

RIIWHS204E

Work Safely at Heights

Learner Guide Instructions

Who is this document for?

The learner.

What is in this document?

- Course information that matches the PowerPoint presentation.
- Review questions.
- Practical assessment instructions for learners.

What do you need to do before you use it for the first time?

1. Rebrand the document.
2. Review the document as part of your validation process.
3. Set the reading and test time limits that are highlighted in pink at the end of the document.

See the 'Read Me First' document for a complete set of instructions on how to use these resources.

LEARNER GUIDE

RIIWHS204E Work Safely at Heights

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Learner Name: | |
| Learner ID: | |
| Learner Contact Number: | |
| Learner Email Address: | |
| Date Training Commenced: | |

This Book Contains:

- Course Information.
- Review Questions.
- Practical Assessment overview and instructions.

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1.1 Introduction

This training course is based on the unit **RIIWHS204E Work Safely at Heights**.

Working at heights includes any job where there is a chance of you being injured by falling down from one level to another, like falling off a roof.

Any person who is working at heights needs training, clear work instructions and must use fall prevention and safety equipment.



1.1.1 Overview

You will learn about:

- ◆ Planning out the work.
- ◆ Choosing and installing safety equipment.
- ◆ Working at heights safely.
- ◆ Cleaning up the work area after you have finished.



1.1.2 What is Working at Heights?

Working at heights includes:

- Work that is done at a high level off the ground, including work done from elevating work platforms.
- Work that is done near an edge that a person could fall off, or near a hole that a person could fall into.
- Work done on a surface that a person can fall through, or slip off.

1.2 Work Safely

You must follow all safety rules and instructions when performing any work at heights. If you are not sure about what you should do, ask your boss or supervisor. They will tell you what you need to do and how to do it in a safe way.



1.2.1 Health & Safety Rules

Every workplace has to follow laws and rules to keep everyone safe. There are 4 main types:

| Type | Explanation |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Acts | These are laws that you have to follow. |
| Regulations | These explain what the law means. |
| Codes of Practice | These are instructions on how to follow the law, based on industry standards. 'Managing the Risk of Falls in Workplaces' is the national code of practice for working at heights. |
| Australian Standards | These tell you what the minimum requirement is for a job, product or hazard. |

These requirements are the basis of all policies, procedures and safe work practices within a company and/or workplace.

1.2.2 Technical and Safety Information

Like laws and rules, technical and safety information is an important part of all procedures and practices for working safely.

Before starting your work at heights, you need to make sure you have all technical and safety information for the job.

This will help you to do your work in the safest way.



Technical and safety information includes:

| | |
|---|---|
| Site Details | The information and safety requirements of the workplace environment (where you will be working). |
| Hazard Details | Any hazards in the work area or related to the work at heights. This could also include instructions on how to handle dangerous or hazardous materials. |
| Task Details | Instructions of what the work is or what you will be doing (this can include diagrams or plans). Also instructions on how to safely do the job, for example manual handling techniques. |
| Manufacturers' Guidelines and Specifications | How to use and maintain tools, equipment and safety devices and systems. |
| Faulty Equipment Procedures | Isolation procedures to follow or forms to fill out. |
| Signage | Site signage tells you what equipment you need to have, or areas that are not safe to be in. |
| Emergency Procedures | Instructions on what to do in emergency situations, for example if there is a fire, or if first aid is needed. |
| Communication Procedures | Technical and safety information could also include workplace procedures for communication. |

You should never work alone at heights. If you fall there would be no one to help you so it is very important that you have good communication with the other workers around you at all times.

Plan out your work and make sure you all understand what each person will be doing and where. To be as safe as possible you need to have clear and direct contact with other workers. Try to use clear, basic language so that nobody gets confused or misunderstands.



Make sure you can see and hear each other. If you can't, you should use hand signals or some other way to communicate.

You could also think about using a two-way radio or mobile phone (if it is allowed on site). If you are using radios make sure they work properly before you start and check for any interference on the channel.

Don't be afraid to ask questions to make sure everyone understands the situation.

