

Turbo Evaluation for Employers

Fast Track Evaluation of Higher Education Credentials in Norway



iQ | **GOOD PRACTICE**
to the point

Target Groups for Transfer:
National and International Policy Makers, Ministries

The Turbo Evaluation in a Nutshell:

Norway's Turbo evaluation enables a company to hire a person who has not yet obtained a general recognition for her or his foreign educational credentials with foreign educational documents.

Organiser:

NOKUT (Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, find more information [here](#)) is an independent expert unit under the Ministry of Education and Research. The board of NOKUT is the agency's supreme governing body.



Norway
for the year 2016

Norway's population in 2016:
5.3 million

Immigrant population
(first and second generation immigrants):
16.8% of overall population

Employment rate of immigrants: 60.2%
non-immigrants: 66.7%

Starting position/challenge

In Norway, as elsewhere, the challenge has been to evaluate the foreign credentials of international talents. In order to manage the 8,000 applications per year, the country has established a general recognition procedure for persons holding a foreign higher education that allows a decision on the equivalence of foreign degrees with Norwegian degrees within two months. However, Norwegian companies that want to employ a person with foreign qualifications, often required even faster answers. In particular, since the rising number of recognition applications increased the risk of a lengthened evaluation process, Norway searched for a new approach to support companies. What happens if a company has found a suitable foreign applicant, who has not yet received or applied for a general recognition? How can these companies be provided with an evaluation in a timely fashion? Since 2014, in Norway, the answer to these questions has a name: Turbo evaluation. The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) offers this evaluation. As a rule of thumb, NOKUT carries out a non-binding evaluation free of charge within five working days. Employers can request the Turbo evaluation via E-Mail, attaching the candidate's personal and professional information and his or her educational certificates.

Implementation of the model

A Turbo evaluation can be carried out when a company has evaluated the job applications and selected a potential candidate for the position of a non-regulated profession. Sometimes, employers request a Turbo evaluation of the entirety higher education documents of a person who is already hired, leading to higher salaries and better career opportunities for the candidate in question. While the procedure is not legally binding, the online process guarantees employers that the higher education degrees of the candidate in question are equivalent to those of the Norwegian counterparts. NOKUT provides a written estimation including three elements: Whether the education is accredited in the country in question; whether



the foreign education is equivalent to a Norwegian degree in the Norwegian education system and, finally, the subject of the degree. The Turbo evaluation is based on a limited set of information about the personal background of the candidate, the university/college along with the study programme he or she attended. Apart from an authorisation form signed by the candidate in order to consent to the evaluation, the translated educational documents and transcripts for the entire course of studies (e.g. for the respective bachelor's, master's and Ph.D. programmes) have to be included in the e-mail to NOKUT. Documents in a number of other languages (e.g. Russian, Arabic, Turkish, Chinese, German, Polish and Farsi) can normally be submitted without translation, depending on the language skills of the employees working at NOKUT.

Summary

The Turbo evaluation combines speed and high evaluation standards, as the evaluation is executed by experienced case officers who are credited evaluators and part of the overall recognition structure in Norway. As a result, the evaluation has been turned into credible advice based on years of in-depth experience with the matter at hand.

Time is a Key Factor

Three Questions for Stig Arne Skjerven, Director of Foreign Education at NOKUT

What is the innovative aspect of the Turbo evaluation?

In an employment process, the assessment of foreign education sometimes takes more time than an employer actually has at his or her disposal. Although the general recognition procedure for foreign degrees in Norway is relatively fast, we recognised that we should offer something additional for companies in order to enable them to act quickly when a good job candidate comes along. The time aspect is a key factor. The Turbo assessment makes it easier for employers to assess the foreign education that job seekers have obtained and enables employers to consider international applicants for interviews and jobs.

Would it be possible to introduce the format in other countries?

In line with NOKUT's core values, we want our services to be as relevant to society as

possible. The Turbo evaluation will be equally important to countries experiencing the same or a greater level of immigration, whether people migrate for work, family or humanitarian reasons. We have proof that other countries can profit from the Turbo evaluation concept. Denmark, for instance, has already developed a similar arrangement.



What can the model achieve in the long term?

The scheme is aimed at improving the opportunities for jobseekers with foreign qualifications in order to bring their valuable competences to fruition in Norway. This has become increasingly important, as companies in Norway have experienced shortages in skilled workers over the last few years. Bottleneck vacancies for non-regulated professions can be found for different types of engineers as well as jobs in Information and Communications Technology (ICT). To fill in the gaps, companies increasingly look into tapping into the potential of international talents. This is unlikely to change in the future. Having companies interested in attracting international talents is important for every job seeker with an international background but it is also vital to other stakeholders, such as employers and educational institutions. Essentially, the Turbo evaluation produces significant results for society as a whole, too.

Dr. Are Turmo, Director for Education and Skills at the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO)

Quick Feedback is Often Crucial



Attracting international applicants can be quite time-consuming, especially when it comes to workers with foreign credentials. Time is truly of the essence here. As such, the Turbo evaluation provides a much-needed service to companies enabling the latter to attract international talents. Dr. Are Turmo, Director for Education and Skills at the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) therefore appreciates NOKUT's evaluation scheme.

"It can be challenging for companies to evaluate education at foreign universities and colleges", he explains. Thus, Turmo does not only value the support provided by NOKUT because of its quality, but also because of its speed.

"Quick feedback is often crucial", according to the Director of Education and Skills. "Quick responses from NOKUT is definitely a strength of the scheme", he says. Similar positive responses can be heard from Project Manager Monica Odden Myklebust of Ringerike Business Association, an employer who successfully hired a young Syrian engineer through the Turbo evaluation. "We used Turbo evaluation when we were hiring a trainee for one of our partner companies", the employer recalls. "The Syrian candidate brought all the necessary qualifications and we were excited, but since we thought we were unable to evaluate his credentials in a timely fashion, we started looking for other candidates". Then the employer discovered Turbo evaluation: "The process was efficient and hassle-free. With simple instructions and a close follow-up, our case was resolved quickly." The Syrian engineer, as the employer adds, "is now thoroughly enjoying his new life at Ringerike. The company is very pleased to have hired him."

Authors: Alisha Molter, ebb; Dr. Johnny Van Hove, ebb

Editor: Dr. Johnny Van Hove, ebb

Photos and illustrations: NOKUT, NHO, Julia Schlax (RockAByte GmbH)

Layout: Gereon Nolte, ZWH

Version: 2018

www.netzwerk-iq.de

Network IQ

The Network "Integration through Qualification (IQ)" aims at sustainable improvements in the labour market integration of adults with a migration background. The programme is funded by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) and the European Social Fund (ESF).

Strategic partners in implementing the programme are the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Federal Employment Agency (BA).

The Network "Integration through Qualification (IQ)" is a programme funded by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) and the European Social Fund (ESF).



In cooperation with:

