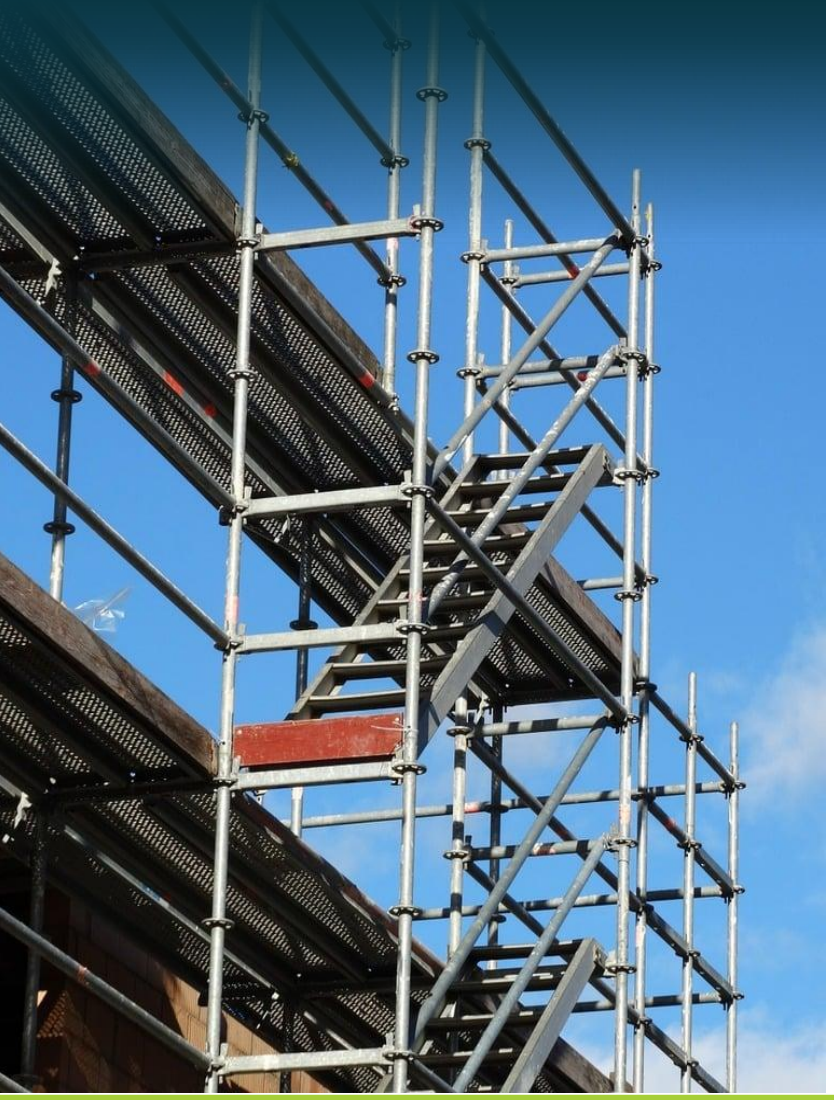
WAIHANGA ARA RAU
Construction and Infrastructure
Workforce Development Council

Scaffolding Delivery

Project report

October 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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This review was undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of scaffold training and assessment practices in meeting industry expectations and ensuring learners achieve genuine workplace competence. It draws on feedback from industry representatives, providers, and learners to identify key strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement across the programme.

Industry feedback highlighted several concerns regarding the balance and robustness of current scaffold training and assessment practices. The main issues related to learners' limited workplace experience, shortened block courses, restricted equipment access, insufficient assessment opportunities at the required standard, and a lack of workplace evidence being used to support assessment decisions.

To address these concerns, a series of targeted recommendations have been developed to strengthen the alignment between on-job and off-job learning, ensure consistent assessment outcomes, and better reflect current industry practice.

Key Findings and Recommended Actions

- **Limited experience / workplace exposure**
  Learners often attend block courses with limited workplace exposure yet are still deemed competent. Stronger pre-course preparation, a consistent process for verifying on-job learning, and increased employer accountability are recommended. Strengthening workplace verification, assessor moderation and training will ensure competence is only awarded when all criteria are met.

- **Use of Workplace Evidence and Employer Engagement**
  Workplace evidence is not consistently used to supplement block course assessment. Strengthening verification processes, reducing unnecessary compliance paperwork, and embedding naturally occurring workplace evidence into the assessment framework will create a more authentic and balanced measure of learner competence.

