

# Students' legal security

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From time to time, cases arise where students feel unfairly treated. It can be about administrative decisions, examination, censorship, assessment system and teaching. This is something NMBU should have improve further. All rules are in NMBU's regulations or are authorized there. Unfortunately, the regulations are both difficult to find on the website and difficult to read. It is also unreasonable to demand that individual students should be able to interpret heavy legal texts on their own. NMBU should therefore be better at protecting students' legal security at all levels. This can be done by improving the dissemination of rights, duties and processes that include students.

During the corona pandemic, many students noticed the importance of predictability in their studies. When an exam is moved all out of sudden, it has a big impact on our everyday lives. Assuming a worst-case scenario, students may drop subjects or take fewer points than planned. It is also important to recognize that studying for a pass / fail exam is something completely different than studying for an exam with a letter grade. When the assessment form changes in the middle of the semester, it can put the student in an unpleasant situation. Such cases are typical examples of the rule of law not being good enough.

The regulations of the NMBU follow the legal method. This means that they are formulated in a way that can be difficult to understand for students without a background in law. While this may be an obstacle, it is not necessarily the regulations themselves that are the source of the problems. Much can be done with the routines at NMBU to improve legal security. An example of this could be to include training on the democratic processes at NMBU as a common compulsory course. This can make it clear that the university is engaged in education.

One measure to make the regulations more accessible is to improve the use of the student ombudsman. The student ombudsman at NMBU is an important resource for students' legal security. Unfortunately, the offer is not well enough known. Even if the student ombudsman is not one of the parts mattering concerning students, it is important that you have access to good advice if you need it. Improving the visibility and use of the student ombudsman is a very important step on the way to ensuring students' legal security.

Another possibility for NMBU when it comes to improving students' legal security is that the university can ensure that students and all employees understand where to get help with such issues. Direct and correct referral will benefit students, both by easing their workload when they want to raise an issue, and to improve confidence to the processes at the university.

Having knowledge of the rules that affect one's everyday study should not be a special skill only some students have. Of course, not all students need to have a full overview of all the regulations of the NMBU but work must be done to have a general knowledge of them and where they are located. Although some of the responsibility for knowing the regulations can be placed on the students, the responsibility for dissemination lies with the university. Course responsible, lecturers and supervisors are in a position where a simple decision they make can have a major

impact on students' everyday lives. Efforts should therefore be made to increase competence in rights, duties, and processes at NMBU. This applies to both students and staff.

The Student Parliament at NMBU demands that:

- NMBU shall, in collaboration with the Student Board, work to ensure that the rules in NMBU's regulations are clear and easy for students to find and understand.
- NMBU shall systematically review its routines for students to have legal security at all levels. This applies in particular to how NMBU disseminates information about rights, obligations and processes.
- International students should be recognized as a vulnerable group when it comes to the rule of law. Extra measures must be applied to ensure that they are informed of their rights, obligations, and processes at NMBU.
- The student ombudsman is a great resource for students' legal security, and visibility and availability should be prioritized accordingly.
- Efforts will be made to increase transparency around the processes that lead to a resolution. This is especially true in cases that affect everyday study or study progression.
- Students must have very good predictability for both the examination and the assessment system.
- Efforts will be made to ensure that employees and students receive good training in democracy and rights at NMBU.
- It should be easy for every student and employee at NMBU to know who to contact in different types of cases. If not, the student should easily be directed to the right person.