



REGISTERED NATIONAL QUALIFICATION

Title:	National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 4 ¹				
Version:	1	Qualification type:	National qualification	TQF level:	4
Credits:	70	TQF Registration code:	QR-04-NQ-028-02-1005-26-01		
Approval date:	10 September 2026		Next review:	10 September 2031	
Qualification developer:		1. Tonga National University School of Science and Technology Bay- ‘o-Manumataongo Ma’ufanga Nuku’alofa 2. Pacific Australia Skills Government of Australia Tonga Nuku’alofa, Tonga			
Purpose:	The <i>National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 4</i> is aimed at those: • Experienced bricklayers and blocklayers • Graduates of the National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 3 • Apprentices • Construction workers seeking to advance their technical knowledge and practical skills within the brick and blocklaying trade.				

¹ This Tonga national qualification, *National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 4* is considered equivalent to the Australian CPC31320 Certificate III in Bricklaying and Blocklaying, CPC31020 Certificate III in Solid Plastering, BSB30220 Certificate III in Entrepreneurship and New Business and New Zealand Certificate in Trowel Trades (L4).

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National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 4

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- Individuals aspiring to progress into leading hand, supervisory, or specialist masonry roles, as well as existing tradespeople wishing to formalise their competencies through a nationally recognised qualification

The qualification provides an opportunity for learners to enhance their employability, leadership capability, and career progression within Tonga's construction industry.

This Level 4 bricklaying and blocklaying graduates also gain entrepreneurship knowledge and business planning skills required to establish, manage, and grow in self-employment and establish sustainable small business ventures.

The qualification responds directly to industry demand for highly skilled brick and block layers capable of undertaking complex bricklaying and blocklaying projects while maintaining high standards of workmanship, safety, and compliance. It equips learners with advanced technical competencies, problem-solving abilities, and workplace leadership skills required by employers. For individuals, it provides a recognised pathway for career advancement, increased employment opportunities, and lifelong learning. For industry, it strengthens workforce capability by producing competent tradespeople able to deliver quality construction outcomes. For the community, the qualification contributes to safer, more durable, and resilient buildings and infrastructure, supporting Tonga's long-term social and economic development.

On successful completion of the qualification, graduates will be able to plan, coordinate, and complete advanced bricklaying and blocklaying activities in accordance with construction drawings, specifications, the Tonga National Building Code, and workplace health and safety requirements. They will demonstrate competency in constructing structural and reinforced brick and block systems, arches, curved walls, retaining walls, decorative brick and block features, and other complex brick and block structures. Graduates will be able to interpret technical documentation, organise resources, supervise small work teams, apply quality assurance processes, communicate effectively with clients and other trades, and solve construction-related problems while maintaining industry standards of safety, quality, and productivity.

The scope of this qualification is highly relevant to the bricklaying and blocklaying occupation and the broader building and construction sector in Tonga. It supports employment across

	residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, and infrastructure construction projects where advanced brick and block laying skills are required. The qualification provides the competencies necessary for qualified bricklayers, blocklayers, leading hands, site supervisors, and specialist brick and block laying contractors, while also supporting progression into higher-level construction qualifications and supervisory or management roles. Its broad industry relevance ensures graduates possess transferable skills that meet current and emerging workforce needs across the construction sector. The National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 4 supports the Government of Tonga's Strategic Development Framework 2035 by strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and developing a highly skilled national workforce that meets the evolving needs of the construction industry. The qualification contributes to national priorities by improving workforce productivity, increasing employment opportunities, supporting private sector growth, and enhancing the quality and resilience of infrastructure and housing. It also promotes sustainable economic development by reducing reliance on imported skilled labour, strengthening local industry capability, and ensuring that construction projects are delivered safely, efficiently, and in accordance with national building standards.
Rationale	This qualification is essential for the increasing demand for advanced level skilled bricklayers and blocklayers within Tonga's growing construction and infrastructure sector. Industry consultation and labour market surveys identified significant skills shortages in brick and block construction, particularly in specialised areas such as structural rick and block, rendering, and complex wall construction. The qualification provides a structured competency-based training pathway aligned with national industry standards requirements. It supports improved bricklaying and blocklaying quality, workplace safety, productivity, and employment opportunities while strengthening local technical workforce capability. The <i>National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 4</i> is intended for construction workers who want to improve their technical knowledge and practical skills in the brick and blocklaying trade as well as experienced bricklayers and blocklayers, graduates of level 3 qualifications, and apprentices. It is also appropriate for current tradesmen who want to formalise

