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The work health and safety information needed before hiring contractors

About this position

We expect you to request work health and safety information from a contractor before you hire them. A formal pre-qualification process is one way to gather the information you need.

A pre-qualification assessment looks at a contractor's general ability and competence for the work, including health and safety risk management. It's used before the tender process begins.

It's not compulsory to use pre-qualification, but it can help give you confidence that a contractor can assess and manage the risks in the work they do.

Using a pre-qualification assessment doesn't mean your ongoing responsibilities to consult, cooperate and coordinate with other PCBUs are met. Pre-qualification should be carried out alongside engagement with contractors, effective onboarding, clear contracts and expectations, and ongoing management and supervision of contractors when the work is done. It's part of wider contractor management, rather a standalone activity.

Pre-qualification can be done in various ways, either through a formally recognised provider or through a simple conversation – as long as you get the information you need.

Like work health and safety in general, **gathering the information you need is not a tick-box exercise** – the risks are different at every workplace and for every job.

Base the amount of detail you need on the size and complexity of the work, and the degree of risk involved and potential for harm. This reflects the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 requirement for you to do what is reasonably practicable in your circumstances.

The questions below aren't a default checklist, but they can help you get started.

As a starting point, consider requesting information about:

- how the contractor manages the health and safety risks that will arise from the work to be done, and how they manage their responsibilities for work health and safety on a shared worksite or a shared work activity
- how they communicate about work health and safety risks with their workers, and with other businesses and their workers, and how they engage with their workers, and make opportunities for workers to get involved in managing risks
- how they maintain any plant and equipment to be used for the work to a safe standard and how they plan for any high-risk work needed
- what experience and training their workers have for the work to be done
- how they supervise their workers and monitor any subcontractors who do work for them
- how they investigate any work health and safety near-misses or accidents and learn from them.

Our guidance [PCBUs working together](#) has more information about what to find out before choosing a contractor. And how to manage work health and safety obligations that overlap in a contracting chain.

You can also find more information about pre-qualification here [Good Practice Procurement Guide for Improving Health and Safety](#)