



# **The absence limit – Circular Udir-3-2016, including local clarifications and additions by the County Executive**

First approved by the County Executive on 28 June 2016. Last revised in June 2021. Effective from 1 August 2021.

This document follows the same structure as Circular Udir 3-2016, and the text in the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training's (UDIR) circular is reproduced in its entirety. In some places, brief extracts from UDIR's circular are omitted or rewritten for editorial reasons. These instances are marked with a separate footnote.

*The County Executive's local additions and clarifications have been inserted into the document in italicised font. The local additions and clarifications were originally drawn up following discussions with shop stewards, the School Student Union of Norway, the Pupil and Apprentice Ombudsman, head teachers and the County Governor.*

## **The absence limit applies to pupils in upper secondary schools. The purpose is to motivate regular attendance and prevent absenteeism among pupils.**

In principle, pupils have a duty to attend all teaching hours. If a pupil fails to attend lessons, the absence may have consequences for the right to receive a half-year assessment or final mark (rules regarding absence limit) and for the absence that is recorded on the pupil's certificate of competence and certificate of upper secondary education (rules regarding recording of absence on the certificate of competence and certificate of upper secondary education).

In this circular, we will clarify the absence limit. The relationship between the absence limit and the rules regarding recording of absence on the certificate of competence and certificate of upper secondary education is discussed under the sub-heading "What is the difference between the absence limit and other regulations?"

## **The absence limit in brief**

The absence limit is established in [Section 3-9](#) of the Regulations to the Norwegian Education Act and [Section 3-9](#) of the Norwegian Independent Schools Act.

If a pupil has more than 10 per cent undocumented absence in a subject, he or she will, as a rule, not be entitled to a half-year assessment or final mark in that subject, nor is the teacher permitted to award such marks. The following rules apply:



- In order for the absence to be exempt from the absence limit, the absence must be due to one of the reasons stated in Section 3-45 of the Regulations and the pupil is required to submit relevant documentation.
- If the pupil's undocumented absence rate is between 10 and 15 per cent but the reason for absence entails that it would be clearly unreasonable for the pupil not to receive a mark, the head teacher may decide that he or she should still receive a mark.
- The absence limit applies to absence from lessons in individual subjects, not the pupil's overall absence rate.
- The pupil shall receive a warning if he or she is at risk of not receiving a mark due to absenteeism.

#### **Who is subject to the absence limit?**

The absence limit applies to all pupils in public and independent upper secondary schools, including pupils undertaking supplementary studies qualifying for higher education (Vg3 and Vg4).

The absence limit does not apply to apprentices, training candidates, certificate of practice candidates and adults. Nor are pupils in vocational education programmes who are taking alternative Vg3 in school subject to the absence limit, as they receive neither half-year assessment marks nor a final mark.

#### ***The rules for applying for absence of up to ten days in the school year to be written off, and guidelines for self-certification within the school rules apply in addition to the absence limit***

*The school rules regarding the use of self-certification apply independently of the absence limit. Absence that has not been agreed or notified in advance, or for which self-certification or other documentation has not been submitted, may have consequences for a pupil's mark for orderliness.*

*The pupil must submit a separate application for absence of up to ten days not to be recorded on their certificate of upper secondary education (cf. Section 3-45 of the Regulations to the Norwegian Education Act). Such an application is to be submitted towards the end of the school year on a separate application form before the time limit set by the school. Relevant documentation must accompany the application and be submitted independently of any documentation submitted during the school year in connection with the absence limit.*



## **What is covered by the absence limit?**

### **All absence will be counted**

All absence from education, regardless of reason, should, in principle, be counted when assessing whether the pupil is within or has exceeded the absence limit. Examples of absence covered by the absence limit:

- Absence in connection with external examination, where the pupil is seeking to improve a mark as an external candidate
- Absence in connection with entrance examinations for higher education or interviews for part-time jobs
- Absence as a result of exclusion from tuition

However, there is some absence that should not be counted, and some absence may be exempt from the absence limit.