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	their skills with a nationally recognised qualification, as well as those who hope to advance into leading-hand, supervisory, or specialised brick and blocklaying roles. The interested candidates must meet the entry requirement of the programme. The qualification provides an opportunity for learners to enhance their employability, leadership capability, and career progression within Tonga's brick and block construction industry.
Outcomes Statement	Graduates will develop advanced technical skills in structural bricklaying and blocklaying, reinforced brick and block work, arches, curved walls, retaining walls, feature brickwork, multi-thickness walls, brick and block repair work, and other specialised brick and block construction techniques. The qualification also develops competencies in planning and organising work, supervising small teams, managing materials and resources, and maintaining quality assurance throughout brick and block construction activities as well as develop the skills and knowledge needed to identify business opportunities, assess and manage risks, access financing options, and plan for the establishment of a sustainable self-employed small business venture. Graduates of the National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 4 prepares learners to become competent trades people with the ability to: • Conduct site specific hazard identification and risk controls to maintain a safe work site • Safely sets up and removes scaffolding for brick and blocklaying tasks • Transfer measurements and plans onto site to ensure accurate construction layout • Build external veneer walls for structural support and aesthetic finishes • Build safe and durable steps and stair structures • Construct straight walls and accurate corners for stable structures • Build reinforced walls and piers for added strength and load-bearing capacity • Install decorative and functional glass blocks in walls • Install moisture barriers to prevent water penetration and damage in buildings • Build arches for structural and architectural purposes

	• Create curved masonry features for design and structural applications • Develop integrated masonry systems for building stability • Applies fire-resistant materials and techniques to meet safety standards • Finish walls with smooth or textured plaster on straight and curved surfaces • Apply foundational entrepreneurial knowledge and skills to identify viable business opportunities, make informed start-up decisions, plan financing needs, and develop a business plan for a small enterprise. Graduates are equipped to work independently or as part of a team, delivering high quality, structurally compliant advanced level brick and block work while meeting industry standards, safety requirements, and construction specifications.																																																												
Qualification Components	This qualification consists of the following units of competency: <table><tr><th colspan="4">Compulsory</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>Unit Code</th><th>Unit Title</th><th>Credit value</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>NS151-04</td><td>Identify work area hazards and select risk control strategies</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>NS152-03</td><td>Erect and dismantle limited height scaffolding</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>NS153-04</td><td>Set out for brick and block work construction</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>NS154-04</td><td>Lay brick and block walls and corners</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>NS155-04</td><td>Construct brick or block stairs</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>NS156-04</td><td>Carry out brick veneer construction</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>NS157-04</td><td>Construct multi-thickness brick walls</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>8</td><td>NS158-04</td><td>Install glass block work</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>NS159-04</td><td>Construct brick and block arches</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>10</td><td>NS160-04</td><td>Construct brick and block curved walls</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>NS161-04</td><td>Construct brick and block structural systems</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>12</td><td>NS162-04</td><td>Construct fire-rated brick and block walls</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>13</td><td>NS070-02</td><td>Entrepreneurship 1</td><td>7</td></tr></table>	Compulsory					Unit Code	Unit Title	Credit value	1	NS151-04	Identify work area hazards and select risk control strategies	4	2	NS152-03	Erect and dismantle limited height scaffolding	4	3	NS153-04	Set out for brick and block work construction	5	4	NS154-04	Lay brick and block walls and corners	6	5	NS155-04	Construct brick or block stairs	4	6	NS156-04	Carry out brick veneer construction	5	7	NS157-04	Construct multi-thickness brick walls	5	8	NS158-04	Install glass block work	4	9	NS159-04	Construct brick and block arches	5	10	NS160-04	Construct brick and block curved walls	5	11	NS161-04	Construct brick and block structural systems	5	12	NS162-04	Construct fire-rated brick and block walls	6	13	NS070-02	Entrepreneurship 1	7
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	Electives			
		Unit Code	Unit Title	Credit value
	14	NS163-04	Install flashings and damp-proof course	5
	15	NS164-04	Apply plaster and render to straight and curved surfaces	5
	Total Credits			70

