

Guidelines for the organisation of departments and the holding of elections in departments at the Norwegian School of Economics

The regulations were prepared as guidelines for the departments on 20 March 2009 following the Board's decision on the organisation of departments of 16 February 2009.

1. The department system

Academic activities at NHH are organised in departments. All employees in teaching and research positions are affiliated to one of the following departments:

- Department of Professional and Intercultural Communication
- Department of Finance
- Department of Finance and Management Science
- Department of Accounting, Auditing and Law
- Department of Economics
- Department of Strategy and Management.

In the event of doubt, the rector shall decide which department an employee is affiliated to.

2. The departments

2.1 The departments' duties

The departments are responsible for teaching, research, dissemination, academic development work and other academic activities within specific subject areas.

The departments allocate the financial and personnel resources placed at their disposal in a manner that enables them to perform their duties.

Matters of an academic nature shall normally be dealt with by the department or departments whose subject area(s) they fall within.

In the event of doubt, the rector decides whether a matter is of an academic nature, and which department should consider it.

2.1 The departments' management

Each department shall have a head of department, a deputy head of department and a person responsible for teaching.

The departments shall have the following governing bodies:

- Board of the department
- Recommendation committee (the board of the department can choose to function as the recommendation committee)

In addition, departments can have:

- Select committees

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- Discipline groups and/or research groups
- A person responsible for research, persons responsible for other functions as relevant

2.3 The boards of the departments

2.3.1 The authority of the boards of departments

The Board of NHH has delegated decision-making powers to the departments within the framework of the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges Section 9-1 (2).

The board is the department's supreme body. It is responsible for activities in the department, including developments and performance within the limits of the law and guidelines laid down by superior bodies.

The board of the department can in turn delegate authority to the head of the department, working groups, discipline/research groups, the head of administration of the department, persons with responsibility for functions and committees in the department. The board of the department shall consider matters that involve important issues of principle or are of material importance.

The board of the department shall make its decisions at meetings. The board forms a quorum when more than half the members are present and vote.

The business of the board of the department, or other bodies to which the board has delegated authority, is to consider the following matters, among others:

1. Important matters relating to research, teaching, researcher training and external dissemination of knowledge at the department.
The board shall facilitate the provision of high-quality education in the programmes that the department offers. Correspondingly, the board of the department has overall responsibility for research and research production at the department.
2. Responsibility for the allocation of the resources placed at the department's disposal in accordance with guidelines laid down by superior authorities.
3. Attend to the department's long-term recruitment and personnel planning within the framework of NHH's personnel policy.
4. Participate in appointments by:
 - proposing announcements of vacancies in the department within the framework set out by superior authorities
 - drafting texts advertising teaching and research positions
 - proposing members of the expert committee in connection with appointments to teaching and research positions in the department

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- recommending applicants for teaching and research positions, including research fellowships, in the department. (This only applies if the board of the department has chosen to function as the recommendation committee.)
- 5. Consider and make a prioritised recommendation concerning applications for leave of absence for research purposes.
- 6. Academic and administrative responsibility for externally funded projects as stated in special rules concerning contract activities at NHH.

2.3.2 The composition of the boards of departments

The boards of departments shall have between seven and ten¹ members, and have the following composition²:

- a) Head of department
- b) Deputy head
- c) Between two and five employees in teaching and research positions.
- d) If temporary staff make up more than 25% of the department's employees in teaching and research positions, one ³ of the board members under item c) shall be elected⁴ from among that group. If this group comprises less than 25%, such representation is voluntary.
- e) Head of administration of the department
- f) Two students.

Gender equality shall as far as possible be addressed in the composition of the boards of departments.

The term of office is four years for all board members, with the exception of representatives of temporary employees and students. The terms of office for these groups are two years and one year, respectively.

The department shall have a person responsible for teaching. This office shall be held by one or more of the members under item c)⁵.

¹ If a board has an even number of members, the chair shall have the casting vote.

² See section 4.2 fourth paragraph for information about when the composition and number of members of the board shall be clarified.

³ Compare with section 4.1, second paragraph.

⁴ See section 4.1, fourth and fifth paragraphs

⁵ See section 4.5.

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The boards of departments can grant others, including employees in secondary positions, access to the board meetings with the right to speak and make proposals.

3. Head of department, deputy head of department and person responsible for teaching

3.1 Authority and responsibility

The head and deputy head of department and head of administration make up the day-to-day management of the department. The head of department is the department's most senior executive. The head of department chairs the board of the department and oversees the department's activities on its behalf. The head of department and the deputy head in his/her stead, are entitled to attend meetings of all the department's councils and committees. The head and deputy head of a department are expected to work as a team.

The head of department's responsibilities include the following:

1. Convene meetings and propose agendas. He/she is responsible for the preparation of matters for consideration by the select committee, if one is appointed, and the board of the department.
2. Contact with the Board, NHH's academic and administrative management and the institution's other departments.
3. Financial management and resource management, including pay frameworks within the limits set out.
4. Personnel responsibility for all the department's employees.
5. Consider and submit a prioritised recommendation concerning applications for grant funding.

If the head of department is absent or leaves the position during the last year of his/her term of office, the deputy head shall take over. If the head of department leaves the position earlier, a new head of department shall be elected.

