administrative fields, in order to fulfil its statutory responsibility.	The Act relating to Universities and University Colleges states that ‘Universities and University Colleges have a responsibility to for sustain and develop Norwegian professional language’ (2009, p.1–7).
Teaching		
8.	<p>Norwegian is the primary teaching language in NHH’s bachelor’s programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The general rule is that compulsory courses shall be taught in Norwegian. ii. The prescribed readings for the compulsory courses shall be in Norwegian if good Norwegian textbooks exist. When the prescribed readings for these courses are in English, the course description should list supplementary readings in Norwegian. 	<p>Recommendation by Universities Norway (report 2006, p. 11): ‘The Scandinavian languages Norwegian, Swedish and Danish should be considered to have equal status as teaching languages.’ Most HE institutions treat Norwegian, Danish and Swedish as having equal status as teaching languages.</p> <p>As seen in Appendix 4, the situation regarding prescribed readings is that most of the compulsory courses in the BØA programme use course readings in Norwegian. In the autumn of 2018, 6 of the 19 compulsory courses had course readings that were only in English.</p>

9a.	<p>Norwegian and English are both important teaching languages in NHH's MSc programme in Economics and Business Administration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. It shall be possible to take all specialisations in English. ii. The aim is that neither the courses offered in English, nor those in Norwegian, shall account for less than 1/3 of the credits awarded. iii. If the number of students makes it necessary to offer the course twice, the course should be given in both Norwegian and English. <p>The majority of the working group (Dahl, Gunnerud, Kamsvåg and Møen) support this version of guideline 9.</p>	<p>In 2016/2017, the proportion of credits awarded to students in the national intake, for Norwegian-language courses, was 31 per cent. Thus the present situation is that Norwegian use is approximately at the level proposed as a target figure. See Chapter 3, Figure 1 and Table 1.</p>
9b.	<p>English is the primary teaching language in NHH's MSc Programme in Economics and Business Administration. Choice of language is governed by academic and pedagogic considerations.</p> <p>The minority of the working group (Doppelhofer, Mjøs and Uthaug) support this version of guideline 9.</p>	
10.	<p>Norwegian is the primary teaching language in NHH's MSc Programme in Accounting.</p>	
11.	<p>English is the primary teaching language in NHH's PhD programme.</p>	
12.	<p>Information about the study programmes shall be available in both English and Norwegian.</p>	<p>This does not necessarily mean that the same amount of information is provided in both languages, cf. the parallel language principle as defined in Chapter 1 of the report.</p>
13.	<p>The course description shall clearly state the teaching language for each course.</p>	
14.	<p>Exam questions will be set in the teaching language for the course, unless otherwise stated in the course description.</p>	

	i. The students may choose whether to answer exam questions in a Scandinavian language or in English, unless otherwise stated in the course description.	
15.	NHH shall ensure that Norwegian and English terms for the key concepts in the compulsory courses in the bachelor's programme are accessible in a national term portal.	
16.	NHH shall offer tuition in communication principles and academic writing in order to ensure that linguistic, textual and genre competence is developed in all study programmes.	The tuition may be in the form of special courses, parts of other courses or digital resources.
17.	NHH shall offer courses in Norwegian language, culture and social affairs to foreign students.	
Research and dissemination		
18.	Research shall normally be published in English. Research of particular interest to the Norwegian-speaking public should also be published in Norwegian. i. NHH shall contribute to sustaining Norwegian-language academic journals in the economic-administrative area.	NHH's strategic focus is on international publication. The working group considers that in parallel with this there is great value in publishing research that is particularly relevant to the Norwegian public, in Norwegian. In this context, NHH's alumni and public authorities are important target groups. The sub-guideline is also consistent with the recommendations from the Language Council's Language Policy for the Future Committee (see Appendix 2).
19.	NHH shall disseminate research-based knowledge to the general public, the private sector and the public sector in both Norwegian and English. i. NHH's social responsibility implies that the main focus when disseminating information is on the Norwegian-speaking public. Dissemination to this audience shall normally be in Norwegian.	
20.	NHH shall offer tuition in disseminating research results in Norwegian and English.	

21.	A popularised summary of all PhD theses shall be published in both Norwegian and English.	
22.	NHH shall offer linguistic quality assurance for research publications and dissemination pieces.	
Administration and information		
23.	The administrative language at NHH is Norwegian. i. Subordinate organisational units may choose English, subject to Board approval.	
24.	NHH shall ensure that all staff and students receive relevant information in a language they can understand.	
25.	In external communications and official documents written in English, NHH shall use British English.	
Implementation and management		
26.	The implementation and management of the language guidelines shall be anchored in the NHH leadership at all levels.	
27.	Establishing practices that ensure compliance with the guidelines is a line management responsibility within the organisation. i. The responsibility includes developing action plans and progress reporting procedures.	

