

REGISTERED NATIONAL STANDARD



UNIT OF COMPETENCY

Title:	Use bricklaying and blocklaying tools and equipment ¹				
TQF Level:	3	Credits:	6	Version:	1
National standard code:	NS141-03				
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 safely and effectively select, prepare, use, clean, and store bricklaying and blocklaying tools, plant, and equipment. The unit focuses on understanding functional and operational features of tools and equipment and applying manufacturer instructions, workplace procedures, and work health and safety requirements. It is designed for individuals performing routine bricklaying and blocklaying tasks under supervision on new or existing structures. In successfully completing this unit standard, learners are able to: • Safely select, inspect, and use a range of bricklaying and blocklaying hand tools, power tools, plant and equipment. • Conduct pre-operational checks to ensure tools and equipment are safe, serviceable, and fit for purpose. • Interpret basic construction plans, specifications, and workplace instructions to determine tool and equipment requirements. • Set up and operate bricklaying and blocklaying equipment in accordance with manufacturer specifications and workplace procedures. • Safely use equipment such as cement mixers, brick saws, wheelbarrows, brick grabs, levels, drills, and other masonry tools. • Cut bricks and concrete blocks accurately to specified sizes and shapes using appropriate cutting equipment. • Produce different mortar joint finishes using suitable hand tools and finishing techniques.				

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.

	• Apply safe manual and mechanical handling techniques when transporting materials and equipment. • Wear and maintain appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for bricklaying and blocklaying activities. • Apply Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) requirements, including hazard identification, dust suppression, noise control, electrical safety, and silica exposure management. • Carry out routine cleaning, maintenance, storage, and care of tools and equipment to maximise their lifespan and performance. • Troubleshoot common equipment issues and report faults in accordance with workplace procedures. • Dispose of waste materials responsibly and comply with environmental and workplace requirements. • Work effectively as part of a construction team while demonstrating safe, efficient, and professional work practices. • Complete bricklaying and blocklaying tasks using appropriate tools and equipment to industry standards, ensuring quality workmanship and productivity.
Learning Outcome 1 (LO1)	Organise tools and equipment for brick and block laying work
Performance standards	1.1 Read and interpret work plans and specifications; 1.2 Follow requirements in workplace safety and environmental documentation and workplace procedures; 1.3 Identify potential hazards and determine and implement control measures; 1.4 Select, fit correctly and use personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate for job; 1.5 Clarify job priorities and sequence tasks with others on site.
Learning Outcome 2 (LO2)	Prepare tools and equipment to use for brick and block laying
Performance Standards	2.1 Identify any limitations of tools and equipment from manufacturer's instructions; 2.2 Select plant, equipment and tools for the task; 2.3 Check equipment and tools to ensure guards, guides, controls and switches are fitted and functional; 2.4 Check electrical leads and power tools for damage; 2.5 Set aside, tag and report damaged equipment and tools.
Learning Outcome 3 (LO3)	Use plant, equipment and tools

Performance standards	3.1 Level and stabilise static equipment in appropriate location; 3.2 Connect electrical tools to a residual current device (RCD); 3.3 Use plant, tools and equipment safely for its intended purpose; 3.4 Disconnect portable electrical tools when not in use.
Learning Outcome 4 (LO4)	Clean up tools and equipment work area
Performance standards	4.1 Clear the work area and dispose waste following environmental requirements; 4.2 Clean tools and equipment; 4.3 Check for serviceability and report damage or faults; 4.4 Store and secure tools and equipment following workplace 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> Work Planning and Safety • Reading and interpreting work plans and specifications • Identifying hazards and implementing appropriate control measures • Following workplace OHS policies, environmental procedures, and site documentation • Selecting, fitting, and using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) Tool and Equipment Preparation • Selecting suitable hand tools, power tools, plant, and equipment for bricklaying and blocklaying tasks • Conducting pre-operational checks on tools and equipment • Identifying faults, damage, or limitations from manufacturer instructions

