

REGISTERED NATIONAL STANDARD

UNIT OF COMPETENCY



Title:	Work safely at heights¹				
TQF Level:	3	Credits:	4	Version:	1
National standard code:	NS143-03				
Associated qualification (and code):	1. National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 3 QR-03-NQ-028-01-1005-26-01 2. National Certificate in Wall and Floor Tiling Level 3 QR-03-NQ-028-03-1005-26-01				
Approval date:	10 September 2026		Review date:	10 September 2031	
Purpose:	This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to work safely at heights on construction sites and other workplaces where there is a risk of falling from one level to another. It applies to tasks performed above two metres and includes the identification of hazards, selection and use of fall-prevention and fall-arrest systems, safe access and egress, and ongoing monitoring of control measures. The unit does not include the erection of scaffolding or work platforms; however, it does cover the identification and reporting of common faults with scaffolds and work platform systems. Work is undertaken in accordance with occupational health and safety legislation, workplace best practices and procedures. This unit is to ensure that individuals can safely perform work at heights by identifying hazards, implementing effective control measures, and using appropriate fall-prevention and fall-arrest equipment. It applies to construction workers and workers in other industries who are exposed to risks associated with people or objects falling from height. This unit is critical in reducing the risk of falls, one of the leading causes of serious injury and fatalities in construction industry. In successfully completing this unit standard, learners are able to: • Identify work-at-heights tasks and associated risks • Participate in the development and application of safe work method statements (SWMS) • Select, inspect and use fall-prevention and fall-arrest systems correctly • Access, work within and exit elevated work areas safely • Monitor and adjust safety controls in response to changing site conditions				

¹ Due to safety issues inherent in working with electricity and combustible substances, all training and assessment activities must be in accordance with Tonga National Building Code.

Learning Outcome 1 (LO1)	Determine task requirements
Performance standards	1.1 Read work order and associated drawings and consult with relevant persons to determine the proposed work-at-heights task, 1.2 Identify where and how work in 1.1 is to be carried out, and the equipment or plant to be used; 1.3 Participate in the development of the safe work method statement (SWMS) for the specified task; 1.4 Select appropriate work-at-heights control measures; <i>(Range to include required fall restraint devices and/or fall arrest devices in accordance with workplace and regulatory requirements)</i> 1.5 Determine location of anchor points for harness-based work to safely access required work area; 1.6 Review completed SWMS and clarify issues with relevant persons.
Learning Outcome 2 (LO2)	Assess work area
Performance Standards	2.1 Select personal protective equipment (PPE), check for serviceability and report problems; 2.2 Identify unstable, fragile or brittle work surfaces and implement control measures to prevent a fall from height; 2.3 Check fall protection equipment; <i>(Range to include required fall restraint and fall arrest devices to ensure serviceability and report problems.)</i> 2.4 Identify and install signage and barricade equipment. <i>(Range in accordance with SWMS or relevant safe work procedure.)</i>
Learning Outcome 3 (LO3)	Access work area
Performance standards	3.1 Ensure required fall protection, scaffold and barriers have been installed; <i>(Range in accordance with workplace requirements.)</i> 3.2 Connect to fall protection equipment without being exposed to a risk of a fall from height; 3.3 Confirm with relevant persons that fall protection equipment and safety systems are correctly fitted and are appropriate to the task;

	3.4 Access work area safely and move and place tools, equipment and materials using methods that eliminate the risk of falling objects.
Learning Outcome 4 (LO4)	Conduct work tasks
Performance standards	4.1 Undertake work tasks in compliance with the SWMS and workplace requirements; 4.2 Traverse between anchor points while remaining connected to the fall prevention system; 4.3 Use PPE appropriate to the task; 4.4 Maintain communication with relevant persons while working at height; 4.5 Keep fall protection equipment in place and adjust to allow for movement during work; 4.6 Exit from work area, removing tools and materials (Range to comply with worksite procedures.)
Pre-requisites	NS133-03 Apply <i>Occupational Health and Safety</i> (OHS) requirements, policies and procedures
Co-requisites	N/A
Underpinning skill and knowledge	The following skills and knowledge underpin this unit standard: <u>Skills:</u> Planning and Risk Management • Reading and interpreting work orders, drawings and workplace documentation • Consulting with supervisors and relevant persons to confirm task requirements • Participating in the preparation and review of SWMS and safety documents • Identifying hazards associated with working at heights and implementing control measures • Determining suitable anchor points and fall protection systems Practical Work at Heights