### **Absence not covered by the absence limit**

If the pupil is absent from education due to a right pursuant to the Norwegian Education Act, such absence should not be counted toward the absence limit. Examples of such absence may include:

- counselling at school
- evaluations performed by the Educational-Psychological Service and Statped
- scheduled study work agreed with the subject teacher in advance
- pupil council work, administrative schoolwork and participation in pupil's parliament organised by the School Student Union of Norway or similar, that is approved by the school
- agreed meeting with the head teacher or other members of staff
- apprenticeship interview (an apprenticeship interview is a prerequisite for being allocated an apprenticeship pursuant to Ch. 6A of the Regulations to the Norwegian Education Act and for using the right to upper secondary education pursuant to Section 3-1 of the Norwegian Education Act)
- special, new and deferred examination

Schooling at home or at an institution due to long-term illness or similar is part of regular schooling, and so does not count as absence.

If external examination is included in the pupil's ordinary choice of subjects, absence from education due to external examination will not be counted as absence.



*Nor will pupils be recorded as absent from lessons which the school has included on the timetable but are subsequently cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.*

### **Absence that may be exempt from the absence limit**

If a pupil has absence that is due to one of the reasons listed below and is able to document this, the absence will not be counted when assessing whether the pupil is within or has exceeded the absence limit. This entails that the pupil may still be awarded a half-year assessment and final mark when the pupil's overall absence in the subject exceeds 10 per cent, as long as the undocumented absence does not exceed 10 per cent.

Absence due to the following reasons may be documented and exempt from the absence limit (cf. Section 3-45, fifth paragraph (a)-(f) of the Regulations):

- Health and welfare reasons
  - *Illness*
  - *Appointment with a doctor, dentist or Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Out-patient Clinic (BUP), appointment with the school health service etc.*
  - *Caring for family members, e.g., your own children*
  - *Serious illness in the family*
  - *Baptism, wedding, confirmation, funeral*
- Work as shop steward
  - *Representation on a municipal youth council or youth county executive board*
  - *Serving as a representative at a meeting or for other work in the School Student Union of Norway*
- Political work
  - *Attending as a delegate at a national convention for a registered political party or its youth wing*
  - *Membership of a municipal council*
  - *Membership of a political committee at the county level*
  - *Serving as a party representative in school debates at other schools during municipal and parliamentary elections*
  - *Other work for a political organisation, including organisations independent of political parties, if such work cannot reasonably be performed outside of school hours*
- Relief work
  - *Relief work will typically involve work for relief agencies such as the Red Cross or Norwegian People's Aid. However, it is a requirement that you actually perform work.*
- Mandatory attendance
  - *Examination for military service*
  - *Summons to court proceedings or witness summons*
- representation at a national or international event (cf. § 3-47, fifth paragraph, (a)-(f))



- *Such events may include:*
  - *Representation at various national or international sports championships or competitions*
  - *Representation at concerts, art and cultural events at the national or international level*
- *Parts of the absence occurring in connection with driver training*
  - Absence documented as being due to parts of mandatory driver training for a Category B driving licence is not included toward the absence limit. This applies to the four-hour compulsory safety course on track circuit (stage 3) and nine-hour safety course on roads (parts 2 and 3 of stage 4). Reasonable travel time will also be covered by the documented absence.
  - The other parts of the driver training, including driving tests, and types of driver training other than for a Category B driving licence, are not exempt from the absence limit.
  - Rules regarding driver training for a Category B driving licence, including a description of the various stages, can be found in Chapter 11 of the Regulations concerning driver training and driving tests, etc.

Pupils may also demand to have absence of up to two days exempt for religious holidays outside of the Church of Norway (cf. Section 3-45, eighth paragraph of the Regulations to the Norwegian Education Act)<sup>1</sup>.

These reasons for exemption, with the exception of absence that is due to driver training, are identical to the reasons applicable to absence that can be exempt from recording on the certificate of competence and certificate of upper secondary education.

*In case of uncertainty, the head teacher (or their representative) will decide whether the absence falls under one of the above points.*

If absence from schooling is due to conditions which are clearly beyond the pupil's control, such as shutdowns or delays on public transport, the head teacher or their representative will determine whether the absence should be recorded.<sup>2</sup>

### **If absence is to be exempted, it must be documented**

A pupil who has reached, but not exceeded the absence limit, must document additional absence in order not to lose the half-year assessment or final mark in the subject. However, pupils may choose to document absence at any time prior to

---

<sup>1</sup> Omitted: "and absence that is due to mandatory driver training for a Category B driving license: safety course on track circuit and the second and third parts of the safety course on roads, cf. Section 3-9, second paragraph". This is instead included as a separate bullet point, above.