Review Questions

| | | |
|-----------|---|--------------------------|
| 1. | What is the national code of practice for working at heights? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | |

| | | |
|-----------|--|--------------------------|
| 2. | List 3 types of technical and safety information that will help you to do your work in the safest way. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |

1.3 Get Your Work Details

You need to be clear about what work you will be doing. Make sure you have everything about the job written down before you start. This includes what you will be doing, how you will be doing it and what equipment you will be using.

Make sure you have all of the details about where you will be working. For example:

- On a bridge, building or rooftop.
- Near shafts, trenches, holes or other openings.
- On a ladder.
- On scaffolds.
- In elevating work platforms (EWPs).
- On vehicles or other plant and equipment.
- Above other workers.

You also need to make sure you have all of the details about the kind of work you will be doing. Work at heights can include lots of different types of work including:



- ◆ Construction.
- ◆ Repair work or maintenance.
- ◆ Cleaning.
- ◆ Painting.
- ◆ Installing or removing plant or equipment.
- ◆ Rescue operations.

1.3.1 Work Instructions

All work at heights needs to follow worksite, environmental protection and company safety procedures and work instructions.

Procedures help to make sure that all work is done in a safe way, without damaging equipment or putting people in unsafe situations.

Work instructions will tell you the safest way to do the job, and the safety equipment that you will need to use.



1.3.2 Work Method Statements

Many worksites require a Work Method Statement (WMS) before any work can start. A Work Method Statement is a list of steps that outlines how a job will be done. It also includes any hazards that occur at each step, and what you need to do about them.

These statements can also be known as a Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS), Job Safety Analysis (JSA) or Safe Operating Procedure (SOP).



1.3.2.1 How to Fill Out a Work Method Statement



1. Break the job down into steps and think about what needs to happen in each one.
2. Think about and list any hazards that exist at each step.
3. Work out the best way to deal with the hazards to make the work as safe as possible.
4. Work out who is responsible for each step in the job, who is responsible for dealing with hazards and who is supervising the whole job.
5. Make sure the Work Method Statement is explained to everyone and they clearly understand what they need to do.

1.3.3 Keeping Everyone Safe

WHS law says that all companies and workers need to keep themselves and other people safe while they work. This is called a duty of care.

To keep yourself and other workers safe you need to:

- ◆ Follow your instructions.
- ◆ Follow all workplace rules.
- ◆ Make sure all equipment is safe to use.
- ◆ Carry out your work safely.
- ◆ Report any problems.



If you think something is dangerous, tell your boss or supervisor as soon as possible.

Your worksite will also have instructions for working safely including:



- ◆ Emergency procedures, including using fire fighting equipment, first aid and evacuation.
- ◆ Rescue procedures, especially for workers who have fallen and are hanging in their harness.
- ◆ Controlling hazards.
- ◆ Handling hazardous materials and substances.
- ◆ Safe operating procedures.
- ◆ Personal protective clothing and equipment.
- ◆ Safe use of tools and equipment.

1.3.4 Emergency Procedures

Before undertaking any kind of high risk work you have to make sure you are familiar with the relevant emergency procedures. Work at heights can be extremely dangerous if you are not prepared, not using the correct safety equipment, or if you make a mistake. It can only take a moment of distraction for something to go wrong and knowing how to respond quickly may be the difference between a full recovery and serious injury.

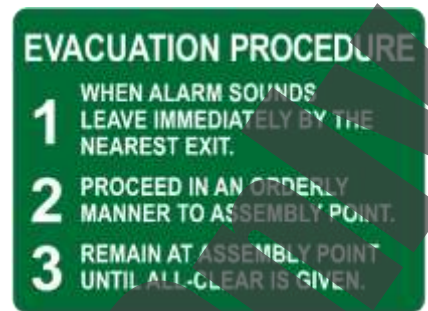
Emergency procedures should include common workplace emergencies such as:

- ◆ Fire.
- ◆ Gas leak.
- ◆ Injuries and the administration of first aid.
- ◆ Flood.
- ◆ Structural collapse.
- ◆ Vehicular collisions.
- ◆ Unexpected or severe weather conditions.