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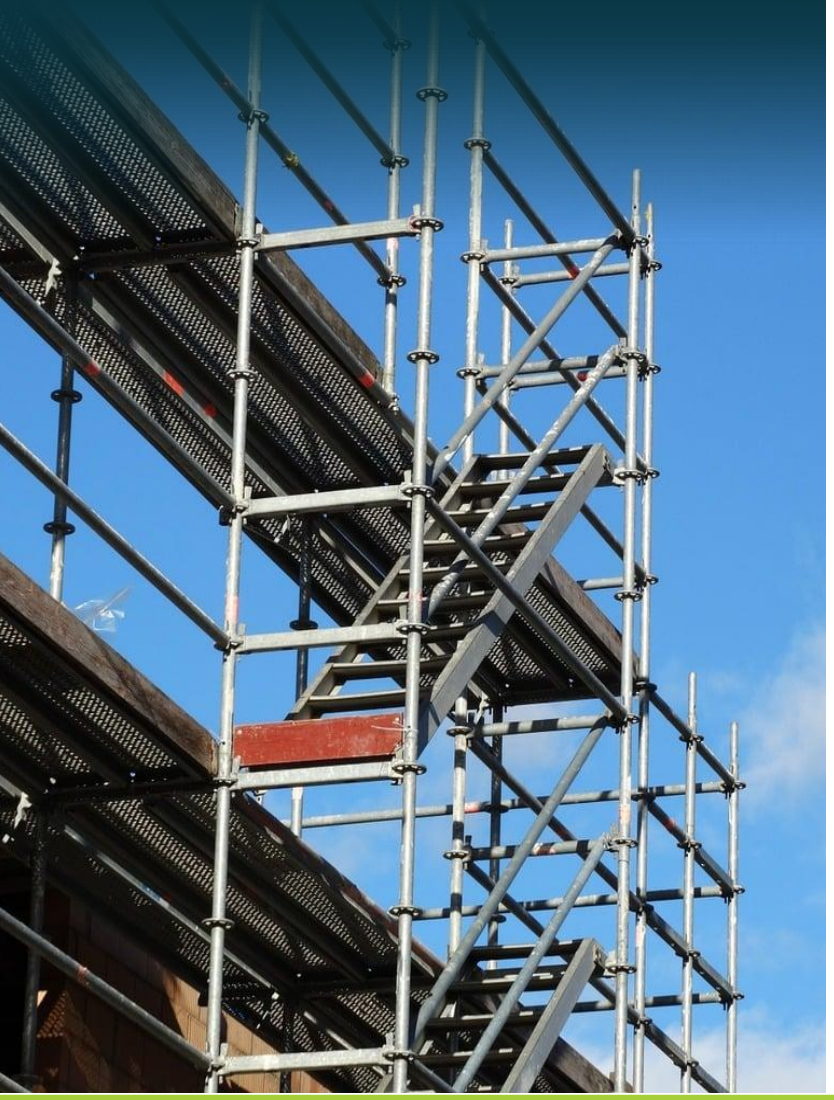

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- **Access to Equipment**
  Due to limited access to specialist equipment like mast climbers and suspended scaffolds in the workplace, some learners require targeted training rather than assessment during block courses. Ensuring that training delivery and assessment reflect current industry practice and that all learners have equitable access to appropriate, well-maintained equipment will improve the validity and consistency of assessment outcomes. Reviewing unit standard content, updating resources, ensuring access to equipment in the workplace , and strengthening tutor capability will improve assessment validity and consistency.

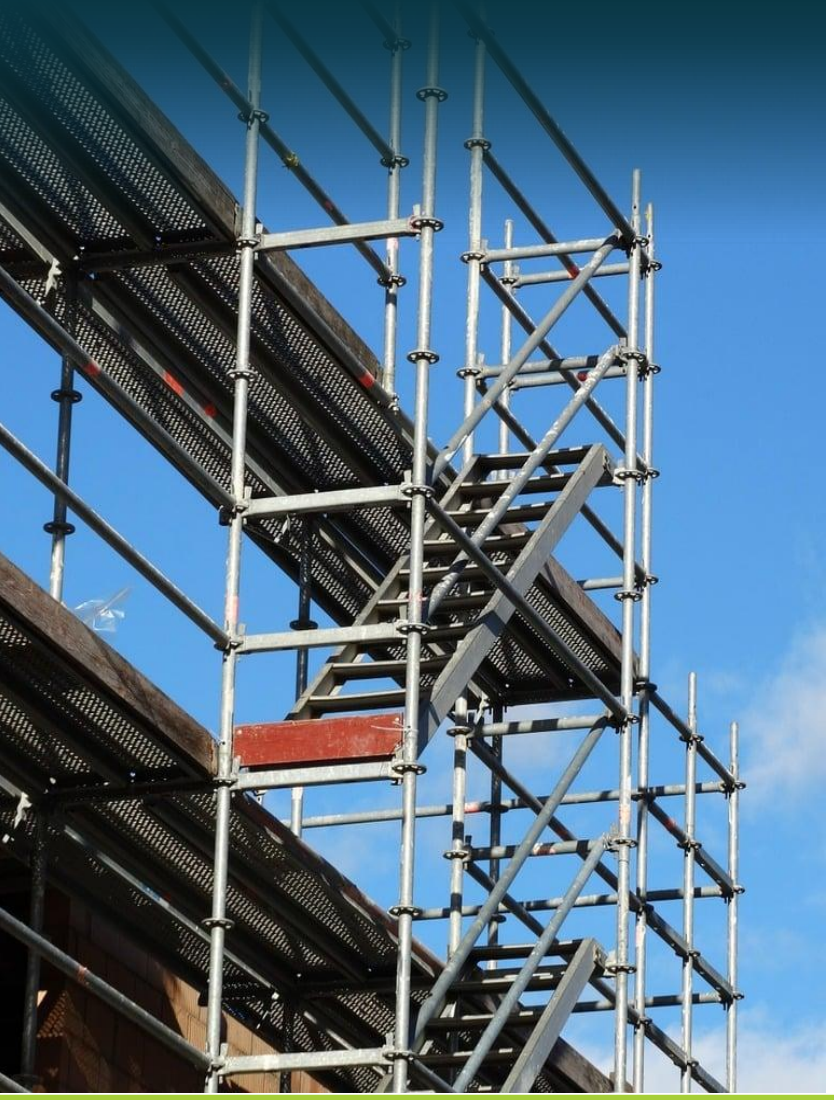
- **Assessment Opportunities and Leadership Skills**
  Assessors effectively rotated leadership roles during team-based assessment tasks, ensuring all learners had the opportunity to lead and direct team activities. Learners were informed in advance, allowing sufficient time to prepare for their leadership responsibilities.

- **Course Duration**

  While there was no evidence of courses being cut short or learners leaving early, the block course structure could be refined and strengthened to ensure sufficient time for reinforcing theoretical understanding and practical skill application. Programme design and assessment processes should be reviewed to remove duplication, align with real workplace practice, and clarify the capstone nature of block courses as opportunities for assessment rather than training.

Overall, these findings and recommendations aim to enhance the integrity, consistency, and industry relevance of scaffold training and assessment. Strengthening collaboration between training providers, employers, and assessors will ensure learners are genuinely work-ready, competent, and confident in applying their skills safely and effectively in the workplace.