<sup>2</sup> The paragraphs "More about absence for health and welfare reasons/relief work/mandatory driver training" are omitted here and are instead incorporated into the bulleted list, above.



reaching the absence limit. Therefore, it is not a requirement that pupils must wait with documenting their absence until they have reached the absence limit, and schools also cannot refuse to receive documentation on an ongoing basis.

### **Documentation of absence for health reasons**

Absence for health reasons cannot be documented by way of self-certification from parents/guardians or pupils who are of age and must be documented from the outset with a medical certificate or documentation from another professional, such as a physiotherapist, dentist or psychologist (including BUP). Visits to the school health service can be documented by a written confirmation from the school health service.

However, there are some conditions that, due to their nature, make it difficult or unsuitable to see a doctor or professional for each individual instance, e.g., long-term physical or mental illness that entails a risk of absence. In such circumstances, the absence may be documented by way of self-certification in conjunction with other forms of documentation. Other documentation includes a declaration confirming that the pupil has a chronic illness, or documentation showing that the pupil is being assessed or monitored for an undiagnosed condition. The principal or *their representative* will determine whether the presented documentation is suitable, or whether there is a need for another type of documentation. *Unless otherwise indicated, documentation of a chronic illness will be valid for the current school year.*

It is not a requirement that the documentation provides the school with information regarding the pupil's health condition. It is sufficient that it confirms that the absence was due to health reasons. The pupil may also choose to omit/redact parts of a medical certificate that contain surplus information.

If the pupil has a medical certificate that documents that the absence is due to health reasons, this shall be considered by the school. This also applies if the medical certificate is not written on the same day as the absence.

### **Documentation of other absence**

In the case of welfare reasons, such as a funeral, a statement from parents/guardians or a pupil who is of age and legal capacity can normally be used.

Absence for political reasons can be validated by a political organisation and for relief work by a relief agency, or similar.

Any absence due to driver training that may be exempt from the absence limit must



be documented by the driving school.<sup>3</sup>

### **Discretion up to 15 per cent**

In special circumstances, the head *teacher or their representative* may decide whether a pupil who has exceeded the 10 per cent limit without providing sufficient documentation may still receive a half-year assessment or final mark. The reason for the absence must be of such a nature that it is clearly unreasonable for the pupil not to be awarded a mark, and the undocumented absence rate in the subject must not be higher than 15 per cent.

This is a narrow exemption provision that makes it possible to safeguard pupils who find themselves in a difficult life situation. The exemption can help students with particular challenges to achieve and receive an assessment even if they have an absence rate exceeding 10 per cent.

The head teacher must undertake an individual evaluation of the pupil's situation to determine why he or she did not attend lessons. Thus, it is the reason for absence that will determine whether the principal can use this exemption. The mark that the pupil stands to receive, or the consequences of the pupil being unmarked in a subject, are irrelevant to the evaluation.

This exemption is in addition to the exemption for documented absence. This means that the evaluation will not be affected by the amount of documented absence (e.g. sickness absence) the pupil has. In other words, the pupil may have an absence rate exceeding 15 per cent overall, but the undocumented absence rate must not exceed 15 per cent. In all circumstances, your teacher must have a sufficient basis for assessment in order to award you a mark.

[We elaborate on the difference between the absence limit and a lack of basis for assessment, below in this circular.](#)

### **How is absence calculated?**

The limit is set at 10.0 per cent undocumented absence. If a pupil has e.g. 10.4 per cent undocumented absence in a subject, this may not be rounded down. The absence calculation shall be based on the number of planned and fixed annual teaching hours in a subject. The number of teaching hours used to calculate the absence limit should be the same for all students at a school. The school owner is free

---

<sup>3</sup> Omitted: "County councils may choose to draw up more specific guidelines for the types of documentation required for different types of absence."



to provide more teaching than is determined in the national framework regulating the distribution of teaching hours per subject. If the school owner wishes to provide more than the minimum teaching hours for a subject, this should be determined within a local framework regulating the distribution of teaching hours per subject. In such circumstances, the locally agreed figure for annual teaching hours will be used as the basis for the absence calculation.

