



Cadastral Surveyors Licensing Board
of New Zealand

Guidelines for Obtaining a Licence to Undertake Cadastral Surveys in New Zealand

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Board's Standards for Licensing Cadastral Surveyors 2021 <https://www.cslb.org.nz/licensing.html>

To obtain a licence to undertake cadastral surveys in New Zealand you must hold a tertiary educational qualification in surveying recognised by the Board and demonstrate practical and professional competencies that satisfy the Board's Standards for Licensing Cadastral Surveyors 2021 (the Standards).

Use one of the following categories to find the licensing requirements and the process that meets your circumstances:

- (1) I am a **graduate surveyor who holds a recognised qualification in cadastral surveying**, and I wish to apply for an initial licence, or
- (2) I am a **registered or licensed cadastral surveyor in an Australian State**, and I wish to apply for an initial licence in New Zealand, or
- (3) I am an **overseas qualified cadastral surveyor (other than Australia)**, and I wish to apply for an initial licence in New Zealand, or
- (4) I wish to **renew my existing licence**, or
- (5) I am a **previously licensed New Zealand cadastral surveyor**, and I wish to **reapply** for a licence.

1 Applications from Graduate Surveyors

1.1 Requirements

To obtain an initial licence you must:

- 1.1.1 Hold a 4 year tertiary educational qualification in surveying from New Zealand or Australia or a tertiary qualification in surveying from another country that the Bureau for the Assessment of Overseas Qualifications (BAOQ) has assessed as being the equivalent of an approved surveying degree from New Zealand or Australia. The Board recognises the Bachelor of Surveying (BSurv) degree that has included the advanced cadastral surveying paper (currently SURV 457 or SURV 557), from the University of Otago and surveying degrees from some other institutions, including some Australian State universities, as relevant qualifications. Qualifications from institutions not currently recognised by the Board may also be accepted and are considered individually, on application, by the BAOQ. This will be undertaken at your cost of NZ\$450. Many overseas tertiary qualifications have surveying as a component but do not meet the Board's requirements.

- 1.1.2 Have completed a minimum of 2 years practical training, after graduation, under the supervision of a licensed cadastral surveyor in New Zealand, including at least 1 year of practical training in cadastral surveys involving the subdivision of land and boundary definition. The practical training must enhance your skills to undertake cadastral surveys and produce cadastral survey datasets that meet the Surveyor-General's Rules and the competencies described in Schedule 1 of the Standards.
- 1.1.3 Hold a Certificate of Competency issued by the assessment panel within 2 years preceding the application (this currently requires a minimum of 2 years post-graduate practical training, a pass in an examination of cadastral law and completion of projects set by the assessment panel, followed by an oral examination in the form of a professional interview with the assessment panel). Details of these requirements can be found on the S+SNZ website.

https://www.surveyspatialnz.org/ModularPage?Action=View&ModularPage_id=25

Commencing in 2026 a new Competency Assessment Framework will replace the examinations run by S+SNZ. For further information about the new framework go to <https://www.cslb.org.nz/news.html>

This site contains an assessment Guideline as well as the practical experience templates for downloading and recording the accumulated post-graduation experience that is required under the supervision of a licensed surveyor.

In exceptional circumstances the requirement for a Certificate of Competency may be waived by the Board if it is satisfied with your competency based on considerable prior cadastral surveying experience.

Note: Until recently there have been two pathways available through S+SNZ to obtain a Certificate of Competency for licensing. One included membership of S+SNZ and required completion of the full requirements for projects in cadastral surveying, spatial measurement, geodetic surveying, land development engineering, and planning, design, and resource management. The other, for licensing purposes only, has limited requirements for the land development engineering and the planning, design, and resource management projects. Details of these can be found in the Annual Circular which is available on the S+SNZ website.

https://www.surveyspatialnz.org/ModularPage?Action=View&ModularPage_id=25

The Annual Circular will be superseded by the new competency framework in 2026 as the only pathway to obtain a certificate of competency.

1.2 Process

Following completion of the requirements specified in 1.1 above you may apply for an initial licence using application Form 1 – Application for a Licence to Undertake Cadastral Surveys for Graduate Surveyors, <https://www.cslb.org.nz/form-1.html> and submit it to the secretary of the Board.

Your application must include:

- (i) A copy of your 4 year tertiary educational qualification in surveying.
- (ii) A copy of your Certificate of Competency issued by the assessment panel (currently administered by S+SNZ). The Certificate of Competency must include the cadastral licence options (cadastral surveying, spatial measurement, geodetic surveying, land development engineering, and planning, design, and resource management) and have been issued within 2 years preceding your application or as otherwise accepted by the Board.

