

AA

Hotel
Quality Standards

Welcome to the AA Quality Standards for Hotels

AA Hotel Services have been recognising accommodation since 1908 and first introduced the star rating scheme in 1912, recognising and rewarding establishments for the quality and range of their services and facilities. The AA is the only pan-Britain organisation for quality rating and assessment to the hospitality industry.

Our Hotel Quality Standards have evolved over the years to reflect consumer expectations within the industry and to ensure our ratings and awards are accurate, consistent and reliable. Since 2006 we have shared these common standards with the four national tourist boards ensuring consistency with every accommodation rating scheme in the UK. The standards are regularly reviewed to reflect industry changes and customer expectations.

The Hotel Quality Standards outlined in this brochure are fundamental in achieving your nationally recognised and approved rating, so all establishments wishing to be affiliated with the AA should adhere to the specific criteria outlined on the following pages.

These standards are the basis for the inspections that will take place at your establishment – by reading and applying the criteria carefully, you can be confident that your establishment will meet the high industry standards required to become recognised by the AA.

We look forward to working with your establishment and promoting it through the AA Hotel Recognition Scheme.

AA Hotel & Hospitality Services



Tynley Hall Hotel, Hampshire

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1 GENERAL OVERVIEW

A photograph of a luxury hotel lobby. In the foreground, there are yellow upholstered chairs and a dark wood bar counter with various glassware and fruit. The floor is covered in a patterned carpet with large squares of light and dark brown. In the background, there are red bar stools and a staircase with a dark railing. The lighting is warm and ambient.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.2 GENERAL OVERVIEW

1.3 QUALITY

1.4 SUB-CATEGORIES/DESIGNATORS

1.5 AWARDS

1.6 ACCESSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

**1.7 GETTING THE MOST FROM AA RECOGNITION
AND YOUR AA INSPECTION**

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 SERVICED ACCOMMODATION

Serviced accommodation in Britain is broadly divided into three categories:

- Hotel: formal accommodation with full service.
- Guest Accommodation (*e.g. B&Bs, Inns etc.*): informal accommodation with limited service.
- Budget Hotel (*e.g. roadside, budget lodge style*): uniform accommodation with limited service. This booklet describes the requirements for the Quality Standards for Hotels.

Any establishment operating with the word 'hotel' as part of their business name will be assessed using the hotel requirements listed in this booklet.

1.1.2 AA QUALITY STANDARDS FOR HOTELS

The AA standards in this booklet are identical to those that will be applied by VisitEngland, VisitScotland VisitWales and Tourism Northern Ireland for assessing the quality of serviced accommodation in Britain. Your rating will be the same whichever organisation carries out your assessment.

If you choose to be assessed by more than one organisation, each organisation will award you the same star rating.

You will only be eligible for special AA Awards, (e.g. AA Hotel of the Year, Rosettes for food etc.) if you have full AA recognition through annual AA inspection.

1.1.3 DISPENSATIONS

Dispensations for certain individual requirements within these AA Quality Standards may be given as long as all the remaining requirements and quality levels for that rating are met or exceeded. This flexibility will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Any exceptions will need a proportional increase in quality in other areas to compensate for the area where an exception is sought.

1.2 GENERAL OVERVIEW

An establishment will need to satisfy three elements to reach a particular star rating:

- All relevant requirements must be met.
- The overall percentage score for quality must reach the appropriate band (see quality bands 1.3.5).
- The relevant standard of quality in the six critical areas, as highlighted below.

There are nine key areas of assessment:

HOSPITALITY / SERVICE / BEDROOMS / BATHROOMS / CLEANLINESS / FOOD / EXTERIOR / PUBLIC AREAS / DINING ROOM & RESTAURANTS

The six most critical areas are highlighted above. The star rating level across all of these six areas must be met in order to achieve a particular star rating. Where additional facilities are provided in the three remaining assessment areas these will also be assessed, e.g. spa.

