

REGISTERED NATIONAL STANDARD



UNIT OF COMPETENCY

Title:	Read and interpret plans and specifications for brick and block work ¹				
TQF Level:	3	Credits:	4	Version:	1
National standard code:	NS137-03				
Associated qualification (and code):	National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 3 QR-03-NQ-028-01-1005-26-01				
Approval date:	10 September 2026		Review date:	10 September 2031	
Purpose:	This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to read and interpret basic construction plans and specifications relevant to brick and block laying operations. It includes identifying the types and purposes of plans and drawings, recognising commonly used symbols and abbreviations, locating key site features, and understanding project requirements outlined in specifications. The unit applies to workers in the brick and block laying sector who work under supervision in a team environment and require foundational skills to interpret design drawings accurately. This unit underpins effective communication, accuracy and compliance in brick and block laying work by enabling workers to understand and apply information contained in plans and specifications. In successfully completing this unit standard, learners are able to: • Apply reading and interpretation skills to identify and explain the features, functions, and purposes of various types of construction plans, drawings, and specifications relevant to brick and block laying work; • Recognise and interpret construction symbols, abbreviations and legends to extract and use relevant technical information; • Verify document accuracy, including checking title blocks, and amendments to ensure current information is used; • Apply site interpretation skills to accurately orient plans to the physical site and locate key site features, including boundaries, access points, services, datum levels, and work locations;				

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.

	• Interpret and extract job requirements from plans and specifications, including dimensions, quantities, construction types, materials, finishes, tolerances and quality standards. • Apply numeracy skills to interpret scales, measurements, dimensions, and quantities, supporting accurate and consistent work practices; • Identify and apply environmental and workplace requirements, including waste management practices, environmental controls, and compliance obligations outlined in plans and specifications; • Use effective workplace communication skills to ask questions, clarify information, report discrepancies, and confirm understanding with supervisors and team members; • Record and communicate relevant information from plans and specifications to support teamwork, task completion, and adherence to project requirements.
Learning Outcome 1 (LO1)	Identify features and functions of plans and drawings
Performance standards	1.1 Identify the key features and functions of the main types of plans and drawings used in brick and block work; 1.2 Explain the meaning of construction symbols commonly used on plans and drawings in brick and block work; 1.3 Locate and explain the meaning of the legend and abbreviations on plans and drawings used in brick and block work; 1.4 Explain the meaning of title panels and revision details commonly used on plans and drawings in brick and block work.
Learning Outcome 2 (LO2)	Locate key features on a site plan/drawing.
Performance Standards	2.1 Orientate the site plan with the site; 2.2 Locate boundaries of the site from the site plan; 2.3 Locate existing services on the site; 2.4 Locate site datum from the site plan.
Learning Outcome 3 (LO3)	Identify project requirements from plans and specifications
Performance standards	3.1 Determine project dimensions and nominated locations from project plans and specifications; 3.2 Obtain dimensions for nominated work locations from project plans and specifications;

	3.3. Determine environmental requirements, controls and locations from environmental plan, project plans and specifications; 3.4 Identify standards of work, finishes and tolerances from project plans and specifications; 3.5 Determine materials from project plans and specifications.
Pre-requisites	N/A
Co-requisites	N/A
Underpinning skill and knowledge	The following skills and knowledge underpin this unit standard: <u>Skills:</u> Reading and Interpretation - Identifying key features, functions and purposes of common construction plans and drawings - Recognising and interpreting construction symbols, abbreviations and legends - Checking title panels and revision details to confirm the latest amendments Site and Project Identification - Orientating a site plan to the physical site - Locating key site features such as boundaries, datum, access points and nominated locations - Identifying construction types, dimensions and nominated locations from plans Communication and Workplace - Asking questions and confirming understanding with supervisors and team members - Reporting amendments or discrepancies in plans and specifications - Recording basic information from plans and specifications Numeracy and Measurements - Applying basic mathematical skills to interpret dimensions and quantities

