**Checklist - planning the safe use, erection and dismantling of prefabricated or modular scaffolding**

Scaffolding is a temporary structure erected to support access and working platforms and includes:

* prefabricated scaffold
* tube and coupler scaffold
* cantilevered scaffold
* hung scaffold
* suspended scaffold.

**Note: This checklist is for prefabricated scaffolding only**

Scaffolding can present a risk of injury to people from the following:

* Falls from height. This can occur when workers are exposed to fall hazards while using, erecting or dismantling the scaffold.
* Falling objects. This can occur during the erection or dismantling of scaffold when components are not secured or when tools or materials are being used by workers and are not contained within the scaffolding.
* Scaffold collapse. This can occur when scaffolding is overloaded or incorrectly erected including the omission of ties, braces or other components. Stair modules may also collapse from incorrect installation or stair treads failing from insufficient or cracked welds. Environmental factors (wind or rain) may also contribute to a scaffold collapse.
* Work near powerlines. This can occur when work is performed near or around live electrical parts.
* Mobile plant and traffic. This can occur when mobile plant or vehicular traffic comes in direct contact with scaffolding.
* Mix and match components. This can occur when components of different size, strength or characteristics are used and could affect the safe load capacity of the scaffold.
* Hazardous manual tasks.

**Why is planning important?**

Planning is the first step in ensuring that work is done safely. Planning for scaffolding operations should start as early as possible and involve consultation with everyone engaged in the work including the principal contractor, plant owner/supplier/erector, designer, sub-contractors and safety personnel. Good planning involves:

* selecting the right scaffolding for the task or structure, considering the proposed live and environmental loads
* planning, scheduling and coordinating the erection, dismantling and work operations on or near the scaffolding
* erecting, dismantling and using the plant safely, including the development and implementation of scaffold plans and handover certificates.

Effective planning will help identify ways to protect people who are:

* erecting and dismantling the scaffolding
* working on or near the scaffolding
* in an area adjacent to the scaffolding, including public areas.

**How to use this checklist**

This checklist can be used to assist with the set up and use of scaffolding at construction workplaces. The assessment can be led by a principal contractor, Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU), scaffolder, safety advisor or health and safety representative (HSR) and should be done in consultation, coordination and cooperation with everyone involved. For example, a representative from the principal contractor might assemble a group of relevant people from the site to discuss each item and coordinate the actions required for any **‘no’** responses.

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* requires a PCBU to consult, so far as is reasonably practicable, with workers who are likely to be directly affected by a health and safety matter and with other duty-holders at the same workplace. Records of completed checklist can be kept to monitor and review items at a later date.

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| **Part one – site details** | |
| **Date of assessment:** |  |
| **Assessment completed by:** |  |
| **Name of PC or PCBU:** |  |
| **Site location:** |  |
| **Plant design registration number:** |  |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Section** | **Item** | **Response and comments** |