You will find details of how to respond to each type of emergency including:

- ◆ The responsibilities of specific personnel.
- ◆ The location of emergency equipment.
- ◆ Who must be notified, how and what details need to be provided.
- ◆ Areas to gather.
- ◆ Areas to be avoided.



Any work at heights emergency procedures should also include guidelines for responding to:

- ◆ Falls from height.
- ◆ Suspension trauma (also known as suspension intolerance).
- ◆ First aid treatments specific to these types of emergencies.



There may be additional safety or emergency requirements specific to the work conditions including:

- ◆ Confined spaces.
- ◆ Working at night.
- ◆ Working near or above public areas.

Review all emergency procedures before starting any work and speak with your supervisor if anything is unclear or you feel something has been overlooked, or is unsafe in any way.

Review Questions

| | | |
|-----------|--|--------------------------|
| 3. | What are 3 places you might be working at heights? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |

| | | |
|-----------|--|--------------------------|
| 4. | List 2 types of work that may need to be conducted at heights. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |

| | | |
|-----------|---|--------------------------|
| 5. | What is the purpose of work instructions? What is a WMS? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a) | | |
| b) | | |

6.

What is 'duty of care'?

7.

List 2 examples of emergency procedures that relate to working at heights:

1.

2.

1.4 Inspect the Worksite



Before you start any work at heights you need to look around the site.

Have a good look at the layout of the area and the condition of any buildings or structures that you will be working on.

This is so you know the layout of the area, you can check the condition of any buildings or structures that you will be working on, you can check for potential hazards and choose the right equipment to use.

Once you have an idea of what the job and site look like you can start to think about any potential hazards and work out what equipment you'll need to do the work.

1.4.1 Checking the Weather

The weather can change the way you do the work at heights.

Strong wind can knock you off balance or blow equipment and materials over the edge of the work area.

Rain can make the surface of the work area slippery.

Lightning can be extremely dangerous, especially when working up high.

If the weather is very bad, you might have to put the work off until the conditions clear up.



Review Questions

| | | |
|-----------|--|--------------------------|
| 8. | Why is it important to inspect the site before you start work? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | |

1.5 Identify and Control Hazards

Before you start work, you need to check for any hazards or dangers in the area. If you find a hazard or danger you need to do something to control it. This will help to make the workplace safer.



1.5.1 Identifying Hazards

Part of your job is to look around to see if you can find any hazards before you start your work at heights.

A **hazard** is the thing or situation with the potential to cause injury, harm or damage.

When you start checking for hazards, make sure you look everywhere. A good way to do this is to check:

- ◆ Up high above your head.
- ◆ All around you at eye level.
- ◆ Down low on the ground (and also think about what is under the ground).



Some hazards you should check for in the work area:

| Area | Potential Hazards |
|---|--|
| Surfaces | Are they unstable, slippery, untidy, sloping or not going to support your weight? |
| Structures | Are they unstable or incomplete? |
| The Ground | Is it uneven, soft or unstable? Will it support the weight of access equipment (scaffolds, EWPs etc.)? |
| The Work Area in General | Is it crowded, busy or messy? Is there plant, equipment, tools, rubbish, workers or other obstructions in the area? Are there hazardous materials in the area? Are there other hazards specific to the worksite? Are there hazards related to the work being done in the area? Is there a chance of tools, materials or equipment falling down onto other people? Is there enough lighting to cover the whole work area? |
| Access to and from the Work Area | Is there a safe way to get to and from the work area? |
| Unprotected Edges | Are there unprotected edges on floors, working platforms, walkways, walls or roofs? |
| Environment | Is bad weather predicted (e.g. storms and rain)? Are there very hot or cold temperatures? Are there UV hazards? |
| Manual Handling | Trying to carry heavy or bulky items while on a ladder. Having to bend or twist too much to get hold of materials or equipment. Holding yourself in an uncomfortable position, or in a way that will make it hard to keep your grip. Balancing while moving from one surface to a different one. |