The Education Act

"The New Education Act - for knowledge, choice and security" (Govt. Bill 2009/10:165) was approved by the parliament in June 2010, and applies since 1 July 2011. The Education Act gives the Swedish Schools Inspectorate a clear legal basis for its supervision. A scale of sanctions were introduced, where the ambition, as far as possible, is to have the same sanctions against municipal and grant-aided independent schools. There was an increase in the rules regulating the work of the Swedish Schools Inspectorate (Skolinspektionen) to enhance their power to perform clear, effective supervision and allowing them to impose fines on public and private responsible bodies, and to use other sanctions as well. New provisions on systematic quality enhancement procedures (that are to be documented) were introduced while the previous requirements for quality assessment reports and municipal school plans were removed. This means that each body responsible for schools is to systematically and continuously plan, monitor and develop its educational services. The focus is to be on achieving the national objectives for education. Teacher evaluation is not regulated by law. However, all school staff has regular individual development dialogues with the school head and wages are individually set in accordance with labour market rules.

Preschool and School Level

By the beginning of the 1990s comprehensive changes had been implemented in the regulatory system as well as in the division of responsibility between elected officials and between the central and local levels of administration. A shrinking economy increased the demands for efficiency in the use of public funds, and this in conjunction with greater freedom of choice and increased possibilities for pupils and parents to choose education. This created an entirely new situation for evaluation. Rationality and usefulness were given prominence with emphasis on individual needs. The introduction of the learning outcomes based education system transferred the choice of method of assessment to the schools. Since the inclusion of preschool (förskola) in the curriculum for compulsory education, the possibilities to evaluate its activities on a national level have improved.

The system of regular educational inspection was introduced in 2003. The Swedish inspection model was created to respond to the needs of national evaluation, audit and accountability in a highly decentralised system of governance with a high degree of local responsibility. Local authorities are still responsible for evaluating their own educational provision but are themselves evaluated by central education authorities or agencies.

Until September 2008, the Swedish inspection was organised as an independent agency under the Ministry for Education and Research (Utbildningsdepartementet): The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket). The agency was responsible for national development and steering documents such as national curricula in different teaching subjects, grading criteria, general guidelines. In 2006 the Government established an independent schools inspectorate. The purpose
was two-fold. Firstly, it was considered to be important to separate the body responsible for steering and support from the one responsible for evaluation and control. Secondly, the purpose was to emphasise the importance of national inspection and to encourage a more forceful and rigorous inspection carried out more frequently. From October 2008 the national inspection has been organised under an independent agency: the Swedish Schools Inspectorate while the Swedish National Agency for Education retains the rest of their earlier responsibilities.

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate ([Skolinspektionen](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/institutions-47_en#Skolinspektionen) [5])

The Swedish National Agency for Education ([Skolverket](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/institutions-47_en#Skolverket) [6])

**Higher Education**

The Swedish Higher Education Authority ([Universitetskanslersämbetet](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/institutions-47_en#Universitetskanslersämbetet) [7]) is a government agency. Its operations are controlled by the Government through the instructions it issues. These instructions define our areas of responsibility and the tasks to be undertaken. The authority's operations comprise three main areas:

- Quality assurance of higher education and appraisal of the degree-awarding powers of public-sector higher education institutions.
- Legal supervision of higher education.
- Monitoring efficiency, follow-up and horizon scanning as well as responsibility for statistics in the higher education sector.

Each year the Government issues a public service agreement that specifies the targets and the funding for these operations. The government also assigns on-going tasks during the year.

The Swedish Higher Education Authority ([Universitetskanslersämbetet](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/institutions-47_en#Universitetskanslersämbetet) [8])

---

**Source URL:** https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/quality-assurance-71_en

**Links**

[1] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/institutions-47_en#Skolinspektionen
[5]