

## Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Norway\*



International Confederation of Chimney Sweeps Trade Union

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## 1.0 The Norwegian system of VET

Norway has a VET system built upon the tripartite cooperation principle. A system of cooperation, mandated by the Education Act, is established both at national and regional level, involving both employers' and workers' unions.

At national level, the National Council for VET, a body for cooperation on vocational education and training, appointed by the Ministry, gives advice and takes initiatives within VET. One Vocational Training Council exists for each VET programme.

At regional level, there are county vocational training boards, one in each county. These boards have specific advisory tasks as stated in the Education Act. The organization of pupils/apprentices is represented in both in the National Council for VET and in the County Vocational Training Boards.



Education and training is conducted both in schools and in enterprises. Both public and private enterprises accept apprentices and are approved as training enterprises by the county. Training Offices and Training Circles, enterprise driven cooperation ensuring apprenticeship place provision, have become increasingly common.

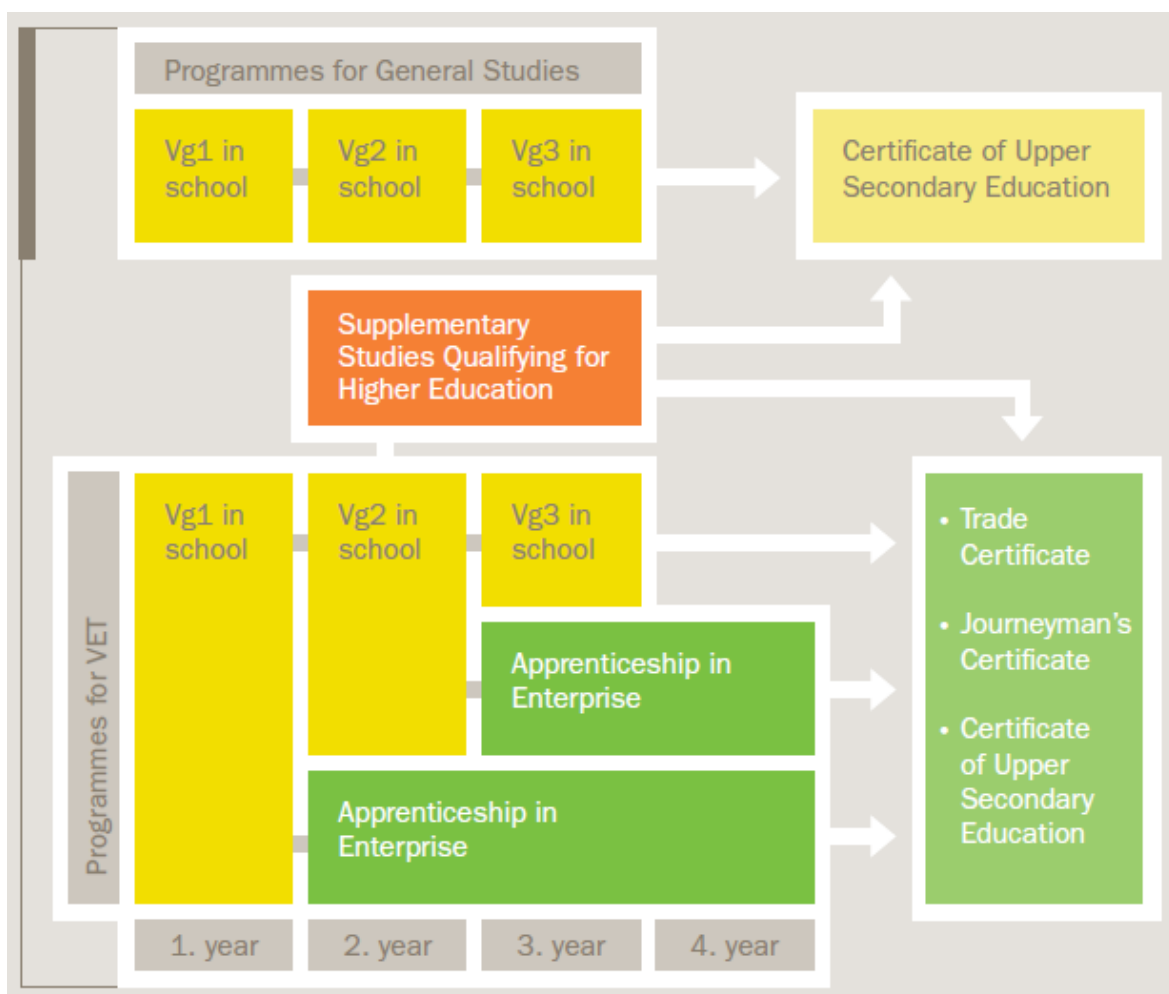
The first stage at which VET is provided in Norway is at lower secondary level through Elective programme subjects (utdanningsvalg). These enable 8–10th year students to try out subjects from the different upper secondary level programmes, including VET.

Having completed lower secondary education, a student can choose to enter one of nine Vocational Education Programmes.

The standard model for VET at upper secondary level is often called the 2+2-model. This refers to the division of the standard four year programme into two years school-based training followed by two years enterprise-based training which corresponds to one year in school. The model carries a certain degree of flexibility depending on the different programmes.

After the first year at upper secondary level in one of the nine programmes, the student has to choose between several specialisations in year 12 leading to a further specialisation in year 13 when the profession is chosen. The subjects within VET are divided into Common Core Subjects, Common Programme Subjects and In-depth Study Project (prosjekt til fordypning). As the curricula are regulations, the schools and training establishments are bound by their content.

Should a student wish to transfer to a General Studies Programme, he/she may do so by completing a year of Supplementary Studies Qualifying for Higher Education.



