



Concerning Lånekassen's  
Quota Scheme:

**Suggestions for Solving  
Late Payment of Funds  
to Newly Arriving  
Students**

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Each year Norwegian universities and colleges admit a number of students from developing countries and countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Central-Asia under the Quota Scheme. The State Educational Loan Fund (Lånekassen) is responsible for the funding. The goal of the Quota Scheme is to give students relevant education that would benefit their home countries when they return after graduation. Also, the scheme contributes to strengthen Norwegian institutions of higher education's participation in the global knowledge cooperation.

When the students are accepted under the Quota Scheme and arrive to Norway they have to start with the application process for funding. The university provides them with assistance in order to fill their application along with the university's stamp and course code number. But in order for this application to be completed, the student needs to get 11-digit personal identification number (personnummer/fødselsnummer) and a personal bank account. The former requirement needs up to 3 weeks then the bank needs another 2 weeks. After which, the student will send his application to Lånekassen offices. All the applications are collected at the Lånekassen office in Bergen.

This process has the time frame of 2 to 4 months. That is, the student has to survive in Norway from his or her own funding, loans and favors until Lånekassen sends the funds. For years, this situation has been causing major stress for many and could be avoided by a simple change in policies and application procedures.

The following suggestions have been prepared that would either hasten the application process and or act as a radical alternative solution.

**A) Speeding up the process:**

As per suggestion of the Lånekassen office in Bergen, during a meeting in December 2007, it is possible to run the application for the Quota Scheme students on line, as do all Norwegian and or non-Norwegian but eligible students. According to Lånekassen office in Bergen this would speed up the process by eight working days. However, the mentioned office still needs the university stamps on a hardcopy of the application to affirm its authenticity. We further suggest that the university continue to send a hardcopy of the application to Lånekassen but meanwhile allow the student to apply on line.

**B) Radical Alternative:**

We suggest that along the guidelines for institutions of higher education that apply for number of Quota Scheme students that Lånekassen would add a condition on these academic institutions to lend the students that have been accepted to the Quota Scheme an amount of NOK15,000 for the specific duration of 4 months. In order to protect the rights of both parties, a contract will be signed by them that would insure the return of the amount mentioned back to its source. The student, bound by the contract will have to repay the institution as soon as he or she has received the Lånekassen funds.

For years, Quota Scheme students have been going through lack of appropriate funding at the start of their education in Norway, a challenge, that place them in a vulnerable position. This situation does not reflect the correct image of Norway and living standards that they will experience later and should be encountered with at the beginning of their education. Please, we would like you to consider the above suggestion so that we protect the social and academic welfare of international students studying in Norway.

Thank you,

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