Note:

1. The learners must complete 13 compulsory units above (#1 - #13) with total of 65 credits.
2. The learners will choose to complete either #14 or #15 above (only ONE) as elective unit to complete this *National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 4 qualification* with 5 credits only.
3. The learners will successfully complete this *National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 4 qualification* with total of 70 credits.
4. The above units of competency can be delivered as short courses or micro-credentials consisting of two or more units with total credits ranging from 10 – 39 depending on the training needs of an interested training provider.
5. Approval for short course or micro-credential delivery be sought form TNQAB prior to delivery.

Entry Requirements ²	The minimum entry requirements to this national certificate include the following:
	1. Be at least 18 years old (at the current year this qualification is delivered) 2. Successful completion of: i) National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 3 (QR-03-NQ-028-01-1005-26-01) OR ii) Industrial workers with minimum of three years (equivalent to 36 months) work experience in bricklaying and blocklaying seeking formal recognition of their experience through RPL.

² Program promotion and enrolments must encourage inclusive practices relating to gender equality, disability inclusion, and non-discrimination in training and at workplace.

Learning Assumed to be in Place	Learners are expected to have: • Apply OHS requirements, policies and procedures • Work effectively and sustainably in the workplace • Plan and organise brick and block laying work • Conduct workplace communication • Read and interpret plans and specifications for brick and block laying • Carry out measurements and calculations for brick and block laying • Undertake basic estimating and costing for brick and block laying • Handle and prepare bricklaying and blocklaying materials • Use bricklaying and blocklaying tools and equipment • Apply basic levelling procedures • Working safely at heights • Carry out basic demolition • Carry out concreting to simple forms • Place and fix reinforcement materials for brick and block laying • Lay paving bricks • Carry out cavity brick and block construction • Use plastering tools and equipment • Prepare surfaces for plastering
International Comparability	This Tonga national qualification is equivalent to: i) Australian CPC31320 Certificate III in Bricklaying and Blocklaying ii) Australian CPC31020 Certificate III Solid Plastering iii) Australian BSB30220 Certificate III in Entrepreneurship and New Business iv) New Zealand Certificate in Trowel Trades (L4) The Tongan Units of competency have been independently developed for the Tongan construction context, reflecting local construction materials, building methods, the Tonga National Building Code, industry practices, and applicable Tongan occupational health and safety standards designed to meet Tonga's workforce and industry requirements.
Recognition of Prior Learning	This qualification may be achieved in whole or in part through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) which considers skills and knowledge gained in different settings including the community, workplace and educational institutions, and in accordance with relevant national and institutional policies and processes.