The application form requires you to confirm that you have read the Boards Standards for Licensing Cadastral Surveyors 2021 and that you meet all the competencies described in Schedule 1, and, in accordance with section 23 of the Cadastral Survey Act 2002, certify that within the last 5 years you have not been convicted of any offence under sections 217 to 281 of the Crimes Act 1961.

You will be issued an invoice for the prescribed application fee of NZ\$400, including GST, which must be paid prior to the issue of your initial licence.

The Board may require you to provide any other information, or undertake any additional assessment, that it deems necessary to consider your application.

Applications are usually processed within 1 month of receipt.

2 Applications from Australian Licensed or Registered Cadastral Surveyors

2.1 Requirements

If you are a licensed or registered cadastral surveyor in an Australian State (including cadastral endorsement where applicable), you may give notice seeking an initial licence under the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1987 and the reciprocal agreement between the New Zealand and Australian Boards.

2.2 Process

You must obtain a letter of accreditation from the licensing or registration board of the State of Australia in which you are licensed or registered as a cadastral surveyor, including confirmation of whether you have ever been the subject of disciplinary action for professional misconduct or are the subject of any current disciplinary complaint or investigation. You should request the Australian Board send the letter of accreditation directly to the secretary of the New Zealand Board when you submit your application for an initial licence.

Complete the application Form 2 - Application for a Licence to Undertake Cadastral Surveys for Licensed or Registered Cadastral Surveyors from a State of Australia, <https://www.cslb.org.nz/form-2.html> and submit it to the secretary of the Board together with the prescribed application fee of NZ\$400, including GST.

The application form requires you to confirm that you have read the Boards Standards for Licensing Cadastral Surveyors 2021 including all the competencies described in Schedule 1, and, in accordance with section 23 of the Cadastral Survey Act 2002, certify that within the last 5 years you have not been convicted of any offence under sections 217 to 281 of the Crimes Act 1961.

You will be issued an invoice for the prescribed application fee of NZ\$400, including GST, which must be paid prior to the issue of your initial licence.

The Board may require any other information to establish that you meet the standard of equivalence of occupation of a licensed cadastral surveyor in New Zealand.

Applications are usually processed within 1 month of receipt.

3 Applications from Overseas Qualified Cadastral Surveyors

3.1 Requirements

If you are a cadastral surveyor with qualifications which are not from New Zealand or Australia and wish to obtain an initial licence in New Zealand you need to satisfy the Board that you meet the competencies and requirements for licensing surveyors described in the Board's Standards for Licensing Cadastral Surveyors 2021.

<https://www.cslb.org.nz/index.html>

One of the requirements is that you hold a relevant tertiary educational qualification in surveying that is at least the equivalent of a 4 year surveying degree from New Zealand or Australia that is acceptable to the Board. Many overseas tertiary qualifications have surveying as a component but do not meet the Board's requirements as they are deficient in cadastral surveying.

3.2 Process

The first step is to provide the Board with a comprehensive curriculum vitae of your cadastral surveying career and request that they assess your tertiary educational qualification. You must provide the Board with certified copies of your degree certificate(s) and detailed information on the degree course(s) translated into English where applicable. The Board will probably require your academic qualification to be assessed by the Bureau for the Assessment of Overseas Qualifications (BAOQ). This will be undertaken at your cost of NZ\$450 including GST.

If your tertiary educational qualification is not acceptable to the Board you will need to complete additional tertiary studies to achieve the required equivalence of an acceptable 4 year surveying degree from New Zealand or Australia. You may need to negotiate any credits directly with the tertiary educational institution concerned.

If your academic qualification is acceptable to the Board, you will be informed of what further work (if any) you need to undertake before an initial licence can be issued. This may, without limitation, include:

- (i) A Certificate of Competency issued by the assessment panel (currently administered by S+SNZ). The Certificate of Competency must include the cadastral licence options (cadastral surveying, spatial measurement, geodetic surveying, land development engineering, and planning, design, and resource management) and have been issued within 2 years preceding your application or as otherwise accepted by the Board.
- (ii) Undertaking practical experience in cadastral surveying in New Zealand under the guidance of a licensed cadastral surveyor for up to 2 years, including a minimum period of time specified by the Board on surveys involving the subdivision of land and boundary definition; or
- (iii) Completing a relevant tertiary educational course on a topic of New Zealand cadastral surveying required by the Board; or
- (iv) Pass an examination in New Zealand cadastral surveying law conducted by the assessment panel and certified to the Board; or
- (v) Completing a specified cadastral project and an oral examination, in the form of an interview conducted or arranged by the Board, to their satisfaction.

You may then apply for an initial licence using application Form 3 – Application for a Licence to Undertake Cadastral Surveys for an Overseas Qualified Cadastral Surveyor, <https://www.cslb.org.nz/form-3.html> and submit it to the secretary of the Board.