	• Tagging and reporting damaged or unsafe tools and equipment Practical Tool and Equipment Use • Safely using tools and equipment only for their intended purpose • Setting up and stabilising static equipment • Connecting and disconnecting electrical tools using RCD protection • Using equipment to achieve different brick and block joint finishes • Assisting in bricklaying or blocklaying work under supervision Housekeeping and Storage • Cleaning tools and equipment after use • Checking serviceability and reporting defects • Disposing of, reusing, or recycling materials according to workplace and environmental requirements • Storing and securing tools and equipment in line with workplace procedures <u>Knowledge:</u> Tools, Equipment, and Plant • Terminology related to bricklaying and blocklaying tools and equipment • Functional and operational features, uses, and limitations of: ○ Hand tools (trowels, jointing tools, bolster chisels, hammers, squares, bevels) ○ Measuring and levelling tools (spirit levels, laser levels, water levels) ○ Power and battery-operated tools (drills, wet-cut brick saws) ○ Plant and mechanical equipment (cement mixers, wheelbarrows, pallet trolleys, hoists, brick buggies) ○ Small engines, compressors, and mixers Manufacturer and Operational Requirements • Manufacturer specifications and instructions, including:
--	--

	○ Safety requirements during operation ○ Identification and purpose of components ○ Maintenance, cleanliness, and serviceability ○ Basic troubleshooting procedures Materials and Construction Knowledge • Basic construction and bricklaying terminology • Characteristics, properties, and applications of materials used in bricklaying and blocklaying • Purpose and interpretation of plans and specifications Work Processes and Handling Techniques • Manual handling principles • Mechanical handling techniques • Use of supports, clamps, guides, and holding devices Occupational Health, Safety, and Environment • OHS requirements relevant to bricklaying and blocklaying, including: ○ Job Safety and Environmental Analysis (JSEA) ○ Electrical safety ○ Working at heights ○ Noise control and hearing protection ○ Dust suppression and silica exposure management ○ Environmental requirements for waste management, reuse, and recycling on construction sites
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 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 (plants and equipment) 6. Pictorial Chart (Plants and equipment) 7. Plans and Specifications 8. Cement mixer 9. Brick cutting saw 10. Trowels and jointing tools

	11. Bolster chisels 12. Mash/lump hammers 13. Builder's square and sliding bevels 14. Corner blocks and string lines 15. Profiles and straight edges 16. Spirit levels, water levels, laser levels 17. Mortar boards 18. Wheelbarrows 19. Hand brick grabs 20. Structured assessment and evidence-collection tools
Requirements to complete this unit	There are four (4) Learning outcomes and eighteen (18) 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>Brick buggy</i> refers to equipment used to transport bricks around site. 2. <i>Brick grab</i> refers to tool used to carry bricks safely. 3. <i>Electrical Hazards</i> are risks associated with electrical equipment and improper grounding.

4. *Environmental Requirements* are regulations and workplace procedures aimed at reducing environmental impact, including waste management and recycling.
5. *Hand tools* refer to manually operated tools used in bricklaying
6. *Hazard* refers to potential source of harm.
7. *Intended purpose* refers to using equipment only for its designed function.
8. *Jointing tools* are tools used to shape and finish mortar joints.
9. *JSEA (Job Safety and Environmental Analysis)* refers to process to identify risks.
10. *Level* refers to tool used to ensure horizontal or vertical alignment.
11. *Manual handling* refers to lifting and moving materials by hand.
12. *Mechanical handling* refers to using equipment to transport materials.
13. *OHS (Occupational Health and Safety)* refers to framework for safe work practices.
14. *Plant and equipment* refers to larger machinery used for material handling and processing.
15. *Power tools* refer to electrically or mechanically operated tools
16. *Pre-operation check* refers to inspection of tools before use.
17. *RCD (Residual Current Device)* refers to safety device that cuts power to prevent electric shock.
18. *Risk control* refers to measures to reduce workplace risks.
19. *Serviceability* refers to condition of equipment being safe and functional.
20. *Silica dust* refers to hazardous dust produced during cutting masonry materials.
21. *Stabilise equipment* refers to ensuring tools are secure and balanced before operation.
22. *String line* refers to the line used to maintain alignment of brickwork.

	23. <i>Tonga National Building Code</i> refers to a set of technical standards governing the design and construction of buildings in Tonga.
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.