	• Selecting, fitting, checking and using personal protective equipment (PPE) • Inspecting fall restraint and fall arrest equipment for serviceability • Installing and using signage and barricades around work at heights areas • Safely accessing work areas using ladders, scaffolds or other approved means • Connecting to and traversing between anchor points while remaining protected • Carrying tools, equipment and materials in a manner that minimises falling object risks Communication and Monitoring • Maintaining communication with relevant persons while working at heights • Monitoring the effectiveness of risk controls and responding to changing conditions • Reporting equipment faults, hazards and unsafe conditions • Exiting work areas safely and conducting safe removal of tools and materials <u>Knowledge:</u> Regulatory and Compliance • Relevant Tonga National Building Code • Workplace safety policies, procedures and reporting requirements Work-at-Heights Safety Systems • Hierarchy of controls for working at heights • Job safety and environmental analyses (JSEA) • Safe work method statements (SWMS) • Safety data sheets (SDSs) and manufacturer instructions Equipment and PPE • Types, characteristics, uses and limitations of equipment used when working at heights, including: • Fall-arrest and fall-restraint systems • Harnesses, lanyards, inertia reels and shock absorbers
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	• Anchor points and temporary anchor systems • Guardrails, edge protection and scaffolding • Ladders, elevated work platforms (EWPs) and trestles • Rescue and retrieval equipment Work Processes and Site Considerations • Processes for planning work at heights, including assessment of: • Weather conditions • Ground and surface stability • Access and egress routes • Methods for identifying common faults in scaffolds and work platforms • Safe methods for accessing, traversing and exiting elevated work areas • Procedures for preventing falling objects and protecting people below
Assessment requirements	<u>Assessment methods</u> may include more than one of the following: Direct Observation Assessment of learners while they are performing tasks in real time in a real simulated environment. • The learner performs practical tasks. • The assessor watches the learner complete these tasks against a checklist or performance standards. Assessor Requirements • Use a structured observation checklist aligned to performance standards • Observe multiple occasions to ensure consistency of competence. • Record evidence of safe work practices, correct use of equipment, etc. • Provide immediate feedback where appropriate. • Ensure conditions reflect real workplace standards. Oral Questioning Verbal questions asked to assess the learner’s understanding of knowledge and reasoning. • Conducted during or after practical tasks. • Can be structured (planned questions) or informal (follow-up probing). Assessor Requirements