Your application must include:

- (i) Certified copies (translated into English where applicable) of your professional qualifications including current or previous registration, licensing, or equivalent certificates.
- (ii) A letter from your licensing or registration authority that you have not been the subject of disciplinary action for professional misconduct or are the subject of any current disciplinary complaint or investigation.
- (iii) Documentation confirming that you have satisfactorily completed any further work required by the Board.
- (iv) A comprehensive curriculum vitae of your cadastral surveying career.

The application form requires you to confirm that you have read the Boards Standards for Licensing Cadastral Surveyors 2021 and that you meet all the competencies described in Schedule 1. In accordance with section 23 of the Cadastral Survey Act 2002, you are also required to certify that within the last 5 years you have not been convicted of any offence under sections 217 to 281 of the Crimes Act 1961.

The Board may also require you to provide any other information, that it deems necessary to consider your application.

Prior to your initial licence being issued, you must pay the prescribed application fee of NZ\$400, including GST.

Applications are usually considered at the next Board meeting following receipt of the application.

4 Applications to Renew an Existing Licence

4.1 Requirements

The licensing year runs from 1 July to 30 June and the Board requires that an application to renew an existing licence must be received by the secretary no later than 30 June each year to ensure it remains current. In accordance with section 28(3) of the Cadastral Survey Act your licence will remain in force after 30 June pending its renewal.

If your application for renewal is not received by 30 June then your licence will lapse and you must reapply for a licence in accordance with Section 5 below, Applications from Previously Licensed Surveyors.

In exceptional circumstances only the Board may consider your application for renewal, as opposed to an application from a previously licensed surveyor, provided it is received no later than 30 September.

When you apply to renew your existing licence, you must provide to the satisfaction of the Board:

- (i) Evidence that you have maintained your skills in cadastral surveying as required by the competencies as described in Schedule 1 of the Standards.
- (ii) Any other information the Board may require to renew your licence.

The Board applies the following criteria when assessing applications for renewal of an existing licence.

1. If you have completed a minimum of 3 cadastral survey datasets approved by Land Information New Zealand in the preceding 2 year period, all of which must have

- involved boundary definition, at least one must have involved the subdivision of land, and none are for survey information only, unless decided otherwise, the Board will accept this as evidence that you have the required level of competence for the renewal of your existing licence.
2. If you have not completed a minimum of 3 cadastral survey datasets as described in clause 1 above, then you must demonstrate your competency in cadastral surveying by certifying that in the preceding 2 year period you have either
 - (a) Practised cadastral surveying in New Zealand or in another jurisdiction in which similar competencies in cadastral surveying to those required under the Standards are necessary; or
 - (b) Maintained your knowledge, understanding and ability in cadastral surveying in New Zealand by means of private study, research, employment, attendance at seminars, workshops or other appropriate means in relation to the competencies as described in Schedule 1 of the Standards.
 3. If you are certifying under sub clause 2(a) above, and you have practised cadastral surveying in another jurisdiction, other than New Zealand, then you must
 - (i) State the jurisdiction, your current license or registration number, and describe how the competencies of that jurisdiction equate to the New Zealand competencies described in Schedule 1 of the Standards, and
 - (ii) Demonstrate you have maintained your competency in the New Zealand context, in particular the current rules and standards for cadastral surveying, and all the legal aspects, including the legislative requirements for the subdivision of land as far as it relates to cadastral surveying, and
 - (iii) Demonstrate some knowledge of the current system and process used for lodging cadastral survey datasets in New Zealand.
 4. If you are certifying under sub clause 2(a) above, and you have practised cadastral surveying in New Zealand, or you are certifying under sub clause 2(b), then you must describe the means by which you have maintained your understanding of cadastral surveying in New Zealand and your knowledge and abilities in the statutory planning process and land development engineering principles, as described in Schedule 1 of the Standards. This could, without limitation, include your involvement in some of the following activities.
 - (i) Filling a leadership role in an organisation that undertakes cadastral surveying and being actively involved in cadastral surveying by exercising judgement on cadastral survey matters and supervising and mentoring staff undertaking cadastral surveys, including the related statutory planning process and any land development engineering, and advising or dealing with clients on cadastral survey projects
 - (ii) Undertaking all aspects of cadastral surveys but not certifying and lodging cadastral survey datasets with Land Information New Zealand
 - (iii) Participating in ongoing education or training that relates to cadastral surveying, statutory planning, and land development engineering
 - (iv) Working in an organisation involved in cadastral survey matters, and undertaking cadastral survey activities such as teaching or setting, applying, and administering rules and standards
 - (v) Attending workshops and seminars on cadastral surveying, statutory planning, or land development engineering topics
 - (vi) Participating in cadastral forums within recognised bodies representing cadastral surveyors, including writing or reading articles

- (vii) Writing, peer reviewing, or reading articles on cadastral surveying, statutory planning, or land development engineering in published journals such as the New Zealand Surveyor
- 5. The Board may require you to attend an interview, the purpose of which is for you to elaborate on how you have maintained your competency in cadastral surveying. There is a distinction between being a competent surveyor in the widest sense and maintaining specific New Zealand cadastral survey competence, remembering that the licence is to undertake cadastral surveys in New Zealand.
- 6. If the Board has received a notice from the Surveyor-General under section 7(1)(d) of the Act of a significant failure by you to comply with the Surveyor-General's Rules, the Board may consider your application in greater detail in one or more successive renewal years and may require you to provide further evidence to support your application.

