

Linking Education and Licensure: Norway's Framework for Cadastral Surveyor Qualification

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SUMMARY

In 2021, a national licensing scheme for cadastral surveyors was introduced, taking full effect on January 1, 2026, when only licensed professionals will be permitted to execute and administer municipal cadastral surveys. To provide a clear education-to-licensing pathway, the Norwegian Mapping Authority (Kartverket) developed Guidelines for the Approval of Degree Programmes in Cadastral Surveying, which operationalise the Norwegian Qualifications Framework for the profession. The guidelines translate the learning-outcome categories of knowledge, skills, and general competence into three professional domains—legal, cadastral, and geomatics—that define what licensed surveyors must know and be able to do.

Development of the framework combined legal interpretation, structured dialogue with universities, and insight from a national labour-market study, which confirmed strong employer demand for integrated legal, technical, and administrative competence.

Universities can obtain approval either for an entire degree or for defined compositions of compulsory and elective courses that demonstrably achieve the specified outcomes. The approval process is proportionate: institutions submit published learning outcomes, a concise alignment to the three domains, a brief account of progression, and, where relevant, the pathway composition. Applicants with non-recognised degrees may be individually assessed against the same competence structure, enabling targeted supplementary learning.

The first approval, granted in October 2025 to the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) for its Master's in Property and Land Law, establishes the inaugural recognised pathway. The decision specifies approved pathway compositions within the degree, applies retroactively to eligible alumni, and provides students and advisers with a licence-oriented plan from the

outset.

Kartverket continues to maintain dialogue with higher education and municipal employers to keep learning outcomes relevant and ensure that approved pathways prepare graduates to perform all types of cadastral works under the Cadastre Act. The framework strengthens recruitment predictability and public trust while linking national qualification descriptors directly to professional licensing—offering a transparent, evidence-based model that connects education, licensure, and practice without constraining academic autonomy.