PROJECT BACKGROUND



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The scaffolding industry have expressed concerns over the past couple of years about the delivery and outcomes from block course delivery and assessment of standards across the Level 3 to Level 5 scaffolding qualifications. The Scaffolding, Access, and Rigging Association (SARNZ) has voiced these concerns on behalf of the industry. The concerns included:

- Learners attending block courses with limited experience or workplace exposure to the subjects being taught but still being deemed as 'competent' and being awarded the standards at the end of the course.
- Workplace evidence not being used to supplement the block course delivery or assessment, therefore not aligning to the notional hours of individual standards within the programme
- Learners not having access to all the equipment required to satisfy the outcomes of the standards being assessed.
- Learners not being given the opportunity to be assessed at the required level of the standard. An example is not all learners having the opportunity to lead the task to demonstrate that they have the confidence and capability to operate at the correct level in back in the workplace.
- The block courses being reduced in time resulting in even less exposure to the subjects or the ability to reinforce skills through practical application. An example is a five-day block course being reduced to four days, or less, as the block course progresses.

This report will provide an overview of the key themes identified across the delivery sites visited and the post-assessment moderation undertaken. Individual providers or sites will not be identified as part of the report, each provider has received a separate report identifying requirements or recommendations for each site.

DISCOVERY APPROACH

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Feedback from industry

- The Scaffolding, Access and Rigging Association (SARNZ) was contacted and asked to provide their feedback at the beginning of the project.

Observation of course delivery

- Courses were observed on site at both provider and client locations, across different regions and assessors. A Subject Matter Expert (SME), appointed by Waihanga Ara Rau and endorsed by SARNZ attended all site visits.

Post-assessment moderation

- A range of post-assessment moderation standards, relevant to the project and the blocks observed, were included in the 2025 Waihanga Ara Rau Moderation Plan.

PROJECT ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

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7 **SITE VISITS** Auckland, Dunedin, Wellington, Invercargill, Palmerston North,	6 **PROVIDERS**	3 **BLOCK COURSES (3, 4 & SUSPENDED)**
7 **UNIT STANDARDS MODERATED**	45 **POST MODERATION SAMPLES**	47 **LEARNERS**

Course observation details

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BLOCK 3

23223	Base out returns for tube and fitting scaffolding	L3, C8
23224	Erect and dismantle standing tube and coupler scaffolding	L3, C10
23226	Erect and dismantle proprietary framework	L3, C4
30628	Demonstrate and apply knowledge of leadership skills and communicate instructions on a scaffolding worksite	L3, C3
	Total	**25 credits**

BLOCK 4

23718	Erect and dismantle catch fans	L4, C6
23720	Erect, operate, and dismantle mast climbers	L4, C6
	Total	**18 credits**

SUSPENDED SCAFFOLDING

26591	Handle and maintain suspended scaffolding components	L3, C5
26592	Plan and prepare for the erection of proprietary suspended scaffolding	L3, C10
26593	Erect, operate, and dismantle boatswain's chairs	L4, C5
26594	Erect, operate, and dismantle swinging stages	L4, C10
26595	Complete suspended scaffolding inspection compliance reports	L3, C4
26607	Explain legislative requirements that apply to the design of suspended scaffolding	L3, C3
		37 credits

KEY THEMES – Observation of Delivery

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Theme:	Examples:
Workplace Experience; (On Job evidence) Workplace experience, or a lack of experience, is not being captured as part of the training and assessment process resulting in learners attending block courses just to be assessed against standards they are already competent in, or learners not being well prepared for a block course and being assessed against standards they are not competent in.	• Most learners attending block courses have several years of scaffolding experience, predominantly on proprietary systems, or hold leading or foreman roles, but this experience is not recognised. • Many learners arrive underprepared due to limited support from employers, or no accessibility to specialist equipment that is erected on some courses e.g. Mast climber, Boatswain chair. This resulted in training replacing assessment for tasks where learners cannot gain suitable on-site experience. Learners acknowledged that this led to a lack of confidence in their capability to competently erect specialist equipment after being assessed as competent. • No RCC/RPL pathway to support experienced workers in achieving the qualification, largely due to compliance requirements and alignment with CoCs. • There is variation of how workplace verification is documented as part of the assessment process. The type, quantity, and quality of supporting evidence is inconsistent. • Naturally occurring evidence from the workplace is not captured as part of the assessment process, and learners are not encouraged to provide workplace evidence. There is currently no requirement or expectation that learners provide this evidence as part of validating assessment judgements on course. • There is an inconsistent approach among providers regarding learners completing on-job assessments before attending courses. One provider has a standard policy to withdraw learners who have not completed assessments, though this is applied inconsistently, with some learners being withdrawn and others completing the on job assessments during the block course. The other provider routinely learners without completing on-job assessments prior to the course. Resources also provide inconsistent instructions to learners and employers for completion of on-job assessments prior to attending the course. • Some employers do not fulfil their responsibility as per the Training Agreement to ensure learners are adequately trained or prepared to attend courses. They see this as the responsibility of Providers to cover all knowledge and practical training. Preparation, however is a shared responsibility : providers must give clear guidance on pre course expectations, and employers must support learners to gain the necessary practical experience.