The school owner/school may also give pupils additional teaching, such as intensive education, homework help, etc. Such additional schooling will be supplementary to the determined teaching hours in the subject. This entails that the overall teaching hours in the subject are not altered. Supplementary schooling cannot reduce the absence the pupil has had in teaching hours that are provided as part of the planned annual teaching hours in the subject. Otherwise, it must be made clear to the pupils which lessons are ordinary lessons, and which are supplementary.

### **One lesson is an hour according to the clock**

In the national framework regulating the distribution of teaching hours per subject, one lesson corresponds to an hour according to the clock. If instruction is provided in shorter or longer sessions (e.g., 45 minutes), absence must be recalculated and calculated based on the annual teaching hours in national framework regulating the distribution of teaching hours per subject.

For instance, English in Vg1 (Programme for General Studies) will amount to 140 hours according to the clock on an annual basis. This means that 10 per cent absence amounts to 14 hours according to the clock. If the pupil has 45-minute teaching hours in the subject, 10 per cent absence will amount to 17.5 teaching hours. The pupil can therefore have undocumented absence in the amount of 17 teaching hours without exceeding the absence limit in this subject. In case of undocumented absence for 18 teaching hours, the absence limit will have been exceeded.

### **Details regarding recording of absence in Trøndelag County Council**

*The County Executive has in the school rules regulated when absence from parts of a lesson should impact the mark for orderliness, and when it should be recorded as absence for a full hour. If teaching is arranged in shorter sessions (e.g., 45 minutes), absence equal to the length of the session should be recorded.<sup>4</sup>*

If teaching covers several subjects simultaneously, such as on subject days or school trips, the subject teachers must clarify in advance which subjects any absence will count towards and how it will be apportioned between the subjects. *Unless otherwise*

---

<sup>4</sup> This paragraph replaces: "The County Executive, possibly the school, should regulate in the school rules when absence from parts of a lesson should be counted as lateness, and when the absence should be recorded for a full hour. If a pupil arrives slightly late, e.g., five minutes, this should be taken into account in the mark for orderliness or conduct"





*agreed in advance, absence shall be recorded against those subjects which are entered on the normal timetable during the period concerned. The teacher responsible for the subject must record the absence. It must be clearly stated to the pupil in advance, which subject any absence will be recorded against.*

*It is emphasised that absence from all lessons must be recorded. A clear distinction should be made between absence measured in lessons and absence measured in days. Absence for the week shall be recorded in Everyday by Friday of that week. Subject teachers shall send warnings to the pupil without delay and on the basis specified when the absence is recorded in Everyday.*

*Form teachers will review absence for the preceding week and evaluate absence in connection with any documentation submitted by a pupil. Submission of documentation or any comments from the pupil in respect of the recorded absence must be made within ten days of the subject teacher's deadline for recording absence at the end of the week. If there are compelling reasons for which the pupil cannot be blamed, the head teacher may decide that the documentation or comments can be accepted after this time limit.*

*The documentation should be placed in the pupil's folder in Everyday with the correct code. Form teachers will change any absence codes in Everyday in relation to submitted documentation. In some circumstances, this will mean that the warning sent to a pupil by a subject teacher will no longer be valid after the documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the form teacher. In such cases, the warning will be withdrawn by giving the pupil verbal or written notice that it has been withdrawn (it is not necessary to cancel the warning in the pupil's folder). If the warning is withdrawn, a new warning must be given if there is a further risk of the pupil not receiving an assessment.*

*The form teacher is responsible for ensuring that every single subject teacher is fully informed of documented absence. The principal will develop procedures for ensuring good information flow regarding this at the school. The school also has a duty to investigate absence not supported by documentation.*

### **Special information regarding recording absence on preparatory days before exams and on exam day**

*Reference is made to the interpretive statement by UDIR to the Trøndelag County Executive of 2 April 2019 (excerpt, our underlining):*

*Although Section 1-4 of the Regulations cite preparatory periods and exam periods as teaching periods, this does not mean that absence on one or both days will count towards the absence limit for any one subject. Absence on such days shall only be recorded as part of the total absence. It shall not count*



towards the absence limit for the subject that the preparatory day/exam relates to.

The County Executive has established its own absence code in Everyday that is to be used for this type of absence.