## 2.0 The trade of chimney sweeping in Norway

In the Norway the trade of chimney sweeping the dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when the Danish-Norwegian king Christian IV brought skilled chimney sweeps from Germany to sweep chimneys. Since then, the trade have developed a lot and adapted to future requirements.

### 2.1 Field of Activity

The social consequences of fires are serious for both personal injury and financial loss, and fire prevention, supervision and information have today a more central role than in the past, when sweeping chimneys was the main occupation.

Chimney sweeps clean and sweep chimneys, furnaces, fireplaces and central heating systems to prevent fire, exhaust emissions and creation of soot. Through information on proper installation and use of heating systems and other fire prevention measures the trade of chimney sweeping help to ensure major social values.

Common tasks for chimney sweeps are:

- performing cleaning an sweeping of chimneys, furnaces, fireplaces and central heating systems
- limiting damage after fire
- ensuring that buildings have good fire technical solutions in accordance with laws and regulations
- customizing and creating equipment for sweeping
- providing guidance on various heating methods and how to reduce pollution and formation of soot
- disseminating knowledge about proper selection and use of extinguishers and extinguishing methods

In Norway fire prevention and chimney sweeping is a municipal responsibility, and the chimney sweeps often work in close proximity to the fire department.

### 2.2. Occupational skills

Chimney sweeps with a trade certificate are qualified to carry the following duties:

- plan, execute, document and evaluate their own work
- perform fire prevention inspections in accordance with applicable regulations
- sweep and supervise different types of heating systems
- give information about the discharge of combustion gases, propose and implement measures that reduce emissions
- supervise the installation and operation of heating systems
- use digital tools and prepare reports in connection with supervision and chimney sweeping
- assess fire preventive measures in buildings
- perform flue gas analysis and suggest improvements for increased efficiency
- create and customize the tools necessary for sweeping and use technical equipment for control of heating systems
- use appropriate tools for cleaning and sweeping all types of chimneys, furnaces, fireplaces and central heating systems
- adjust heating systems to prevent fire, exhaust emissions and creation of soot
- give advise on proper heating
- give guidance on alternative heating systems and propose appropriate solutions
- consider how chimney, fireplace and ventilation works, and undertake calculations in connection with this

- assess the need for rehabilitation from the chimney condition, and suggest methods and materials for remediation
- select and use different types of fire extinguishers and fire extinguishing methods, and give guidance on the use of them
- use safety and protective equipment in accordance with applicable regulations
- follow ethical guidelines that apply to the trade
- work in accordance with the health and safety requirements
- work in accordance with the requirements for the environment

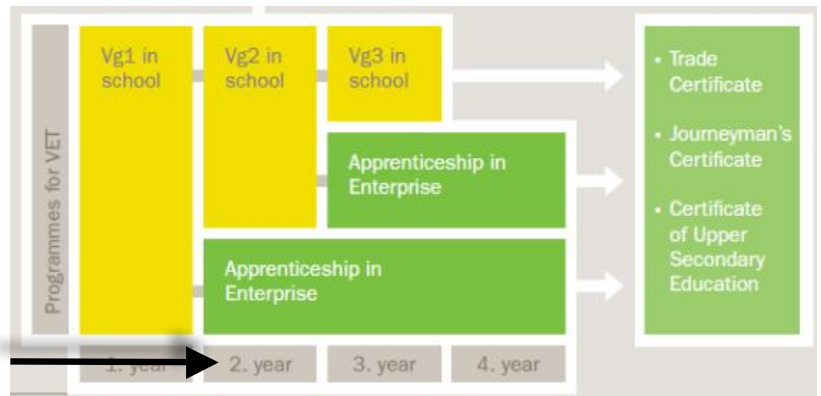
### 3.0 Education for chimney sweeps

In Norway there are two levels of education for chimney sweeps, the Trade Certificate and the Masters Certificate.

#### 3.1 The Trade Certificate

The vocational education and training for chimney sweeps in Norway is done as a dual system in a four year run, and in the VET-system placed under the Programme for Building and Construction.

It follows a run with one year in school and three years of training in a public or private enterprise - not the main model with two years in school and two years of training.



Two schools offer education for chimney sweeps. Ole Vig Videregående Skole that offers education for students doing a full programme, and Norges Brannskole that offers training for students with five years of relevant experience.

Norges brannskole is the national educational institution for firefighters and chimney sweeps. In cooperation with the social partners they developed a training and supervision plan for chimney sweeps, and they offer training in three course periods: first year five weeks, second years six weeks and third year six weeks.

The education and training will develop the students ability:

- to master challenging tasks related to fire prevention measures.
- to communicate with both customers and colleagues.
- for creativity, innovation and professional updating.
- to work accurately and independently by drawings.
- to plan, evaluate and document their own work.

Completed and passed training leads to the trade certificate. The professional title is *chimney sweep*.

#### 3.2 The Masters Certificate

The education for the Masters Certificate has currently two main modules, each ending with an exam. The students can complete the program following part-time studies over two years, while they are working. The program uses a combination of seminars, self-study and/or internet-based education.

### **Module 1 – Business administration**

This module is common to all students, and taught over two semesters. The curriculum has been developed to ensure interdisciplinary skills and that the students benefit from their work experience. All students have to complete and pass a project before they can take the final written interdisciplinary exam.

The module consist of three integrated subjects:

1. Organization and Management
2. Marketing Management
3. Financial Management

### **Module 2 – Trade Management**

This module is taught over one or two semesters depending on the subjects. The main objective is to provide a continuation of the management tasks and topics that are specific for the trade. Emphasis will be placed on raising awareness of the responsibility you have and the attitude you should have as Master in the trade.

All students have to complete and pass a project before they can take the final written exam.

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\*This document is based on information available at [www.udir.no](http://www.udir.no) and [www.mesterbrev.no](http://www.mesterbrev.no).