	- Using information from drawings and specifications to support routine work tasks <u>Knowledge:</u> Plans and Drawings - Features and functions of different types of construction drawings, including: - Site plans - Construction plans - Cross sectional and longitudinal plans - Structural detail plans and illustrations - Project specifications Symbols and Documentation - Common legends, construction symbols and abbreviations used on plans - Processes for checking and confirming amendments to plans and specifications Site Plan Interpretation - Methods for orientating site plans to real world sites - Key features of site plans, including: - Locate datum - Location and layout - Dimensions and quantities - Construction patterns and compatibility Specifications and Project Requirements - Key features of specifications, including: - Materials and material attributes - Quality of work and quality assurance requirements - Standards of work, tolerances, treatments and finishes - Nominated subcontractors and site access requirements Environmental and Workplace Requirements - Environmental requirements shown in plans and specifications, including: - Waste management - Clean up and environmental controls
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Assessment requirements

Assessment methods may include more than one of the following:

Direct Observation

Assessment of learners while they are performing tasks in real time in a 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> 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. 2. Trainer's Guide 3. Learner's Guide 4. Tonga National Building Code 5. Videos – Working drawings for Brick and Block layers 6. Plans and Specifications 7. Scale rule 8. Tape measure 9. Calculators 10. Structured assessment and evidence-collection tools 11. Computer (hardware, software program, ArchiCAD, AutoCAD)
Requirements to complete this unit	There are three (3) Learning outcomes and thirteen (13) Performance Standards to measure competence. To demonstrate competence, the person studying this unit is: a. Required to demonstrate all LOs to the expected standards; b. Required to attain an Achieved Grade (Competent) to fulfil the requirements of the Unit Standard; c. 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> 1. All training and assessment activities must be in accordance with Tonga National Building Code. 2. Assessors must comply with the Tonga national assessment and moderation requirements. <u>Definitions:</u> 1. <i>Abbreviation</i> is a shortened form of a word used to simplify information on plans (e.g., “mm” for millimetres). 2. <i>Access Point</i> is an entry or exit locations to a construction site.

3. **Amendment** is a change or revision made to a plan or specification.
4. **Boundary** refers to the limits or edges of a construction site.
5. **Compliance** refers to adhering to regulations, standards, and specifications.
6. **Construction Plan** refers to a scaled drawing that shows the layout, dimensions, and details of a construction project.
7. **Construction Type** refers to the method or system used to build a structure.
8. **Currency (of documents)** refers to whether the document is the latest and most up-to-date version.
9. **Datum** refers to a fixed reference point or level used for measurements on a site.
10. **Dimension** is a measurement that indicates length, width, height, or distance in a drawing.
11. **Drawing** is a visual representation of an object or structure used to communicate design and construction details.
12. **Environmental Requirements** refer to guidelines to protect the environment during construction (e.g., waste management).
13. **Finishes** refer to the final surface treatment applied to materials (e.g., plastering, painting).
14. **Legend** refers to a key on a plan that explains symbols, lines, and abbreviations used in the drawing.
15. **Material Specification** refers to details about the type and quality of materials to be used.
16. **Nominated Location** is a specific area identified in the plans for particular work or materials.
17. **Notation** is a written notes or annotations on drawings that provide additional information or instructions
18. **Orientation** refers to aligning a plan with the actual site (e.g., using north direction).
19. **Quality Standards** refer to required levels of workmanship and compliance in construction work.

	20. <i>Revision Number</i> refers to number used to track updates made to drawings. 21. <i>Scale</i> is the ratio used to represent actual size in a drawing (e.g., 1:100). 22. <i>Services</i> refer to existing utilities on a site such as water, electricity, drainage, or telecommunications. 23. <i>Site Plan</i> refers to a drawing that shows the location of a building and features such as boundaries, access points, and services on a site. 24. <i>Specification</i> is a written document that describes materials, workmanship, standards, and requirements for a project. 25. <i>Symbol</i> is a graphic representation used on drawings to indicate elements such as materials, fixtures, or features. 26. <i>Title Block</i> refers to section of a drawing that contains project details such as drawing number, revision status, date, and author. 27. <i>Tolerance</i> refers to the allowable variation from a specified measurement or standard. 28. <i>Waste Management</i> refers to procedures for handling and disposing of construction waste. 29. <i>Workplace Communication</i> is the exchange of information among team members to ensure correct understanding of tasks.
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.