1.3 QUALITY

1.3.1 QUALITY ASSESSMENT

There are five levels of quality ranging from One to Five Stars. To obtain a higher star rating a progressively higher quality and range of services and physical facilities should be provided across all areas with particular emphasis in six key areas:

- cleanliness
- service
- food
- bedrooms
- bathrooms
- hospitality

Research indicates that quality is of key importance but visitors also expect the level of services and range of facilities in hotels to increase at each star rating level.

1.3.2 QUALITY TERMINOLOGY

We use phrases such as 'good', 'very good' etc. to signify ascending levels of quality in broad terms only.

These standards indicate typical consumer expectations of each star rating. They are neither prescriptive nor definitive because we recognise the wide variety of quality elements that can be included – for example, style, which can range from traditional to minimalist.

1.3.3 WHAT IS QUALITY?

When we are assessing quality we take into account the following:

- Intrinsic quality – the inherent value of an item.
- Condition – the maintenance and appearance of an item. Is it fit for the purpose?
- Physical and personal comfort – does the quality of an item detract in any way from the comfort of the user?
- Attention to detail – the evident care taken to ensure that the guest experience is special and of the same high standards for all.
- Guests' choice and ease of use – the guest experience is enhanced through choice – be it the choice of beverages in the room or the choice of room temperature. This is further improved by how usable the guest finds the room and its contents.
- Presentation – the way the room and its contents are presented for guests' arrival and during their stay.

1.3.4 THE QUALITY SCORE

When AA inspectors visit your property, they will evaluate and give a quality score to all aspects of the accommodation and service. The total of all these scores establishes an overall percentage score for quality. Inspectors will award a score of between 1 and 5 in each specific area.

- 1 = acceptable
- 2 = average
- 3 = good
- 4 = very good
- 5 = excellent

Based on this score, establishments will be given an overall quality rating on a scale of One to Five Stars, based on the chart below.

1.3.5 QUALITY BANDS

ONE STAR	TWO STAR	THREE STAR	FOUR STAR	FIVE STAR
30–46%	47–54%	55–69%	70–84%	85–100%

1.4 SUB-CATEGORIES/DESIGNATORS

1.4.1 TYPES OF SUB-CATEGORIES/DESIGNATORS

All hotels will be positioned in one of the following descriptive sub-categories. These have been developed to help consumers understand more clearly the different types of hotels available in Britain.

Hotels in each of these sub-categories need to fulfil all hotel requirements detailed in this booklet with the exception of Metro Hotels where provision of dinner is not a requirement.

1.4.2 GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS

Hotel	Formal accommodation with full service. Minimum five guest bedrooms but more likely in excess of 20.
Country House Hotel	A country house hotel with ample grounds or gardens, in a rural or semirural situation with an emphasis on peace and quiet.
Small Hotel	Smaller hotels with a maximum of 20 bedrooms. They will be personally run by the proprietor and are likely to have limited function business.
Town House Hotel	High quality town/city centre properties of individual and distinctive style with a maximum of 50 rooms. High staff-to-guest ratio. Public areas may be limited. Possibly no dinner served but room service available instead.
Metro Hotel	A town/city hotel providing full hotel services with the exception of dinner. Within easy walking distance of a range of places to eat.

1.5 AWARDS

1.5.1 AWARDS

Every year we select hotels that significantly exceed expectations within the expectations of their star classification. This is recognised by two award categories.

- ★ Inspector Choice Red Stars are awarded to hotels that stand out as the very best in the British Isles, regardless of style. These hotels offer excellent levels of quality throughout, outstanding levels of hospitality and service. Red Stars are awarded on annual basis in September.
- ★ Highly Recommended Silver Stars are awarded to hotels that provide superior levels of quality, high standards of hotel keeping in particular hospitality, service and cleanliness and hold an AA Rosette award for the quality of their food.
- ☞ The AA Breakfast Award acknowledges hotels who achieve very high scores for the quality and range of their breakfast offering and those who deliver excellent hospitality and service in this key area. Excellence will be evident in the offer of all hot and cold produce, with particular care and accuracy of cooked breakfast combined by high levels of customer care.