KEY THEMES – Observation of Delivery

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Theme:	Examples:
Course content (Off Job)	• Block course content is outdated based on some unit standard outcomes which are currently aligned to out of date regulations. • Some learners required significant tutor guidance and additional training during the capstone assessment when erecting unfamiliar scaffold systems, one example is the Speedy system. All learners have developed skills specific to equipment used by their respective companies with generally no exposure to other systems questioning the suitability of including unfamiliar scaffold types in a final (capstone) assessment. • An over-reliance on block courses for training was evident, despite the programme's intended balance between on-job and off-job learning. Learner's unfamiliarity with the key industry methods , such as the "step up" method, indicates limited workplace application and reinforces the need for stronger integration of on-job learning. • Learners and tutors identified excessive, repetitive compliance paperwork as a barrier, with many completing assessments in their own time after long workdays. Suggested improvements included employer-allocated time, shorter industry-aligned courses, and workplace-based assessments. While learners valued the technical knowledge gained, motivation for bookwork was low. These observations highlight opportunities to simplify compliance, update assessment resources to remove duplication and better balance theory and practical learning. • Feedback indicated the 'capstone' content and resources are outdated and no longer align with current industry practices. The intent of the capstone has shifted over time, and the separation of oral questioning from practical tasks has led to inconsistent assessment and highlighted ongoing concerns about learners lacking sufficient workplace experience for valid competency judgements. As a result, this is driving training, rather than the intent of the course which is intended to be a focus on summative assessment. The current qualification review- which proposes to remove the capstone assessment – may help to realign assessment with the practical experience learners can realistically gain. In the interim, providers should strengthen assessment practices, including reintegrating oral questioning with practical tasks where appropriate. • Course delivery was consistent, with no evidence of reduced duration or shortened training days throughout the week. Any additional time, which was generally on the Friday, was utilised to catchup with on-job assignments.

KEY THEMES – Observation of Delivery

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Theme:	Examples:
Equipment	• Practical areas were generally well suited for multiple scaffold erection tasks under direct supervision. • Some site layouts prevented tutors from supervising classroom and practical activities simultaneously. • PPE is inconsistently used (chinstraps unclipped, fall arrest harness not attached correctly, scaffold tags missing and incomplete edge protection) which appears to reflect industry norms rather than trainer performance,- however, trainers should be guiding best practice and learners should already know correct use of PPE. • Equipment shortages at one Block 3 course, some equipment was not well maintained e.g. rust on fittings or some of the specialist gear is unfamiliar to learners. • Some learners had minimal or no prior exposure to certain specialist equipment (e.g., mast climbers), prior to the block course. • The equipment used in Block 8 is generally not used on site e.g. Boatswain chair therefore there is more of a focus on training to ensure the US outcomes are covered.
Assessor practice and consistency	• Feedback is provided to learners throughout practical assessment tasks. This is acknowledged as good practice however; it is not validated sufficiently in assessment documentation. • Assessors effectively rotated leadership roles during team-based assessment tasks, ensuring all learners had the opportunity to lead and direct team activities. Learners were informed in advance, allowing sufficient time to prepare for their leadership responsibilities. • Variation of delivery and knowledge of some equipment from tutors – specifically regarding the mast climber. It was evident in theory delivery that the tutor had limited prior experience erecting and dismantling processes for this type of equipment.
Learner Support	• Learner support varied, with little to no uptake from learners for off-job support (apart from block courses) opportunities providers offer and mixed experiences of support from providers throughout the apprenticeship. • While pastoral support from both providers is valued, this engagement is inconsistent, and learners commented that support would be beneficial from those with scaffold-specific knowledge improving the effectiveness of learner preparation. • Employer support for releasing learners for courses varied. Some pay learners to attend block course, while others require learners to use holiday pay or withdraw them from course/s due to requiring them to be at work.

KEY THEMES – Post Moderation

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Theme:	Examples:
Assessment evidence and documentation	• Incomplete or inconsistent evidence, including missing assessor signatures, absent or incorrect dates on scaffolding inspection reports, limited assessor commentary, and poorly labelled photo evidence. These gaps reduced the supportability of assessment decisions. • Health and safety records were inconsistently applied. Samples showed incomplete inspection reports, missing dates, and unclear evidence labelling, reducing transparency of verification. Site visits echoed these concerns, with observed gaps in PPE use, scaffold tagging, and edge protection, highlighting uneven implementation of expected safety standards across training and documentation.
Assessment Resource	• Identical assessment resources are being used across providers, which supports consistency. However, these resources have not been recently reviewed or updated. More recent versions are available and should be adopted to ensure relevance and alignment with industry expectations. • Providers are currently using version 3 of the assessment resource, which is scheduled to expire in December 2025. Version 5, released in August 2023, is available and should be adopted to ensure assessment practices remain current and aligned with industry expectations
Internal Moderation Practice	• Internal moderation approaches varied across providers. One provider demonstrated good practice through annual moderation sessions involving all assessors, while the other had limited practical or cluster moderation processes. This variation contributes to inconsistencies in assessment judgements and the quality and robustness of evidence collection. • Post-assessment moderation highlighted variability in assessor practice, particularly the level of commentary and the strength of evidence used to support decisions. Internal moderation processes did not consistently identify these gaps, limiting opportunities for improvement and assurance of consistency.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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Industry Concern	Recommendation
1. Learners attending block courses with limited workplace experience but still being deemed competent	• Strengthen monitoring of learner readiness by requiring completion of pre-course preparation activities, such as workbooks and introductory equipment familiarisation. • Increase employer engagement to ensure they fulfil their responsibility to train and prepare learners prior to block course attendance. • Improve communication and coordination between training providers, verifiers, and industry • Implement a clear RPL/RCC pathway that recognises prior industry experience while maintaining compliance with qualification and CoC requirements. • Establish a consistent process for confirming on-job learning and assessment completion prior to attending block courses across providers. • Strengthen moderation and assessor professional development to ensure competence is awarded only when all performance criteria are fully met.
2. Workplace evidence not being used to supplement block course delivery and assessment	• Ensure workplace verification processes and documentation allow naturally occurring evidence to be incorporated into the training and assessment process. • Workplace assessments should focus on daily tasks, while block courses focus on the required knowledge or filling any gaps, avoiding duplication of skills already gained on-site. • Strengthen collaboration with employers to improve verification quality and consistency. • Simplify and streamline compliance paperwork to reduce barriers for employers and learners while maintaining evidence integrity. • Integrate workplace evidence into programme design to better reflect notional learning hours and balance between on-job and off-job learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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Industry Concern	Recommendation
3. Learners not having access to all equipment required to meet standard outcomes	• Review and update training resources and practical tasks to reflect current industry methods, systems, and equipment usage. • Ensure training providers have access to sufficient and appropriate equipment for all courses that meets the requirements of the standards being assessed. • Strengthen assessor capability and consistency in the use of specialist equipment through targeted professional development. • Ensure consistent PPE use; secure chinstraps, correctly attach fall arrest harnesses, update scaffold, and edge protection in place.
4. Learners not being given opportunities to demonstrate leadership or operate at the required standard level	In principle good practice assessment practices were observed across all course. Learners were engaged and actively contributed to both practical and theory sessions. Group activities were well managed, with learners taking turns to lead and support their peers, demonstrating good collaboration and participation. Recommendations to further enhance the process include: • Implement workplace verification and assessment for tasks that are routinely performed in the workplace. • Incorporate workplace evidence to supplement block course delivery and provide authentic proof of competence at the required level.
5. Block courses being reduced in time, limiting exposure and practice opportunities	While there was no direct evidence of courses being cut short or learners leaving early, the course duration and structure could be refined to balance both theory reinforcement and practical skill application. Courses could also be shortened by aligning -qualifications more closely with industry practice and reducing duplication of assessment.. Recommendations include: • Review and redesign programme structure and course durations to align with actual training and assessment needs, ensuring sufficient time for practical application. • Streamline assessment design to remove duplication of content across blocks where learners have already demonstrated competence. • Workplace assessments should focus on tasks routinely performed on site, while block courses emphasise the required knowledge or address gaps in understanding, reducing duplication of practical skills already gained on the job • Increase flexibility through incorporating workplace-based assessment options for tasks that are routinely performed on site. • Clearly define the purpose of block courses as capstone assessments focused on demonstration of competence rather than training.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