	Learners can achieve competence in ways most suited to their individual needs (educational, or work) and aspirations. Learners are not required to do the listed units below if they had passed these units in the named qualifications below: i) <i>National Certificate in Wall and Floor Tiling Level 4</i> (QR-04-NQ-028-04-1005-26-01) – NS151-04, NS152-03, NS164-04 and NS070-02 ii) <i>National Certificate in Work-readiness and Employability Skills Level 2</i> (QR-02-NQ-001-0903-22-01) – NS070-02 OR in any other TNQAB recognized training prior to enrolling. Any individual without prior formal qualification but has prior technical experience (3 years+) on bricklaying and blocklaying work may apply/request RPL for this level of training program. The learner wishing to apply/request RPL needs to apply in writing to the training providers. Assessment for RPL must be undertaken by a qualified assessor. Evidence of skills and knowledge acquired must be shown before recognition can be given. Evidence collected shall be portfolio and workplace observation. RPL acknowledges existing skills and knowledge gained from previous learning, both formally (e.g. courses or study previously undertaken) and informally (workplace learning and experiences). Sufficient evidence should be gathered and analysis completed by the RPL assessor to confirm all unit requirements are met to justify the assessment outcome.
Credit transfer	The Tonga Qualifications Framework (TQF) as well as most other Frameworks allow for credit recognition and transfer from other regional or national qualifications through a process of mutual recognition. Credit transfer is a process whereby credits already achieved for one qualification are recognized towards a new qualification. Thus, if a learner has obtained the relevant competency (within the past five years) in: 1. A qualification which has been identified as equivalent to <i>NCBBL4</i>, they will receive credit for unit standards which have been successfully completed. Evidence of achievement

	will be required by relevant authorities before credit transfer is approved; 2. A TNQAB approved qualification that contains any of the component units of this national qualification; 3. A TNQAB approved short course that is made up of any of the component units of this national qualification, he or she will cross credit recognition. Evidence of achievement will be required by relevant authorities before credit transfer is approved. 4. A regional approved Micro-qualification or approved short course that is made up of any of the component units of this national qualification, he or she will cross credit recognition. Evidence of achievement will be required by relevant authorities before credit transfer is approved.
Learning Pathways	<u>Pathways in</u> i. Successful graduates of the National Certificate in Bricklaying and Blocklaying Level 3 (QR-03-NQ-028-01-1005-26-01) or equivalent. ii. Industry workers with minimum of three years (equivalent to 36 months) work experience in bricklaying and blocklaying seeking formal recognition of their experience to apply for RPL. iii. Interested candidates who are passion at brick and block laying work. iv. Completion of relevant short courses/micro-credential v. Candidates who meet the entry requirement <u>Pathways out:</u> i. Graduates will go straight into employment as Qualified Bricklayer or Blocklayer, Qualified Paver. ii. Leading Hand, Foreman, Supervisor at workplace in Construction. iii. Certificate IV in Building Construction (Australia) iv. Diploma in Building Construction (New Zealand)
Support for Qualification	1. Tonga National University, School of Science and Technology, Tonga 2. Ministry of Education and Training, Tonga 3. Ministry of Infrastructure, Building Division, Tonga 4. Pacific Australia Skills, Government of Australia, Tonga

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Accreditation Requirements

Important accreditation requirements include:

1. Teaching staff must have:
 - a) At least a level 5 qualification in an area relevant to Bricklaying and Blocklaying plus (3) years of relevant industry experience;
 - b) A relevant registered qualification Level 5 as a trainer and assessor in TVET;
2. If the teaching staff/a person does not comply with the requirements in subsection 1 (a and b) shall be assessed by an assessor recognised by the Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board of the person's prior learning.
3. A teaching staff/a person who has been assessed under subsection (2) shall be granted recognition of prior learning where the assessor is satisfied that he has the skills and knowledge one level higher than the course of study.
4. Physical resources including:
 - Workshop
 - Training room
 - Tools
 - Equipment and plant
 - Materials
5. Documents:
 - Compilation of printed resources relevant to the component units
6. Specialised resources for each unit of competency including:
 - Tonga Environment Act
 - Tonga National Building Code
7. Unit descriptors or general course outline ready for distribution to students with details of:
 - a) Learning outcomes, qualification components, credit values, entry requirements, learning assumed to be in place, required training resources etc.
 - b) Assessment details including assessment tasks and due dates, marking guidelines, moderation information,

	and other requirements about the completion of each unit c) Recommended textbooks/readings for students, and d) Names and contact details of teaching staff
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