### **Pupils not receiving a half-year assessment mark**

The absence limit applies to both the half-year assessment mark and to final marks. For half-year assessment marks falling in the middle of the school year, absence is calculated against the number of teaching hours in the subject for the half-year. For continuous subjects where a half-year assessment mark is also given in the second half of the year, absence is calculated for the whole year against the total number of teaching hours in the subject for that year. For subjects awarding final marks, absence is calculated against the number of teaching hours in the subject during the year in which the final mark is awarded. The number of teaching hours to which pupils are entitled is established in the framework regulating the distribution of teaching hours per subject. A pupil who has a high rate of undocumented absence at the start of the school year may exceed the absence limit for the whole year, resulting in the pupil receiving neither a half-year assessment nor a final mark.

Pupils who do not receive half-year assessment marks must be monitored particularly closely. He or she must be made aware that further absence could also lead to a final mark not being awarded.

### **Absence in general subjects**

There are some subjects for which a final mark is not awarded every year, such as Norwegian and physical education. Absence in these subjects should be measured against the number of lessons in each school year, not against the total number of lessons over two or three years.

The reasons are two-fold: to take account of pupils who change school, and of pupils who would be at risk of not receiving a final mark in Vg3 because of a high absence rate in Vg1.

### **Change of subject or school during the school year**

School owners may allow pupils to change subjects during the teaching year. In such cases, the pupil's absence calculation in the new subject will be reset to zero. Any absence in the original subject will not count towards the absence limit.

Additionally, absence in a subject will not be carried over with a change in school during the teaching year.



## **Pupils who exceed the absence limit**

### **Pupils will not lose their right to be assessed**

All pupils have the right to assessment, regardless of whether they have lost the right to a half-year assessment or final mark in one or more subjects. This means they will be entitled to take part in lessons and to receive formative assessment in the subject.

### **Converting from pupil to external candidate**

If a pupil wishes to take a subject as an external candidate, he or she may not be a pupil in that subject at the same time (cf. Section 3-24, third paragraph of the Regulations). If a pupil wishes to take a subject as an external candidate, he or she must become a part-time pupil, which requires a decision from the County Council/school. It is a condition for converting from full-time to part-time pupil that there be compelling reasons for doing so (cf. Section 6-5 of the Regulations, third paragraph). Exceeding the absence limit in one or more subjects should be one such reason.

There is no need for a reversed decision to be made for pupils who are accepted into upper secondary education as part-time pupils. It is sufficient for the pupil to relinquish their pupil status in the subject in which he or she wishes to register as an external candidate. The time limits for registering as an external candidate are 1 February for an examination in spring and 15 September for an examination in autumn.

The County Council may choose to allow those who are no longer pupils in a subject to attend teaching as a guest pupil. These individuals have no rights or obligations under the Norwegian Education Act or its regulations. As such, they have neither an entitlement to formative assessment nor to a final mark in the subject.

### **Admission to Vg2 or Vg3**

As a starting point, pupils must have passed all subjects at the relevant stage in order to be admitted to Vg2 and Vg3, (cf. [Section 6-28 of the Regulations to the Norwegian Education Act](#)). This means that a pupil must, as a rule, have achieved at least a mark of 2 in all subjects in order to commence the next stage.

However, an exception to this is provided in [Section 6-37](#) for pupils who have not passed all subjects (e.g. a mark of 1, no basis for assessment or exceeded the absence limit).

The County Council must then carry out a thorough assessment as to whether it is justifiable for the pupil to move up to the next stage. The pupil must still pass the



subject to receive a certificate of upper secondary education.

### **First diploma**

In order to be entitled to a first diploma, the pupil must have completed upper secondary education providing general university and college admissions certification within the normal time frame.

Pupils who do not receive a final mark in one or more subjects due to the absence limit must take the missing subjects as an external candidate.

If they take the examination within the normal time frame and, in addition, satisfy the requirements for a certificate of upper secondary education pursuant to [Section 3-40](#), they will receive a first diploma.

If they do not take the subjects within the normal time frame, they are not entitled to a first diploma.