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Theme	Recommendation
Resource review	We recognise the programme was transitioned from The Skills Organisation and acknowledge the work providers have done to prepare for future qualification versions. However, good assessment practice requires ongoing review and refinement of assessment resources to support validity and minimise barriers even within transitional products. While it is understood that learners were originally transitioned on Version 1 of the qualification— which has recently been extended to December 2027—ongoing feedback indicates that the volume of compliance paperwork remains a significant barrier • In the interim of the qualification review and development of skill standards , providers are encouraged to adjust and strengthen assessment resources to remove duplication • Review unit standard content to ensure content reflects industry practice • Align assessment resources with good practice by integrating knowledge and practical tasks, giving assessors clear guidance to support consistent, fair, and valid assessment decisions. • Ensure the most current versions of unit standards are being used for assessment to maintain alignment with national requirements and industry expectations. • Simplify the excessive and repetitive compliance paperwork to reduce barriers and strengthen workplace verification processes and documentation.
Peer moderation	Strengthen Peer moderation and PD to include: • Consistency in assessor judgements and evidence collection • Ensure competence is only awarded when all criteria are met and sufficient practical experience has been demonstrated. • Reinforce the purpose of the capstone assessment focusing on practical observation rather than training. • Increase consistency and communication between training advisors, verifiers, and training providers • Strengthen trainer capability in specialist equipment by providing scaffolding focused professional development for trainers and assessors. • Introduce group peer moderation ensuring course delivery, assessment processes and evidence are consistent and valid

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APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Standards Reported 2023 – 2024
- Appendix B: Overview of Scaffolding Qualification Duration data
- Appendix C: Block 3 Discovery Findings
- Appendix D: Block 4 Discovery Findings
- Appendix E: Suspended Discovery Findings
- Appendix F: Gateway Courses
- Appendix G: Scaffolding Good Practice Guide & WorkSafe Recommendations

Appendix A Standards reported 2023 - 2024

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Course / Area	ID	Title	Level	Credits	Reported 2023	Reported 2024
Working at Height	23229	Use safety harness system when working at height	3	4	23, 637	22128
	15757	Use, install and disestablish temporary proprietary height safety systems when working at height	3	4	9,109	8254
Elementary Scaffolding	9184	Erect, dismantle and inspect non-notifiable prefabricated frame scaffolding up to five metres in height.	3	5	746	590
	13016	Demonstrate knowledge of the erection and dismantling of scaffolding up to five metres in height	3	3	639	796
	13053	Erect and dismantle scaffolding up to five metres in height	3	6	533	785
	23223	Base out returns for tube and coupler scaffolding	3	8	198	102
	23224	Erect and dismantle standing tube and coupler scaffolding	3	10	197	102
	23225	Erect and dismantle mobile scaffolding	3	4	151	128
	23226	Erect and dismantle proprietary falsework	3	4	197	107
	30628	Demonstrate and apply knowledge of leadership skills and communicate instructions on a scaffolding worksite	3	3	238	127

Appendix A **Standards reported 2023 - 2024(contd)**

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Course / Area	ID	Title	Level	Credits	Reported 2023	Reported 2024
Intermediate Scaffolding	23716	Erect and dismantle vessel scaffolding	4	10	81	113
	23717	Erect and dismantle birdcage scaffolding	4	10	78	113
	23718	Erect and dismantle catch fans	4	6	141	87
	23719	Erect, operate, and dismantle proprietary winches on scaffolding	4	6	253	283
	23720	Erect, operate, and dismantle mast climbers	4	6	289	265
	23721	Erect and dismantle sloping platforms	4	10	113	105
Suspended Scaffolding	26592	Plan and prepare for the erection of proprietary suspended scaffolding	3	10	37	38
	26593	Erect, operate, and dismantle boatswain's chairs	4	5	37	38
	26594	Erect, operate, and dismantle swinging stages	4	10	37	38
	26595	Complete suspended scaffolding inspection compliance reports	3	4	37	38
	26607	Explain legislative requirements that apply to the design of suspended scaffolding	3	4	37	38

Appendix B **Overview of Scaffolding Qualification Completions**

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Analysis Objective: The analysis evaluates if scaffolding learners complete qualifications within expected timeframes, impacting funding and progression.

