



UiT Norges arktiske universitet

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

Arctic Nature Guide 2025-26

60 credits

Longyearbyen, Svalbard

Faculty of Health Sciences – School of Sport Science

February 2025



Study programme name	1-year Programme in Arctic Nature Guide. In Norwegian language the name is Arktisk naturguide.
Target group	The target group are people who work, or who wish to educate themselves to work as nature guides, on Svalbard, in the Arctic region, or on the mainland of Norway. In addition, the study program is suitable for students who want to acquire such expertise for their Bachelor's degree, teacher training, etc.
Admission requirements, required prerequisite knowledge, recommended prerequisite knowledge	Higher Education Entrance Qualification and certified language requirements in English. In addition, you must hold a driving licence, category B (passenger car, etc.) or category S (snowmobile) valid in Norway. For more information, see EEA Regulations) Relevant practical experience requirements Relevant practical experience for admission to the Arctic Nature Guide program is: • Work experience as a nature guide, equivalent to a minimum 6 months full time/100 % Or • Work experience as an officer, outdoor leader or teacher, equivalent to a minimum 6 months full time/100 % Experience from active outdoor life (eg. volunteer as instructor in winter sport or outdoor life, participation in expeditions or organized outdoor activity, experience as glacier- or climbing instructor) or education in outdoor life can replace lack of work experience. All experience must be equivalent to a minimum 6 months full time/100% and must be documented with valid reference letter. All work experience must be documented with a valid employment reference letter. Please note that the testimonial shall include the dates of starting and ending the employment/activity and the weekly hours of employment/activity. Limited number of places each fall.
The study programme's Learning Outcome	Knowledge: • Broad theoretical knowledge of topics related to safe travel and stay in the Arctic nature.

	• Theoretical knowledge about the leadership and hostmanship of groups in nature based on relevant research. • Theoretical knowledge essential in nature-based tourism, experience production, friluftsliv and eco-philosophy. • Understanding of the nature, culture, history and the geopolitical conditions in the polar region. Skills: • Demonstrate skills, methods and routines for safe travel and stay in the Arctic nature. • Have learned methods and through practice and guidance have achieved personal development aimed at being a host, mediator and leader of groups in nature Be able to identify methods to facilitate and impart knowledge, values and good nature experiences. • Acquire adequate skills to be able to convey arctic nature and culture to guests. Competence: • Awareness of the requirements concerning the skills and competence they must possess as a nature guide in order to lead groups in a varied Arctic nature. • Awareness of the responsibility nature guides have when leading groups in a demanding arctic nature. • Reflections on own values in relation to experiencing nature, friluftsliv, nature guide role and commercial tourism. • Awareness of what role nature guides can play as ambassadors and friends of the vulnerable Arctic nature with regard to interaction with the guest.
Academic content and description of the study programme	This international study program will provide candidates with the opportunity to experience Svalbard's nature and culture at close hand by combining arctic friluftsliv with a practical program in tourism and guiding. The study program is a full-time program comprising 60 ECTS credits. The study program is given on Svalbard. The study program is a given in cooperation with UNIS – The University Center in Svalbard. The study program may be included as part of tourism and friluftsliv degree programs at UiT, as well as other educational institutions in Norway.

The study program is according to the profession standard defined by the Norwegian Nature Guide Association (NNGA). By fulfilling the study program and complete the required amount of nature guide work experience, the candidates are in a position of becoming members of NNGA and an approved Arctic Nature Guide and International Mountain Leader (UIMLA) by the Norwegian Nature Guide Association.

Arctic Nature guides educated in this study program have work limitations according to these frames of nature; an Arctic Nature Guide do not have competence to work in nature where there is a particular risk of falls with serious consequences or terrain steeper than 30 degrees on layered winter snow.

The autumn semester contains the subjects 1) Nature guiding as a profession, 2) Health, safety and risk in the Arctic and 3) Nature and Culture in the Arctic. The spring semester contains the subjects 1) Value based guiding in nature, 2) Applied arctic field leadership and 3) The Stormy Sun and the Northern Lights.

Physical and mental surplus during long outdoor expeditions

The course contains a large degree of activity and long outdoor expeditions. It is therefore required that the students are in good physical shape and able to carry equipment for a multiday expedition in the arctic. The candidates must be able to maintain a physical and mental surplus during long and cold outdoor excursions sleeping in tent and snow caves.

Skiing skills

Most of the field excursions involve cross-country skiing, so candidates must be experienced skiers and be physically fit for cross-country skiing over long distances.

Equipment

Candidates must have their own personal equipment in accordance with the individual equipment list.

Table: programme structure

1. semester	Nature guiding as a profession (15 stp)	Health, safety and risk in the Arctic (10 stp)	Nature and Culture in the Arctic (5 stp)
2. semester	Value based guiding in nature (20 stp)	Applied arctic field leadership (5 stp)	The Stormy Sun and the Northern Lights (5 stp)

Teaching, learning, and assessment methods	Student-centred learning activities with problem-based learning approaches, project work, group work, practical and methodical work with guidance are used throughout the study program, in addition to lectures, discussions and the use of ICT. In other words, this involves a lot of self-directed and practical work indoors and outdoors for students. A large part of the study program takes place in nature and includes practical exercises and the development of experience. Guide role experience will be obtained through a practical training period. This period will be carried out as interval sessions in the autumn semester and in a longer period in the spring semester. The period should consist of about 150 hours in total. The candidate will formulate a plan for the period, which must be approved by the teacher. The criteria for the period are given in a separate document, which candidates will receive at the start of the studies. During the course of the study, students are assessed through practical and theoretical assignments in addition to requirements for participation, especially in practical subjects. An overview of formative assessment is provided in the various course descriptions. Students are also assessed through written and oral school exams, as well as written take-home exams and practical exams. A more detailed description of content, teaching, assignments, and exams is provided in the course description. The framework for and information about required reading materials will also be outlined in the course plans
Relevance	Future employment opportunities may be found primarily in guiding activities in the Arctic region. After completing the study programme, students will have gained expertise that will be relevant for employment on the mainland in outdoor recreation, tourism, education, culture and environmental hostmanship, as well as in voluntary organizations
Workload	To reach the aims of learning, the students are expected to work with their study 40 hours a week as average.
Language of instruction and examination	The language of teaching and exams is English. Students will receive the syllabus reading list at the start of the studies; all the syllabus texts are in English.

Internationalisation and student exchange	The study program is international, and the language of teaching is English.
Administrative responsibility and academic responsibility	The School of Sport Sciences at the Faculty of Health Sciences is administrative responsible for the programme. The study leader and the coordinator of the programme are academic responsible.
Quality assurance	The quality of the programme is assured through a process among the academic staff, leading to discussions and final description by the academic heads at the department. The programme is run according to the guidelines for evaluation at UiT the Arctic university of Norway and the Faculty of Health Sciences.
Other regulations	At the start of the studies, candidates must be able to document accident and travel insurance that is valid for the study program's field activities. Candidates must also present a declaration of health that is in accordance with UiT requirements. Candidates must meet the costs of transport and snow scooter rentals in connection with field trips and excursions. Equipment requirements: Candidates must have their own personal equipment in accordance with the individual equipment list.