

Follow up of apprentices in Akershus

Summary of Oppfølging av lærlinger i Akershus Fafo-rapport 2016:31

The follow-up provided to apprentices in Akershus has been the main topic of this project. Its objective has been to chart the quality of this follow-up as it is practised today. The project also aimed to provide Akershus county authority with an opportunity to assess whether a more targeted development effort is required, and whether there are any industries/crafts, apprenticeship training office or individual enterprises that stand out positively and thus could help provide input to further quality enhancement. The main research questions in the report are:

- How good is the follow-up provided to apprentices in Akershus?
- Are there any significant differences in quality between industries or individual crafts?
- Are there any areas within the concept of 'good follow-up' in which the quality is especially high or especially different from the others?

The main topic in the report focuses on whether the apprentices are provided with 'good follow-up'. The county authority is responsible for ensuring that the right to upper secondary education is upheld and for quality assurance and monitoring. The authority must approve training enterprise, review the annual reports from them to ensure that they comply with the requirements for having apprenticeships, and make provisions for craft and journeyman's examinations. Accordingly, 'good follow-up' on the part of the county authority means ensuring a minimum standard. Regulations in the national quality system for vocational education (NKVS-FY) state that the county authority may go beyond its statutory responsibilities. The development of a "quality chart" by Akershus county authority provides an example. 'Good follow-up' on the part of the county authority may therefore be regarded as more than just ensuring a minimum standard; it may also mean providing support and guidance wherever needed. Training establishments need to take responsibility for the professional development (and well-being) of its apprentices, since this is a key element in a well-functioning apprenticeship scheme. The follow-up from the county authority thus needs to have a scope and a form that does not undermine or dilute the responsibilities of the training establishments.

'Good follow-up' from the county authority may thus be regarded as including disclosure of gross negligence, maintenance of a minimum standard, and support for and

reinforcement of the enterprise's ability to provide adequate training, without thereby undermining the enterprise's willingness to take responsibility for this training.

'Good follow-up from the training establishments' means provision of professional guidance and training throughout the apprenticeship period, and performance of the biannual assessment in consultation with the apprentice.

With their function as intermediaries, the apprenticeship training office acts as a point of contact between the county authority and the training establishments. In this project we wanted to examine the way in which the apprenticeship training office exercise their functions.

To answer the research questions we have used quantitative as well as qualitative methods. The methods used include an analysis of available data from Vigo and the Apprenticeship Surveys from 2014 and 2015, as well as three case studies of crafts: sales, child/youth welfare and carpentering. In addition, we have conducted a number of qualitative interviews and a workshop with relevant stakeholders.