Qualifications Reviewed: Focus is on New Zealand Certificates in Scaffolding Level 3 and Level 4, both work-based qualifications with variable durations.

Data Sources and Scope: Data from Tertiary Education Commission includes aggregated learner records from Providers as of September 2025.

Completion Time Analysis: Data considers nominal vs actual durations and completion time distribution to assess learner progress and program effectiveness.

Data caveats and notes

- Data for both TEOs have been merged in calculating the figures below
- Data is as at September 2025 and has been sourced through the administrative data held by the TEC. More recent data is not currently available due to integration issues with ITR data.
- Learner numbers rounded to nearest 5.
- Results are based on information reported through the Industry Training Register (ITR) for the purposes of funding tertiary education. The data does not include any reporting outside of the ITR and relies on the accuracy of data reported by Tertiary Education Organisations (TEO).
- The numbers of completions relate to the number of learners where their enrolment statuses were reported as "Completed" in the ITR. Numbers are not comparable to the programme completion rate performance data as the performance data is cohort-based.
- This data has been compiled specifically to respond to this question. It uses administrative data collected by the Tertiary Education Commission for the purposes of funding tertiary education, and relies on the accuracy of data reported by TEOs. Care should be taken when making comparisons with data collected or compiled for other purposes

Appendix B **Overview of Scaffolding Qualification Completions**

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Level 3 Scaffolding Qualification		
STATUS	**NOMINAL DURATION**	**ACTUAL AVERAGE DURATION**
Overall	21 months	15 months
Completed	21 months	19 months
Not Completed	21 months	13 months

FUNDED MONTHS	NUMBER OF LEARNERS
12 or less	30
13-24	35
25-36	20
37-48	10
49 or more	5

Level 3 learners typically complete qualifications within 24 months, showing consistent progression.

Level 4 Scaffolding Qualification		
STATUS	**NOMINAL DURATION**	**ACTUAL AVERAGE DURATION**
Overall	34 months	24 months
Completed	34 months	36 months
Not Completed	34 months	21 months

FUNDED MONTHS	NUMBER OF LEARNERS
12 or less	5
13-24	80
25-36	140
37-48	135
49 or more	80

Level 4 learners experience significant variability, with many exceeding the expected 36-month timeframe.

Appendix C **Block 3** (1 of 4)

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COURSE DETAIL

23223	Base out returns for tube and fitting scaffolding	L3, C8
23224	Erect and dismantle standing tube and coupler scaffolding	L3, C10
23226	Erect and dismantle proprietary falsework	L3, C4
30628	Demonstrate and apply knowledge of leadership skills and communicate instructions on a scaffolding worksite	L3, C3
	Total	25 credits

Site visit

- 4 courses were observed –across both providers at different training locations throughout the country. In total **27 learners of the 36** that were initially enrolled were in attendance with all but one course having full attendance.
- Up to 8-10 learners may attend per course. Observations noted managing a group of this size can be challenging for a single tutor. A ratio of 3 learners per task is preferred, as it allows for easier monitoring and assessing individual capability. This ratio depends on how many learners attend throughout the week which is not certain until the week of the course.
- All learners had a minimum of 2-3 years of scaffolding experience, predominantly on proprietary systems. There were also a few on each course that had been in the scaffold industry for 5+ years with some in supervisory roles.
- A wide range of assessment tasks aligned with each block course observed. While some site layouts prevented tutors from supervising classroom and practical activities simultaneously, practical spaces were generally suitable for erecting multiple scaffold tasks under direct supervision.

Appendix C **Block 3** (2 of 4)

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Site visits - continued

- The capstone assessment integrates theory and practical tasks but are heavy on compliance paperwork and repetition and some tasks (erection of mobile scaffold) were considered as not a necessary requirement for this course.
- Minimal feedback is provided by some tutors during assessments which is expected for a capstone assessment. However, in most courses' tutors provided support and training throughout tasks, indicating that many learners are not adequately prepared or sufficiently exposed to this type of work in their respective companies.
- In general tutors ensured good industry practice throughout the assessments, keeping learners on task. However, it was observed that correct PPE was not always used appropriately, and some safety protocols were not followed or were not always managed appropriately.
- Feedback from learners questioned the need to include the amount of tube and coupler scaffolds, as learners required more training than assessment and this system is not widely used by many scaffold companies. The main argument to retain this content is that it teaches essential basic engineering principles for scaffold design and erection. However, the opposing view is that because many companies do not use the equipment, it is challenging for learners to gain relevant practical experience. Learners assessed during block courses, with no prior experience, acknowledged that they would lack confidence after the course therefore would not meet the required competency level of the standards.
- Feedback indicates some of the qualification's content which is currently reflected in resources are outdated and misaligned with current industry practices.
- Tutor approaches varied, with one tutor using a very direct style that may not suit all learners. It was evident that tutors who had assessed learners on previous courses, demonstrated a better understanding of individual capability and stronger relationships. This raises questions about the need to reassess tasks where capability has already been confirmed.
- There is an inconsistency in both providers structured collaboration or peer moderation workshops among tutors nationally, affecting consistency in training and assessment methods. This is validated by the inconsistency in post-assessment documentation.
- Learner support varied, with little to no uptake from learners for off-job support (apart from block courses) opportunities providers offer and mixed experiences of support provided from providers throughout the apprenticeship. While pastoral support from is valued when provided, this engagement is inconsistent across both providers, and learners commented that this support would be beneficial from those with scaffold-specific knowledge improving the effectiveness of learner preparation.