4. Elections

4.1 Voting rights, right to nominate candidates and eligibility

All employees in at least 50% of a full-time position with a duration of more than one year and who took up their positions at NHH no later than on 1 February in the election year have a right to vote⁶ in elections for heads and deputy heads of departments. All employees who have the right to vote have the right to nominate candidates. In elections for heads and

⁶ Research fellows whose permanent place of work is not the Norwegian School of Economics and employees who are on leave of absence to work in another position lose the right to vote. This does not apply, however, if the person in question is affiliated to another department during the leave of absence. In such cases, the heads of departments will decide at which department the person in question has the right to vote.

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deputy heads of departments, votes from temporary staff in teaching and research positions shall weigh 25%.

All permanent employees in teaching and research positions who have the right to vote are eligible for election to the offices of head of department, deputy head of department, person responsible for teaching and representative of permanent⁷ employees in teaching and research positions.

Only permanent employees in teaching and research positions have the right to vote in elections for representatives of this group.⁸

If temporary employees in teaching and research positions are to have a representative⁹ on the board, employees in this group have voting rights pursuant to the requirements in the first paragraph above. Temporary employees with at least two years left of their contracts are eligible for election.

Temporary employees in teaching and research positions are responsible for electing their representative to the board in accordance with the criteria stipulated in Chapter 4 to the extent that they are applicable.

The Student Union at NHH (NHHS) is responsible for electing student representatives.

4.2 Election of heads and deputy heads of departments

Heads and deputy heads of departments are elected at an election meeting held in the spring semester. The election is normally carried out by majority vote^{10 11}, and it may be held in writing if any of those present so demand.

The head of department is responsible for convening all those entitled to vote to attend the meeting. The notice of meeting must be sent at least two weeks in advance.

⁷ Compare with section 2.3.2 d).

⁸ If the temporary employees in teaching and research positions are not to elect their own representative, they shall be entitled to vote in the election for representatives of permanent employees in teaching and research positions pursuant to the rules regarding elections of heads and deputy heads of departments – section 4.1, first paragraph.

⁹ See section 2.3.2 d).

¹⁰ See the 'Regulations for the election of the Rector, Deputy Rector and members of the Board at the Norwegian School of Economics (NHH)' Section 6.

¹¹ The alternative to a majority vote is preferential voting, see section 4.3.

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The meeting is opened by the head of department. The meeting then elects a person to chair the meeting.

The first item on the agenda is to decide on the size of the board of the department.

4.3 Election of representatives of permanent employees in teaching and research positions to the boards of departments

Representatives of employees in teaching and research positions are normally elected by preferential voting¹². The election is carried out using a computer program¹³.

The head of department is responsible for organising the election. A separate election committee can be appointed, however.

The alternative to preferential voting is a majority vote. If this voting system is to be used, it must be unanimously supported by those eligible to vote.

The election can be held at the same time as the election of the head and deputy head of department, section 4.2.

4.4 Common rules for nominations, mandatory attendance, absence and conditions for a meeting to be deemed valid

Nominations must be submitted in writing, signed by the proposer, to the secretary of the board of the department no later than one week before the election. It is not permitted to nominate more candidates than the number to be elected.

Attendance at election meetings is mandatory for everyone who has been called to attend, unless they have a legitimate reason for absence. Everyone who attends an election meeting or has received an electronic notice of meeting is obliged to take part in the vote. Blank ballot papers may be submitted.

The head of department must be notified of any absence as soon as it becomes clear that a person eligible to vote cannot participate in the vote. Legitimate reasons for absence include leave of absence, sickness absence or travel, and teaching duties that cannot be rescheduled.

¹² See 'Provisions concerning the procedure for preferential voting' adopted by the Board of NHH on 22 June 2001.

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If a person who has given advance notification of absence nevertheless attends the meeting, he/she will still be entitled to vote. In such cases, it must be clarified whether an advance vote has been submitted, and if so, it must be returned.

The election is valid when more than half of those eligible to vote have voted.

4.5 Appointment of persons responsible for teaching

The office of person responsible for teaching shall be filled by a board member or board members who represent permanent employees in teaching and research positions.

Once the board of the department has constituted itself, it shall appoint a person to fill the office and decide how it is to be organised. The office can be shared by several board members, and the term of office of the person responsible for teaching can be divided between several periods within the overall election period.

An alternative to the above paragraph, is for the election meeting to decide how the office of the person responsible for teaching is to be organised. Such a decision will be binding on the board.

4.6 The duty of employees to accept election – notification of exemption

Employees who are eligible for election have a duty to accept election pursuant to these regulations and to fill the office they are elected to. However, a person who has held the office may refuse re-election for a period of time corresponding to the time that he/she has served continuously in the office in question.

If an elected person did not participate in the election and did not know that he/she had been nominated to office, the person must notify the board within a week of becoming aware of the election of any grounds for exemption that he/she wishes to invoke.

4.7 Records and reporting

Records shall be kept of the elections. The records shall be signed by the persons responsible for organising the election. The Board of NHH and the other boards of departments shall be informed of the result of the election.

4.8 The right to cast a vote in the event of disputes concerning the right to vote

A person who is refused the right to vote, shall nevertheless be allowed to submit a ballot paper. Such ballot papers are placed in special sealed envelopes marked with the voter's name and address. The ballot paper shall be stored securely in the event of an appeal being filed.

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A person who is refused the right to vote shall be informed that he/she can appeal against this decision to the Board of NHH.

4.9 Objections to elections

Everyone who has the right to vote in an election can file a complaint about errors in the election or procedural errors. The complaint must be submitted to the board no more than one week after the election result is declared.

The board can decide that a recount and recalculation of the outcome shall be carried out if this can remedy the error. If the board believes that the error had a material effect on the outcome of the election, a new election must be held. The new election shall be held as soon as possible.