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| **Part two – selecting the right scaffolding** | | |
| Determining scaffolding requirements | 1. Is the type of scaffolding selected suitable for the work that needs to be performed? Consider:  * the type and extent of the proposed work (e.g. materials, loads, number of persons) * rated capacity, and other specifications of the scaffolding * type and condition of supporting structure * the frequency and duration that the scaffolding will be used * proximity of other plant, structures or powerlines * workplace conditions (e.g. ground conditions, site access, public areas, power supply). | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| Inspections and maintenance | 1. Has a competent person carried out a documented inspection on the scaffolding and the supporting structure before it is used? This should cover, but not be limited to:  * all relevant items indicated in the scaffold plan * a visual inspection of the scaffolding (e.g. visible defects, welds, components missing) * condition of supporting ground and sole-boards * edge protection, bracing, ties, platforms and perimeter containment screening * suitable access and egress including stair modules, ladders and emergency access. | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| 1. Has a handover certificate been provided to the PCBU or PC after the inspection and prior to work starting on the scaffolding? This should include:  * time, date and site/project location * competent person’s name, signature and high risk work licence number * intended use of scaffolding and safe working load (SWL) * duty classification including number of bays, platforms and top platform height * plant design registration number. | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| 1. Is there a system in place to notify site workers that the scaffold is safe to access and carry out work from? This notification should include duty loadings, date of handover, competent person sign off, dates of period inspections (e.g. Scafftag or similar) | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| 1. Have inspections and maintenance been carried out according to scheduled intervals and records kept on site? Consider:  * at least every 30 days * before or after a significant rain or weather event * after an incident, repairs or alterations to the scaffolding. | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| **Registration** | 1. Is the scaffolding design registered with Workplace Health and Safety Queensland? | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |
| 1. Is the design registration number readily accessible in the vicinity of the scaffolding?   Note: It is preferred to display the number on the scaffolding at access points. | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |
| **Part three - planning, scheduling and coordinating the work** | | |
| Licencing and training | 1. If the scaffold platform is over four metres, does the erector hold the appropriate high risk work licence for the class of high risk work?   Basic scaffolding licence (SB) is required for modular or prefabricated scaffolds.  Note: If there are any ladder beams, spurs, cantilevers etc. an Intermediate or Advanced scaffolding high risk work licence may be required. | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |
| 1. Has the erector of the scaffolding been provided with relevant training?   This should include information about:   * + the specific scaffolding to be erected on this site   + the hazards and risks associated with erecting or dismantling the scaffolding   + emergency and rescue procedures   + process for recording incidents or near misses   + any site rules that may affect the erection or dismantling of the scaffolding. | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| Planning the work | 1. Has a Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) been prepared for the high-risk construction work associated with the erection or dismantling of scaffolding and for the use of the scaffolding by others? If yes, does the document:  * describe the high-risk construction work to be undertaken * set out the steps required to perform the work * identify hazards and risks * describe the control measures to be used? | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| 1. Does the SWMS follow the hierarchy of controls to prioritise higher-level control measures and not rely on administrative controls only? | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| 1. Have workers been consulted in the development of the SWMS, by:  * providing input in to the content of the SWMS * demonstrating that they understand the content of the SWMS. | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| 1. Have workers involved in the erection of the scaffolding signed off that they have been given training and instructions relating to the SWMS? | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| 1. Is there a system in place to monitor compliance with the SWMS?   If yes, is the high risk work activity compliant with the SWMS? | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
|  | 1. Is there a scaffold plan available on site? If yes, does the plan cover:  * site layout of where scaffolding is to erected * type and duty of scaffold to be erected (SWL per bay) * elevations and detailed sections including number of bays/lifts/height * tie details including type of anchors used * details of bracing, platforms, access, edge protection and screening if required * specific details for extra precautions to be taken in the event of extreme weather (e.g. high winds, rain). | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| Traffic management | 1. Has planning been done to ensure that the location of the scaffolding is not hazardous to workers, other mobile plant or vehicle traffic that may move around the site?   Note: Creating a site traffic management plan will help to separate routes for pedestrian, plant and vehicle movements and outline how different traffic situations will be managed | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |
| **Part four - scaffolding siting and setup** | | |
| Proximity to plant, structures and public areas | 1. Is the scaffolding positioned so that the risk of injury from collision with other plant or structures is minimised? Consider:  * overhead electrical power-lines, towers or other services * nearby structures, buildings, roads or public areas * tower and mobile cranes, EWPs or other potential obstructions (e.g. concrete placement boom pumps). | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |
| Exclusion zones | 1. If exclusion zones have been selected as a control measure, do they prevent?  * persons from being hit by falling objects * the scaffold coming within close vicinity of overhead power- lines * other plant and vehicle traffic from entering the zone around the scaffolding. | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |
| Exclusion zones | 1. Have all relevant workers been informed and understand where exclusion zones are established? | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |
| Erecting and dismantling scaffolding | 1. Has the scaffolding been erected/dismantled in accordance with the scaffold plan, manufacturer’s specifications and legislative requirements?   This should cover but not limited to:   * supporting structure or surfaces. sole-boards, screw-jacks and baseplates * standards, ledgers, transoms, braces, ties, planks, lap-boards and ply infills * platforms, edge protection, fall arresting platforms and loading bays * gap between scaffold and building (225mm max) or internal voids * access and egress including stair modules, ladders and emergency access * perimeter containment screening considering environmental loads (wind, rain) * the use of zip ties to secure non-structural components only (shadecloth) * safe system of work to prevent falls by persons erecting or dismantling the scaffolding * signs and barriers in place for incomplete or excluded scaffold areas * general stability of scaffolding including bracing bays or outriggers. | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| 1. Are the scaffold stair modules fit for purpose? Consider:  * the maximum gap between any stair module and the vertical edge of the transom should not be greater than 15mm * transoms with a horizontal width of at least 45mm are used * inspecting of stair modules for any visual defects including cracks or under-cuts in the welds * inspecting the modules for straightness, damage or excessive wear. | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |
| Managing the risk of falling from heights | 1. For the erection and dismantling of scaffolding, has the risk of falling from heights been adequately controlled? This should include:  * systematic process where a 450mm wide platform and rails are installed progressively * wearing of fall arrest harness under strict conditions if chosen as a control measure * a safe means of access and egress is installed. | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |
| Managing the risk of falling from heights | 1. For workers using the scaffolding, has the risk of falling from heights been adequately controlled? This should include:  * top-rail, mid-rail and toe-board or bottom rail for external falls * top-rail, mid-rail and toe-board or bottom rail for internal falls or voids * brick or mesh guard with toe-board incorporated * safety screens with edge protection incorporated.   Note: mid-rails are required with brick guards unless otherwise specified by the scaffolding manufacturer. | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| Working platforms | 1. Are the working platforms suitable for the proposed work on the scaffolding?   This should cover but not limited to:   * light, medium, or heavy duty depending on proposed loads and work tasks * planks are in good condition and secured into position * planks are not lapped on straight runs and only around corners * metal lap planks to be fixed by double tie wire * gap between planks not to exceed 25mm and the total gap between all planks does not exceed 50mm * hop-up brackets to have tie-bars and not use tie wire * platforms or scaffold components must not support another type of platform e.g. planks from a trestle ladder to a scaffold platform or ledger. | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |
| Managing the risk of falling objects | 1. Are control measures in place for the risk of falling objects?   This should cover but not limited to:   * toe-boards on work platforms * brick or mesh guard with toe board incorporated * perimeter containment screening (fixed to inside of standards) * catch platforms * gantries * exclusion zones.   Note: The level of risk will determine the control measure required | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |
| Stability and tying | 1. Has the scaffolding been erected with suitable ties and is stable from movement or collapse? This should cover but not be limited to:  * ties installed are in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions * drill in type anchors are installed using a torque wrench. * ties connecting with both inner and outer standards unless specified by engineer * ties to be inspected regularly to ensure they have not been modified or removed * ties should not obstruct the access or working platform.   Note: - screw bolt or drop-in anchors should not be used due to the difficulty of installation  - additional buttress/bracing bays or outriggers may be required for stability | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |
| 1. Where there are added loads to the scaffold (e.g. fitted rubbish shutes, hoarding panels attached the lower levels), has this been incorporated into the scaffold plan/design drawings? | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| Fall arresting platform | 1. If a fall arresting platform has been erected, does it have?  * an unobstructed landing area of at least 675mm wide and able to withstand a fall impact * if the slope of the surface or roof is under 26 degrees, the fall arresting platform is no more than 1m below the surface or roof * if the slope of the surface or roof is over 26 degrees, the fall arresting platform is no more than 300mm below the surface or roof.   Note: Refer to diagram below. | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |
| **Part five - using the scaffolding safely** | | |
| Working on scaffolding | 1. Has the relevant sections of the scaffold plan been communicated to the workers during induction? This could cover but not be limited to:  * alterations or removing of components only by licensed scaffolders * access and egress ways including emergency access * safe load limits for platforms including persons, tools and materials allowed * consultation with other workers who may use the scaffold at the same time * specific controls outlined in SWMS for work at height over 2 metres. | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| Worker behaviour | 1. Are work activities on the scaffolding being conducted safely? Look for:  * overload of persons, tools or materials on platforms * nominated access ways not used (workers climbing scaffolding or through windows) * slip, trip or fall hazards present from poor housekeeping or protrusions * evidence of components removed by workers (ties, hand rails, hop-up brackets) * tools or materials being raised or lowered from outside of scaffolding * falling objects or waste materials coming from scaffolding * ladders re-located and not secured. | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| Site management | 1. Has the risk of unauthorised entry to the scaffolding been adequately controlled? Consider:  * the proximity of the site to schools, parks, shopping precincts or other populated areas * general signs indicating it is a construction site * no unauthorised access signage * barriers and site fencing. | □ Yes □ No  Comments: |
| Managing hazardous manual tasks | 1. Have the manual tasks involved in the excavation work been adequately controlled?   Consider:   * postures, movement and forces involved with the work * the design and layout of the workplace * the duration and frequency of the task * the use of mechanical aids to assist with the work (cranes, excavators) * training and instructions for workers performing the work | □ Yes □ No □ N/A  Comments: |

**What to do next**

If you answered **‘no’** to any of the items during the assessment, further action should be taken. This should start with a discussion with the relevant people on site to gather more information and decide on a course of action. Keeping a record of the completed assessment will help to monitor and review items at a later date.

**REFERENCE:**

This checklist was developed with reference to the following legislation, sub-ordinate legislation and supporting documents.

* *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011*.
* Scaffolding Code of Practice 2009.
* Workplace Health and Safety Queensland safety alerts – Stair module failures on scaffolding and Zip ties on scaffolding.