Appendix C **Block 3** (3 of 4)

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Site visits - continued

- Learners struggle with the volume and repetition of theory, safe erection practices, and basic health and safety, suggesting issues beyond block courses that may require wider investigation across the full training programme.
- There is an over-reliance on block courses to be heavily focused on training for learners, however the programme is designed to be balanced between on-job and off-job learning. For example: Learners were unfamiliar with the “step up” method, requiring training and taking considerable time to complete the task. The majority of learners confirmed that this process is not used in their respective companies.
- Few learners pass the written capstone on the first or second attempt, raising concerns about knowledge levels despite pragmatic scheduling. Tutor’s use of 'pass/fail' terminology is not appropriate for competency-based assessment. Verbal questions are currently assessed at the end of the course, 'cheating' , however this approach increased learner anxiety. Integrating verbal questioning into the practical tasks would better test understanding in context and reduce learner anxiety.
- Some learners had not completed all of the on-job assessments which are considered a pre-requisite to attending the course. These were completed during the course and some learners started working through on-job assessments as part of future courses.
- Teams of three erected both tube and clip and proprietary system scaffolds, swapping tasks during the course. The assessment was integrated, with theory delivered before and as required after practical tasks prior to the "capstone" assessment. As a capstone course, no training should be required during the practical tasks, but most learners still needed guidance when erecting tube and clip and proprietary systems that they were unfamiliar with. For example, the Speedy system was unfamiliar to all learners, as it is not a common system currently used across the country. All required close supervision and additional training by the tutor when erecting this system, questioning this type of system as part of the capstone assessment.
- It was commented at all visits that the key issue for future change is that regulations require qualification outcomes to be assessed, even when they are not relevant to current site practice.

Appendix D **Block 3** (4 of 4)

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Post-assessment Moderation Review

No. standards	Providers	Total samples	Supported	Not Supported	% Supported	% Not Supported
5	2	45	40	5	88%	12%

FINDINGS

Post-assessment Moderation

- Five Unit Standards were moderated (23223, 23224, 23226, 23718, 23720), covering 45 assessment samples across two providers.
- Verifier sections were not consistently completed, with several samples showing missing verification that should occur before block courses.
- Overall, the majority of assessment decisions were supported, but a range of documentation and evidence issues were identified.
- Assessor sign-off sections were often incomplete, with missing signatures, dates, or CoC numbers reducing the validity of records.
- Photographic and other evidence was inconsistently labelled, making it difficult to clearly link evidence to assessment tasks.
- Assessor commentary was variable; in many cases notes were brief or absent, limiting transparency of assessor judgement.
- Scaffolding Inspection Reports were filled out inconsistently, with issues in dating and format that did not fully align with the national template.

Appendix D **Block 4** (1 of 3)

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COURSE DETAIL

23718	Erect and dismantle catch fans	**L4, C6**
23720	Erect, operate, and dismantle mast climbers	**L4, C6**
	Total	**12 credits**

Site visits

- Two courses were observed, with **15 of the 20 learners** initially enrolled were in attendance. Up to 12 learners may attend per course.
- As per Block 3, this number of learners provides challenges for tutors. Larger groups would be impacted on individual assessment judgements and sufficient opportunities for all learners to prepare for the final assessment.
- It was observed that larger groups break into classroom and practical activities whereas learners in the classroom are unable to be supervised while the tutor is involved in assessing practical tasks
- During unsupervised classroom time, learners were observed 'sharing' theory worksheets when not directly supervised.

Key Themes included:

- All learners had a minimum of 3 years' industry experience and had previously completed Level 3 qualifications.
- Learners were generally well-prepared, though some arrived with incomplete workbooks or limited prior exposure to equipment such as the mast climber.
- Some learners had minimal or no prior exposure to certain specialist equipment (e.g., mast climbers), leading to a lack of confidence in their capability to competently erect this equipment after been assessed as competent at the course.

Site visits - continued

- Some learners had minimal or no prior exposure to certain specialist equipment (e.g., mast climbers), resulting in low confidence in their capability to competently erect this equipment after having been assessed as competent. While learners valued hands-on learning, many felt they needed further supervised practice to build confidence.
- The training effectively delivers foundation knowledge and skills, though learners may require additional workplace support with exposure to some equipment to achieve full commercial competence.
- Learners acknowledged that the Training Advisor and/or Account Manager role in preparing learners was generally supportive but is inconsistent between providers.
- Variation of delivery and knowledge of some equipment from tutors – specifically regarding the mast climber
- Peer moderation and evidence consistency are improving, but further development is required, particularly around assessor comments and photographic evidence.
- Workplace verification is underutilised; most learners did not provide or refer to on-job records or diaries. Furthermore, this is not considered by tutors as part of the assessment process.
- The training sites and equipment were largely fit for purpose. However, it was identified that some equipment required maintenance including lubrication of fittings and non-checked leads.
- PPE was inconsistently used at all visits (chinstraps unclipped, fall arrest harness not attached correctly, scaffold tags missing and incomplete edge protection). This appears to reflect industry norm, however tutors should be guiding best practice and learners should already know correct use of PPE

Appendix D **Block 4** (3 of 3)

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Post-assessment Moderation Review

Year	No. standards	Providers	Total samples	Supported	Not Supported	% Supported	% Not Supported
2025	2	2	18	11	7	61%	39%

Themes across samples included:

- Inconsistency in evidence and verifiers comments.
- Several samples had incomplete assessor sign-off sections, with missing dates and/or signatures.
- Verifiers documentation left blank or completed by the assessor. Documentation should be completed by the verifier to support the notional hours and ensure relevant workplace experience prior to assessment.
- Some samples provided sufficient evidence to support the assessment decision, with both the verifier and assessor sections fully completed by the appropriate person, including relevant commentary to support the assessor decision..
- It is also noted that assessment resources in use were Version 3, while Version 5 is the current release.

