Health and Safety

Working at Height

Minimum Standard

Version	**V1.1**
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Approver	H&S Board
Effective Date	20/05/2025
Review Date	20/05/2028

Contents

1. Aims and Principles

The aim of this document is to provide guidance on the steps which should be taken to ensure safe working at height in the workplace.

Departments responsible for carrying out this type of work should develop their own procedures which detail the specific arrangements to be implemented.

The procedures must include the standards set out in this document or go beyond them.

2. Legislation and Guidance

a) Applicable Legislation

Health and Safety at Work (Jersey) Law 1989

Health and Safety (Management in Construction) (Jersey) Regulations 2016

b) Guidance

Guidance on the Construction Regulations 2016

Working at Height (UK HSE)

Work At Height Safety Association (UK)

The Ladder Association

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 (UK)

LA455-Safe-Use-of-Ladders-and-Stepladders-A-brief-guide.pdf

3. Definitions

Working at Height

Work in any place, including a place at or below ground level and includes access to or egress from a place of work where, if measures are not taken, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury.

This does not include access to a workplace via a staircase in a permanent workplace.

4. Who does this Minimum Standard Apply to?

The following persons who manage or carry out work at height or who engage contractors to carry out such work.

- Anyone employed by the States Employment Board
- Voluntary staff or those on honorary contracts where there is no implied contract of employment

5. Links to other GoJ Policies, Minimum Standards and Guidance

a) Policies

Jersey Public Service -Corporate Health and Safety Policy

b) GoJ Minimum Standards

Risk Assessment
Personal Protective Equipment
Permit to Work
Lone Working
Control of Contractors
Managing Construction Work Minimum Standard Suite

c) Other Internal Guidance

Further guidance may be available from other departments carrying out this type of work.

For assistance with preparing internal procedures, contact should be made with your departmental Health and Safety Manager/Adviser “Professional”.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The department’s procedures for managing working at height, must clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of all those individuals involved with the work.

Reference should be made to the Jersey Public Service -Corporate Health and Safety

Policy statement Policy for general responsibilities.

7. Risk Assessment and Hierarchy of Controls

Work at height is defined as where a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury. The level of risk should be identified and controlled using risk assessment.

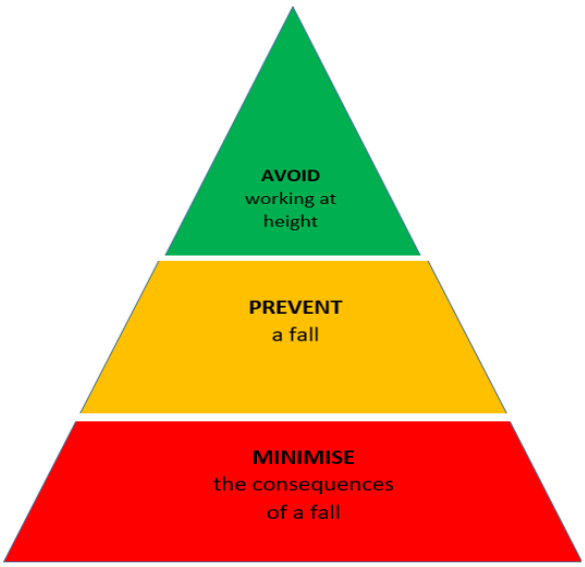
There are many factors which will need to be considered when planning and risk assessing working at height. These include:

- the height at which the work is being carried out
- the nature of the task
- duration of the task
- frequency of the work
- the condition of the surface
    - being worked on
    - that access equipment is sited on
    - that a person could fall onto
- the position of workers in relation to any open edges
- the working environment including exposure to weather, presence of overhead cables etc.
- lone working
- falling objects
- access and egress
- physical capabilities of the worker e.g. vertigo, physical impairment
- anyone in the vicinity of the working at height

The identification of the hazards and evaluation of the risks should be carried out using the methodology set out in the Minimum Standard – Risk Assessment.

When deciding on the most appropriate means of controlling the risks, the working at height hierarchy of controls must be considered.

This is based on the three principles of:



Examples of control measures which fall into each of the categories are as follows:

Avoid

- Use extendable tools from ground level e.g. gutter cleaning
- Use drones for inspecting roofs
- Assemble components at ground level before lifting into place

Prevent

- Install guard rails
- Use access equipment which prevents falls such as a tower scaffold, mobile elevated work platforms
- Use personal protection systems such as work restraint or work positioning systems

Minimise

- Use of nets or airbags
- Use of rope access or fall arrest system

The hierarchy should always be considered in this order of preference i.e. working at height should be avoided; where this is not reasonably practicable, a fall should be prevented and if this is not reasonably practicable, the consequences of such a fall should be minimized.

In addition to following this hierarchy, consideration must also be given as to whether the control measure provides COLLECTIVE or PERSONAL protection.

COLLECTIVE protection will provide protection to all persons who could be exposed to the risk of falling whilst PERSONAL protection only provides protection to the user of the

equipment. This is effectively personal protective equipment (PPE) and therefore is the last resort.

COLLECTIVE protection should always be considered ahead of PERSONAL protection i.e. when choosing controls to prevent a fall, guard rails should be used before a work restraint system where it is reasonably practicable to do so.

When choosing controls to minimize the consequences of a fall, nets or airbags should be used ahead of fall arrest systems, where it is reasonably practicable to do so. A fall arrest system is a last resort and must only be used where it is not reasonably practicable to choose a more effective form of protection.