	• Ask questions that test underpinning knowledge • Use open-ended questions • Confirm learner understanding where practical performance is not enough. • Record responses clearly (notes or checklist). • Adjust language to suit learner literacy levels. Written Test A structured assessment requiring learners to provide written responses. • Short-answer questions, multiple choice, or case scenarios. • Typically conducted off-site or in a classroom environment. Assessor Requirements • Design questions that assess knowledge. • Ensure the test is clear, aligned to unit requirements and appropriate for language, literacy, numeracy levels • Mark responses using a marking guide or model answers. • Provide feedback and identify gaps in knowledge. • Ensure results reflect the learner's independent performance. Work-Based Activity Assessment conducted in a real workplace while the learner performs actual job tasks. • Learners complete normal workplace duties. • Evidence is collected over time. Assessor Requirements • Coordinate with workplace supervisors. • Gather evidence such as - Observation reports, Supervisor feedback, etc. • Verify that tasks meet unit performance standards. • Ensure authenticity (learner's own work). • Confirm competence across different situations and timeframes. Assessment should use a combination of the above methods to ensure sufficient, valid, authentic, and current evidence of competence in both skills and knowledge, in line with unit requirements. <u>Context of Assessment:</u>
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	Competency is to be assessed in the workplace or a simulated workplace environment that accurately reflects a real workplace setting. Assessment is to comply with relevant regulatory or relevant standards' requirements. Assessment of essential knowledge will usually be conducted in an off-site situation.
Moderation arrangements	1. Training providers must have their own moderation system approved by TNQAB before accreditation is granted: a) Relevant internal moderation processes are documented; b) Assessment is planned for each unit, and moderation processes are integrated into such plan. 2. Unless specified elsewhere, external moderation is conducted by the National Qualifications unit of TNQAB for all unit components of a national qualification: a) Samples of assessed activities are submitted for moderation; b) Moderation (external) forms are available on request.
Resource requirements	1. Power point presentations on work safely at heights 2. Trainer's Guide 3. Learner's Guide 4. Videos 5. Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) 6. Safety harnesses 7. Lanyards and shock absorbers 8. Fall arrest systems 9. Fall restraint systems 10. Static line systems 11. Temporary anchor systems 12. Anchor points and connectors 13. Ladders 14. Ropes and rescue equipment 15. Fall arrest harness systems 16. Barricades and signage 17. Personal Protective Equipment 18. Structured assessment and evidence-collection tools

Requirements to complete this unit	There are four (4) Learning outcomes and twenty (20) performance standards to measure competence. To demonstrate competence, the person studying this unit is: - Required to demonstrate all LOs to the expected standards; - Required to attain an Achieved Grade (Competent) to fulfil the requirements of the Unit Standard; - Eligible to three (3) attempts to achieve the required competency within 14 days of the first attempt. Failure to achieve the required competency after three (3) attempts on the specific part of the assessment will require the person studying this Unit to re-enrol for the same Unit.
Important notes and definitions	<u>Notes:</u> - All training and assessment activities must be in accordance with Tonga National Building Code. - Assessors must comply with the Tonga national assessment and moderation requirements. <u>Definitions:</u> <i>Access work area</i> refers to safely reach the working height. Anchor point - secure point for attaching fall protection equipment. <i>Carabiner</i> is a connector used to attach equipment securely. <i>Exit work area</i> refers to leave safely while maintaining protection <i>Fall arrest system</i> refers to stops a fall after it occurs (e.g., harness and lanyard). <i>Fall protection system</i> refers to equipment used to prevent or arrest falls. <i>Fall restraint system</i> refers to prevents a worker from reaching a fall edge. <i>Fall risk</i> refers to potential for injury due to a fall. <i>Fragile surface</i> refers to surface that cannot support weight (e.g. roofing sheets). Edge protection - barriers preventing falls from edges.

	10. <i>Harness</i> is a body-worn device connected to fall protection systems. 11. <i>Hazard</i> refers to source of potential harm (e.g., unstable surfaces). 12. <i>Install equipment</i> refers to a set up fall protection devices. 13. <i>JSEA (Job Safety and Environmental Analysis)</i> refers to risk assessment process. 14. <i>Lanyard</i> is a rope or strap connecting harness to anchor point. 15. <i>Monitor controls</i> refer to continuously check safety measures. 16. <i>OHS (Occupational Health and Safety)</i> refers to framework to ensure workplace safety. 17. <i>Risk control</i> refers to measures taken to reduce risks. 18. <i>SDS (Safety Data Sheet)</i> refers to information on handling hazardous substances. 19. <i>Static line system</i> refers to fixed horizontal line used for continuous attachment. 20. <i>SWMS (Safe Work Method Statement)</i> is a document outlining safe procedures for high-risk tasks. 21. <i>Traverse</i> refers to move between anchor points while connected. 22. <i>Work at heights</i> is any work performed where there is a risk of falling from one level to another.
Public comments on unit	Please contact TNQAB National Qualifications Unit (email EnquireNQ@tnqab.to or Telephone 28136) if you like to discuss or suggest changes to the details of this unit.