4.2 Process

In April each year the Board emails existing licence holders a licence renewal letter and a link to application Form 4 – Application for Renewal of an Existing Licence to Undertake Cadastral Surveys, which you must complete and submit, including any supporting evidence, as required.

The application renewal form requires you to declare the following:

- (i) Confirmation that you have read the Standards for Licensing Cadastral Surveyors 2021, including the competencies described in Schedule 1; **and**
- (ii) Certification that you have completed a minimum of 3 cadastral survey datasets approved by Land Information New Zealand in the preceding 2 year period, all of which must have involved boundary definition, at least one must have involved the subdivision of land, and none are for survey information only; **or**
- (iii) Certification that you have practised cadastral surveying in New Zealand or in another jurisdiction in which similar competencies in cadastral surveying to those required under the Standards are necessary, including any supporting information as required; **or**
- (iv) Certification that you have maintained your knowledge, understanding and ability in cadastral surveying in New Zealand by means of private study, research, employment, attendance at seminars, workshops, or other appropriate means in relation to the competencies as described in Schedule 1 of the Standards, including any supporting information as required; **and**
- (v) Certification that within the last 5 years you have not been convicted of an offence under sections 217 to 281 of the Crimes Act 1961, in accordance with section 23 of the Cadastral Survey Act 2002.

You must submit your completed application form, and any supporting information as required no later than 30 June.

Your supporting information must be detailed and specific, including reference to the relevant competencies in Schedule 1 of the Standards.

The Board may require you to provide any other information, or undertake any additional assessment, that it deems necessary to consider your application.

An invoice for the prescribed application fee of NZ\$400, including GST, will automatically be generated upon submission, and must be paid prior to the issue of your new licence.

Most applications will be processed automatically upon submission and your new licence will be issued following payment of the prescribed fee. All other applications are usually processed within 1 month of receipt.

In accordance with section 28(3) of the Cadastral Survey Act 2002, if your application to renew your licence is made before 30 June, but your licence is not renewed by the Board before 30 June, your licence continues in force until your application is determined.

5 Applications from Previously Licensed Cadastral Surveyors

5.1 Requirements

If you have previously been licensed as a cadastral surveyor in New Zealand but you do not hold an existing licence, you must demonstrate to the Board that you have maintained or re-established your knowledge, understanding and ability to undertake cadastral surveys in New Zealand to the required level of competence for the issue of a licence.

To meet the required level of competence you must provide to the Board

- (i) A comprehensive summary of your cadastral surveying experience, whether as the holder of a licence or otherwise, including specific cadastral survey datasets and the roles you performed on each one; **and**
- (ii) Details of any ongoing education or training you have undertaken in the competencies described in Schedule 1 of the Standards during the 3 years preceding your application; **and**
- (iii) The names of two currently licensed cadastral surveyors as referees familiar with your cadastral surveying experience, at least one of whom can attest to your most recent cadastral surveying competence and at least one of whom is not your current employer or work colleague, unless in either case the Board agrees otherwise.

5.2 Process

You should apply using Form 5 - Application for a Licence to Undertake Cadastral Surveys for Previously Licenced Cadastral Surveyors who's Licence has expired, and submit it, together with all the necessary supporting information, to the secretary of the Board.

The application form requires you to confirm that you have read the Boards Standards for Licensing Cadastral Surveyors 2021 and that you meet all the competencies described in Schedule 1. In accordance with section 23 of the Cadastral Survey Act 2002, you are also required to certify that within the last 5 years you have not been convicted of any offence under sections 217 to 281 of the Crimes Act 1961.

Before making a decision on whether to issue a licence the Board may, without limitation, require you to:

- (i) Provide any other evidence of your current or most recent cadastral surveying experience and competence.
- (ii) Undertake a period of cadastral survey work under the supervision of a currently licensed cadastral surveyor.

- (iii) Complete and pass any written or oral examination in any aspect of cadastral surveying specified by the Board.
- (iv) Satisfactorily complete an interview with the Board.

Following completion of any additional assessment or further work and prior to a licence being issued, you must pay the prescribed application fee of NZ\$400, including GST.

Applications are usually processed within 1 month of receipt.