## **What is the difference between the absence limit and other regulations?**

The pupil's absence impacts

- the right to a half-year assessment or final mark (absence limit), cf. Section 3-9 of the Regulations
- the teacher's basis for assessment in a subject, cf. Section 3-3 (4) of the Regulations
- certificate of competence and certificate of upper secondary education (rules regarding recording of absence in upper secondary school), cf. Section 3-45 of the Regulations

### **Difference between the rules regarding absence limit and the recording of absence on the certificate of upper secondary education**

The pupil's absence from instruction impacts the right to receive a half-year assessment or final mark (absence limit) and the absence on the pupil's certificate of upper secondary education (rules regarding recording of absence on the certificate of upper secondary education). With the exception of absence as a result of driver training for a Category B driving licence, the exception rules for absence that may be exempt from the absence limit are identical to the exception rules for absence that may be exempt from being recorded on the certificate of competence and certificate of upper secondary education. Even though the exception rules are the



same (with one exception) for both sets of rules, the rules regarding what is exempt from the absence limit and what absence shall be recorded on the certificate of competence and certificate of upper secondary education, are different. This entails, e.g., that even though some absence may be exempt from the absence limit, it should nevertheless be recorded on the certificate of competence and certificate of upper secondary education.

The below table lists some of the differences.

Differences between the rules regarding absence limit and regarding the recording of absence on the certificate of upper secondary education	
<b>Absence limit</b>	<b>Recording of absence on certificate of upper secondary education</b>
For individual subjects; may affect marks	Totalled for all subjects; no connection to subject marks
Exemptions apply to lessons	Exemptions apply to days, not lessons
There is no limit for the number of days or lessons exempted	Exemptions are limited to 10 days per school year
All documented illness can be exempted from the first day	Absence due to illnesses other than chronic illness cannot be exempted for at least the first three days
Absence connected to treatment from a dentist or BUP or <i>visits to the school health service</i> etc. can be exempted	Absence in connection with treatment from a dentist or BUP or <i>visits to the school health service</i> <sup>5</sup> etc. cannot be exempted
Absence for health reasons must be documented with a medical certificate or documentation from another professional, either on its own or in combination with self-certification	Absence for health reasons must be documented with a medical certificate
Parts of driver training may be exempt from the absence limit	No driver training may be exempt from being recorded on the certificate of competence and certificate of upper secondary education
<i>There is no requirement to document absence until the 10 per cent limit is exceeded, however, pupils may choose to present documentation before the limit is reached.</i>	<i>Application is made on a separate application form, together with relevant documentation, towards the end of the school year and within the time limit set by the school.</i>

<sup>5</sup> Clarified by UDIR to the County Governor of Trøndelag, April 2018



### **The difference between the rules regarding absence limit and the rules regarding the basis for assessment in subjects**

If a pupil has exceeded the absence limit in a subject, the teacher must not award a half-year assessment and/or a final mark, even though the teacher has a basis for assessment in the subject.

If a pupil has a high rate of absence, this may result in the teacher not having a sufficient basis for assessment in order to award a half-year assessment or final mark in subject.

These rules apply in parallel, and entail, e.g., that a pupil with a high rate of documented absence due to illness may be within the absence limit, but still not receive a half-year assessment and/or a final mark because the teacher does not have a sufficient basis for doing so.

What must the school do?

### **What must the school do?**

#### **The pupil and parents must be notified**

A pupil may not be denied a half-year assessment or final mark in a subject unless they have received advance warning.

The pupil and parents must be notified in writing if there is any doubt concerning whether the pupil will receive a half-year assessment or final mark in one or more subjects. This follows from [Section 3-8 of the Regulations to the Norwegian Education Act](#). Parents will not be notified once a pupil turns 18 years of age. The purpose of the warning is that the pupil shall continue to have the possibility of receiving a half-year assessment or final mark in the subject.

The warning shall be issued "promptly". This means that it must be sent when the pupil is at risk of exceeding the absence limit. Even if a notification has been given with respect to the half-year mark, a new warning must be issued regarding the final mark. *It is recommended that the limit for when the warning should be sent be set at 5 per cent absence in a subject.*

*Separate warnings shall be sent if there is doubt concerning (1) whether the pupil can receive a mark due to the absence limit and (2) whether the pupil can receive a mark due to the teacher having an insufficient basis for assessment. There will often be two different causal relationships involved and, therefore, even if both could lead to the*



*pupil not receiving an assessment in a subject, they are treated as separate sets of circumstances.*

### **Individual decisions and the right to appeal**

The decision not to award a final mark in a subject is an individual decision for which the head teacher is responsible for making, cf. [Section 3-15](#). *Individual decisions are made as soon as the pupil has exceeded the absence limit and has been given reasonable time to provide relevant documentation<sup>6</sup>*

There is a right of appeal against decisions not to award a final mark, cf. [Section 5-1 of the Regulations](#). There is a ten-day time limit for appealing. *The County Council is the appeal body. Appeals are sent to the school, which will handle further case processing in relation to the appeal body.* There will not be an individual decision if the pupil does not receive a half-year assessment mark.