Appendix E **Suspended** (1 of 2)

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COURSE DETAIL

26591	Handle and maintain suspended scaffolding components	**L3, C5**
26592	Plan and prepare for the erection of proprietary suspended scaffolding	**L3, C10**
26593	Erect, operate, and dismantle boatswain's chairs	**L4, C5**
26594	Erect, operate, and dismantle swinging stages	**L4, C10**
26595	Complete suspended scaffolding inspection compliance reports	**L3, C4**
26607	Explain legislative requirements that apply to the design of suspended scaffolding	**L3, C3**

TOTAL **37 credits**

Site visits

- 1 course was observed, with **all 4 learners** that had been enrolled attended the duration of the course - Up to 12 learners may attend per course.
- Many learners are experienced scaffolders (some with more than 10 yrs) but often arrive underprepared due to limited access to specialist equipment, limited support from employers, no accessibility to equipment that is erected on this course and lack of completed pre-course modules, which impacts learning outcomes.
- Most of the learners have little to no experience with suspended scaffolding but are experienced in other general scaffolding tasks
- Safety protocols are generally well followed, though some equipment and PPE practices could be improved.
- The tutor actively engaged all learners, encouraging participation from those with a tendency to stand back, ensuring they participated fully.
- High-risk nature of suspended scaffolding is well communicated, with safety practices modelled and reinforced throughout training.

Appendix E **Suspended** (2 of 2)

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Site visits – continued

- The tutor actively engage learners, utilising incorrect practices as learning opportunities.
- The Tutor confirmed that peer moderation workshops and general support are inconsistent between providers which raises concerns about consistency in quality assurance processes and personal development opportunities.
- The practical area is well equipped with a range of structures and equipment required for this course; however, as it is located away from the classroom and admin office, moving between theory and practical activities is less efficient, though this was managed reasonably well by the tutor.
- There was evidence of over duration, for example, one learner waited a year to attend the course due to low numbers completing the qualification.
- Feedback noted that some skills assessed in Block 7 are not able to be practised on site before Block 8 due to availability of equipment and companies' scope of work. The tutor therefore provide refresher training at the start of Block 8 to ensure learners are ready for the suspended practical assessments.
- The equipment used in Block 8 is generally not used on site eg bosun chair therefore there is more of a focus on training to ensure the US outcomes are covered
- Leadership responsibilities were changed so all learners were given responsibility to lead the induction and direct the team when working on the relevant tasks. They were given adequate notification of this to enable suitable preparation prior to task commencement.
- Learners and the tutor commented that there is inconsistency in on-job and pre-course support across the providers. One provider typically attends early block courses to confirm attendance and address issues.
- LLN monitoring and support is inconsistent from the two providers, it was identified that learners on this course require further assistance especially in comprehending and completing the extensive amount of bookwork.

Appendix F **Low Level Scaffolding Gateway**

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13016	Demonstrate knowledge of the erection and dismantling of scaffolding up to five metres in height	**L3, C3**
13053	Erect and dismantle scaffolding up to five metres in height	**L3, C6**
9184	Erect, dismantle and inspect non-notifiable prefabricated frame scaffolding up to five metres in height	**L3, C5**
	Delivered to schools in 2 days **Total**	**14 credits**
20855	Handle and maintain basic scaffolding components	**L2, C5**

- Industry standards are being used in a secondary school setting to give students credits for Low Level Scaffolding
- We question the suitability of these standards to be used in this context and the level of competency of the students being awarded these standards
- One provider offers units 9184, 13016 & 13053 (14 credits) in 2 days – max class size 10 learners.
- Schools reporting Scaffolding units 9184, 13016 & 13053 through Ara – no gateway information available on the website.
- SARNZ do not support the delivery of scaffolding units in a school setting.
- Unit 20855 appears on the traffic report reported by schools, but does not appear on Gateway courses content

Appendix G **Scaffolding Good Practice Guide & WorkSafe recommendations**

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Workforce Development Council

Good Practice Guide – Scaffolding in New Zealand

Up to 5m - some unit standards may assist in demonstrating competence to erect scaffolds less than 5 m high.

- 9184 Erect and dismantle non-notifiable prefabricated frame scaffolding up to five metres in height
- 13016 Demonstrate knowledge of the erection and dismantling of scaffolding up to five metres in height
- 13053 Erect and dismantle scaffolding up to five metres in height

5m and above - Holder of appropriate class of certificate of competence

Scaffolding in New Zealand

Best Practices Guidelines for Working at Height; and Working on Roofs Good Practice Guidelines

The current recommended NZQA unit standards

- For workers completing basic work while under total restraint, Unit Standard 23229 – Use a safety harness for personal fall prevention when working at height
- For those workers involved in planning, installing, operating fall arrest systems and supervising staff recommend achieving Unit Standard 15757 – Use, install and disestablish proprietary fall arrest systems when working at height

Best Practices Guidelines for Working at Height in New Zealand

Working on roofs Good Practice Guidelines

Best Practice Guideline (BPG) for Elevated Work Platforms

Competency should be assessed through supervision during the use of the equipment. The current recommended NZQA unit standards for MEWPs are:

- 23966v1: Describe Types of Elevating Work Platforms (EWPs) and Legislative Requirements For Their Use
- 23960v1: Assess the Worksite, Prepare and Operate a Scissor Lift Elevating Work Platform (EWP)
- 23961v1: Assess the Worksite, Prepare and Operate a Truck Mounted Elevating Work Platform (EWP)
- 23962v1: Assess the Worksite, Prepare and Operate a Self-Propelled Boom Lift Elevating Work Platform (EWP)
- 23963v1: Assess the Worksite, Prepare and Operate a Trailer Mounted Elevating Work Platform (EWP)
- 23964v1: Assess the Worksite, Prepare and Operate a Vertical Lift Elevating Work Platform (EWP)

Mobile Elevating Work Platforms