8. Safe Systems of Work

All work at height should have a written safe system of work. The document prepared should include the following:

- the nature of the task
- name of the supervisor
- name(s) of operatives
- details of any equipment to be used
- details of training
- the sequence of work including setting up and tidying away
- any personal protective equipment to be used
- steps to be taken in the event of an emergency

Working at height could be subject to a Permit to Work and therefore require a Permit to Work System to be put in place (refer to the Permit to Work minimum standards document for guidance).

9. Selection of Work Equipment

The choice of work equipment to be used will have a significant impact on the level of safety during the work at height and will be the primary means of controlling the risks.

A wide variety of equipment is available and the hierarchy of controls for working at height requires the safest and most effective means to be used for that particular type of work. This will be determined taking into account the factors set out in section 7 of this document and deciding whether it is reasonably practicable to implement those controls or not.

Examples of typical equipment and the protection provided:

Fall prevention - COLLECTIVE	• Guardrails • Access scaffolding • Mobile elevated work platforms (MEWPS)
Fall protection - INDIVIDUAL	• Fall restraint system e.g. fixed length lanyard with anchor point or running line system, retractable device (inertia reel) • Work positioning system
Minimise consequences of a fall – COLLECTIVE	• Nets • Air bags
Minimise consequences of a fall – INDIVIDUAL	• Fall arrest harness system

Where none of the above means of access are appropriate for the task or are considered to be not reasonably practicable, there is a variety of portable access equipment available which includes:

- Podium steps
- Platform ladders
- Ladders and stepladders
- Hop ups
- Kick stools

These types of platform are generally permitted for low level, short duration work only and their use must be very carefully considered and justified through risk assessment.

10. Checks and Inspections of Equipment

Working at height is inherently dangerous and it is critical that equipment used to safeguard people remains safe and effective.

To ensure equipment remains safe to use, various checks and inspections are required to be carried out either in-house or by a competent third party. Depending on the type of equipment and risks associated with it, these can include user checks, formal checks

and statutory inspections. A combination of checks and inspections is often required to ensure the equipment remains safe to use.

Where equipment is found to be defective it should be taken out of use, suitably marked/tagged as defective and quarantined until it can be repaired by a competent person or destroyed if necessary

Appendix A contains a list of typical equipment, and the statutory inspections required and the in-house inspections which are recommended.

11. Maintenance of Equipment

To assist with the management of working at height equipment, each item should be uniquely marked and a register should be prepared.

Each item of equipment will have specific maintenance requirements which will usually be set out in the manufacturer's user manual or technical guidance.

Persons responsible for maintaining and/or using the equipment should be familiar with these requirements.

The type of maintenance required for each item of access equipment should be identified and be included in the risk assessment and department's procedures.

A means of recording that the required maintenance has been carried out should also be prepared.

12. Storage of Equipment

Equipment used for working at height must be stored appropriately to reduce the risk of damage occurring which in some cases, can have catastrophic consequences.

This is particularly important for items which provide personal protection, such as harnesses and lanyards, as these are vulnerable to damage if handled incorrectly.

Details of safe storage arrangements should be included in the department's procedures.

13. Training

All persons responsible for carrying out working at height must be suitably trained and competent.

Where required, specific formal training should be undertaken, such as:

- Mobile elevated work platform operator
- Mobile tower scaffold
- Harness

Other training can be carried out in-house by departments such as:

- Ladders
- Podium steps

All persons required to plan and manage work at height should also have undergone suitable training.

14. Fitness to Work Assessments

Where a risk assessment has identified that individuals require a fitness to work at height medical assessment, this should be arranged with the current GoJ Occupational Health Service provider.

The level and frequency of assessments will depend on the, nature of the work, maximum height at which the person is required to work and their age and can be reviewed by the OH provider.

15. Supervision

All work at height should be properly supervised by individuals who are familiar with the equipment being used and understand the findings of the risk assessment, the safe system of work and the Permit to work (if required). specified.

Where persons have received training on equipment but are inexperienced users, they must be supervised by a competent person until such time as they are deemed to be a competent user.

16. Emergency Arrangements

When planning work at height, the types of incidents which could occur should be identified and taken into consideration when preparing the risk assessment.

In some instances, such as where fall arrest systems are used, it will be necessary to have rescue systems in place for retrieving the individual, which do not rely upon the emergency services. Rescue will also need to be considered where collective arrest methods are used such as nets.

Any such arrangements must be included in the risk assessment and written safe system of work, the contents of which must be brought to the attention of all persons involved with the work. These arrangements should be regularly practiced, reviewed and any lessons learnt added to the risk assessment and applied.

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Appendix A

	Timing and frequency of checks, inspections and thorough examinations							
	Inspect after installation	**Inspect at intervals not exceeding 7 days**	**User checks**	**Inspect at suitable intervals**	**Inspect after substantial alteration or amendment**	**Inspect where the equipment has been subject to conditions which could affect its safe use**	**Thoroughly examine at least once in every 6-month period during use**	**Thoroughly examine/ test at least once in every 12-month period**
Scaffolds including tower scaffold where persons can fall more than 2m	✓*	✓*	✓		✓	✓		
Mobile Elevating Work Platforms	✓		✓**		✓	✓	✓	
Trestles, guard rails, toe boards, barriers etc.	✓		✓		✓	✓		
Nets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Air bags	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Personal fall protection equipment (including work positioning, rope access, work restraint and fall arrest)	✓		✓**	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Anchor points, including mobile anchors and man-safe (line) systems	✓		✓					✓
Podium steps, hop ups etc			✓	✓		✓		
Ladders and step ladders***			✓	✓		✓		

* Formal written inspections required under Regulation 27 of the Management in Construction (Jersey) Regulations, 2016

** User checks should be formally recorded (recommended). *** Safe use of ladders and Stepladders LA455-Safe-Use-of-Ladders-and-Stepladders-A-brief-guide.pdf