In principle, pupils must be registered for exams. A pupil who has taken an exam in a subject for which he or she will not receive a final mark will have the exam annulled. This follows from [Section 3-34, third paragraph of the Regulations](#). If the right of appeal expires before the exam and the pupil has not appealed, they should not be registered for the exam.

### **Missing grades are recorded on the certificate of competence**

If, following a warning, a pupil does not receive a grade in a subject, this shall be recorded on the certificate of competence.

An exceeded absence limit shall be recorded with IV, followed by FAM51 Exceeded Absence Limit. In the usage field, the school shall enter: *Used for those pupils who have exceeded the absence limit in the subject (cf. Section 3-3, fourth paragraph of the Regulations).*

It should be noted that school owners should have a proper system for recording absence (cf. [Section 3-36 of the Regulations](#)). It also follows from this provisions that absence should be documented every half-year.

The system must safeguard the school's duties in connection with the absence limit and recording of absence on the certificate of upper secondary education. Therefore, the system must be able to handle absence measured in both days/lessons

---

<sup>6</sup> Omitted: "These individual decisions should not be made until the pupil has had an opportunity to submit relevant documentation."



for recording on the certificate of upper secondary education, and absence in lessons for individual subjects.<sup>7</sup>

## **How should schools inform and monitor pupils?**

### **Schools must keep pupils and parents informed**

It is important for pupils and parents to be informed about the absence limit and what it means. In other words:

- that the absence limit could result in a half-year assessment or final mark not being awarded in a subject
- the exemptions that apply and acceptable documentation
- the right of advance warning and the right to appeal
- the continued right to receive formative assessment
- the consequences of not receiving marks

It is also important for the school to provide information regarding:

- what is considered absence from a lesson and what is considered lateness
- which subjects the pupil has during which teaching hours (including interdisciplinary lessons, subject days etc.)
- how many lessons they will have in the subject before the half-year assessment and final marks are given, in relation to both the framework regulating the distribution of teaching hours per subject, and the length of the teaching hours

*The County Executive has, among other things, drawn up a separate information sheet for pupils and parents/guardians, of which schools should make use. Upper secondary schools are responsible for assisting with guidance to primary and lower secondary schools on matters relating to the absence limit.*

### **Schools should follow up absence**

Schools have a duty to monitor and take care of pupils. Dropout prevention and absenteeism are interrelated. Research shows that where schools use timely

---

<sup>7</sup> Omitted separate paragraph on the school rules, with the following text: "All schools should have a set of school rules. They should contain rules on what pupils should expect, what pupils can and cannot do at school, and what happens when the rules are breached. They should set clear rules regarding absence and whether absence will result in reduced marks for orderliness and conduct. The school rules may contain sanctions for absence. Refer to our circular on school rules."





intervention to detect and follow up pupils who are frequently absent, this may lead to fewer pupils dropping out later on.

There can be many reasons behind a pupil missing school on a frequent basis. It is important to address it at an early stage, and well before a pupil exceeds the absence limit. Schools and school owners should work together to find effective measures for following up absence and detecting problems early on. Measures should be adapted to the individual pupil.

Schools should also make use of other resources as required. Examples of such resources are the Educational-Psychological Service (PPT), the Follow-up Service, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration, and child welfare services. For some pupils, follow up could amount to a single conversation. For other pupils, there may be a need for more comprehensive monitoring, such as using an interdisciplinary team.

School owners are responsible for making sure that necessary advice is provided. Pupils should receive the information, guidance, follow-up and help they need to settle in. This follows from [Section 22-1 of the Regulations](#). Advice to pupils should take a holistic perspective and should contribute to dropout prevention, among other things.

Parents of pupils under the legal age are entitled to receive notification of a pupil's absence. This follows from [Section 20-4, fourth paragraph \(a\) of the Regulations to the Norwegian Education Act](#).