

Equity in Education for all

- understanding central concepts



Equity in Education • Inclusive Education
Adapted Education • Special Education

THE NORWEGIAN DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training is responsible for the development of primary and secondary education and is the executive agency for the Ministry of Education and Research. The objective of the Directorate is to ensure that children, young persons and adults receive the high-quality education they are entitled to.

The main duties of the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training are to document the status of primary and secondary education, assess it and provide guidance and support for development activities.

The Directorate is responsible for all national statistics concerning primary and secondary education and on the basis of these statistics initiates, develops and monitors research and development.

The Directorate has the overall responsibility for supervising education and the governance of the education sector, as well as the implementation of Acts of Parliament and regulations. The Directorate is also responsible for managing the Norwegian Support System for Special Education (Statped), state-owned schools and the educational direction of the National Education Centres.

Equity in Education is a national goal and the overriding principle that applies to all areas of education.

Education should encourage everyone to take responsibility in their work and social life, and prepare them for an education and an occupation in accordance with their abilities and interests, independent of traditional patterns with respect to gender, functional disabilities and social or cultural background.

EQUITY IN EDUCATION

- means to provide equal opportunities in education regardless of abilities and aptitudes, age, gender, skin colour, sexual orientation, social background, religious or ethnic background, place of residence, family education or family finances. Equity in Education must therefore be understood on the system level,

using a national perspective based on overriding legislation, regulations and syllabuses, and on an individual level, adapting the education to individual abilities and aptitudes.

To ensure Equity in Education for all, positive discrimination is required, not equal treatment.

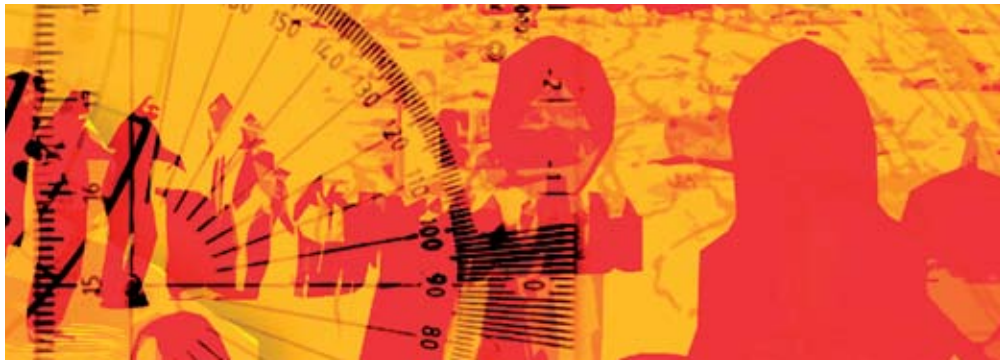


INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

- means that everyone should participate in society on an equal basis – academically, socially and culturally. This places demands on the education arena and on each individual, who must be able to build good relations while respecting individual differences and values. Inclusion is both a process and a goal, where the educational institution should accommodate the individual's aptitudes and needs in the best possible manner.

This requires diversity and adaptation in the educational programme to enable each individual to participate more and receive more benefits from being an active member of the community.

Inclusive education means that the system must adapt to each individual and group. This does not, however, excuse the individual from the responsibility of being a willing participant.



ADAPTED EDUCATION

- the school owner (the local or county authority), and the administration and staff at the educational institution must undertake to provide satisfactory and adequate teaching based on the individual's abilities and aptitudes.

Adapted education involves choosing teaching material, methods and structures to ensure that each individual develops the basic skills and satisfies the competence objectives. This means that the teaching must be adapted

on the individual and group levels. Adapted education does not mean that all teaching is individualised, but that all aspects of the learning environment take the variations among the pupils and apprentices into consideration.

Inclusive education focuses on the common community while bearing in mind the consequences for the individual. Adapted education focuses on the individual while bearing in mind the consequences for the common community.



SPECIAL EDUCATION

- is a right guaranteed by the Norwegian Education Act which is intended to ensure adapted and equitable education for persons who do not, or cannot, gain satisfactory benefits from the regular teaching programme. While adapted education is for everyone, the right to special education is determined by an assessment of the individual by experts. The decision that is reached must be so clear and complete that

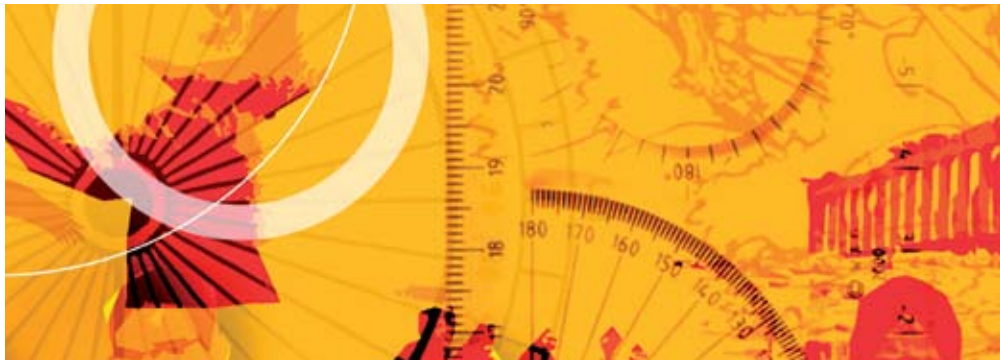
there is no doubt about the scope, structure and content of the teaching programme. All pupils receiving special education should have an individual learning plan.

Before a decision about providing special education is taken, an expert assessment should be made. If special education is refused, reasons must be given.

The prerequisite for equity and adapted education for all, and special education for the few, is that the education is available to everyone, when it comes to buildings, teaching materials, methods and structure, and that a good learning environment is provided for all. In general this can only be achieved in an inclusive environment with participation and commitment on the part of the pupils, parents and guardians,

teachers, school administrators, school owners, assistance agencies and politicians.

Good schools focus on the quality of their teaching and stimulate academic, personal and social progress. School administrations, educators and other employees must cooperate positively with each other, the pupils, parents and guardians and academic environments.



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