Hotels are also eligible for two food awards, AA Rosettes and AA Breakfast Award.

1.5.2 AA ROSETTE SCHEME

First introduced in 1956, the AA Rosette Award scheme was the first nationwide scheme for assessing the quality of food served in restaurants and hotels. Since its inception it has become a recognised benchmark for food quality in the hospitality industry.

☞ **One Rosette**

These restaurants will be achieving standards that stand out in their local area, featuring:

- food prepared with care, understanding and skill
- good quality ingredients

The same expectations apply to hotel restaurants where guests should be able to eat in with confidence and a sense of anticipation

☞☞ **Two Rosettes**

The best local restaurants, which aim for and achieve:

- higher standards
- better consistency

- greater precision is apparent in the cooking
- obvious attention to the selection of quality ingredients

Three Rosettes

Outstanding restaurants that achieve standards that demand national recognition well beyond their local area. The cooking will be underpinned by:

- the selection and sympathetic treatment of the highest quality ingredients
- timing, seasoning and the judgment of flavour combinations will be consistently excellent

These virtues will tend to be supported by other elements such as intuitive service and a well-chosen wine list.

Four Rosettes

Among the top restaurants in the UK where the cooking demands national recognition. These restaurants will exhibit:

- intense ambition
- a passion for excellence
- superb technical skills
- remarkable consistency
- an appreciation of culinary traditions combined with a passionate desire for further exploration and improvement

Five Rosettes

The pinnacle, where the cooking compares with the best in the world. These restaurants will have:

- highly individual voices
- exhibit breathtaking culinary skills and set the standards to which others aspire to, yet few achieve

Hotels are automatically assessed for Rosettes on their overnight inspection providing the restaurant is open. For more information on Rosette assessment visit www.theaa.com/hotel-services/quality-assessment/restaurants

1.5.3 AA HOSPITALITY AWARDS

The annual AA Hospitality Awards held in September celebrate and recognise various hotels for their excellence. Various award categories are available as listed below and are either based on inspector recommendation or open to nominations from hotel scheme members. The awards are ratified by an external awards panel which meet twice a year as part of the process. Awards include:

- Hotel of the Year
- Eco Hotel of the Year
- Wine Award of the Year
- Food Service Award
- Housekeeper of the Year
- Customer Choice Award

More details can be found at www.theaa.com/hospitality-awards

1.6 ACCESSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability and business go hand-in-hand

Green tourism and sustainability practices in your business are one and the same thing; it's all about taking small steps that enable you to do business even better, not differently. Small changes will not only save money, improve employee relations, enhance profitability and provide a richer experience for customers but over time you will also improve your business' impact on the local economy, community and environment. 'Going Green' does not have to be a chore and is just as applicable to properties in a city centre as a rural location.

Sustainable Tourism Certification

If your business is already a successful sustainable business and you wish to demonstrate this to new or existing consumers, you may wish to join one of the certification schemes that exist in England. These schemes are not operated by the AA but by independent organisations which have been verified to ensure they are offering a rigorous and well-founded sustainable certification scheme that will allow you to confidently promote your green credentials.

Legal Obligations

Tourism businesses have obligations under The Equality Act 2010, which replaced the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 (DDA) on 1 October 2010. Tourism providers should treat everyone accessing their goods, facilities or services fairly, regardless of their gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religion or belief, and guard against making assumptions about the characteristics of individuals.

The Equality Act 2010 requires that service providers must think ahead and take steps to address barriers that impede disabled people. Providers should not wait until a disabled person experiences difficulty using a service, as this may make it too late to make the necessary adjustment.

1. Make 'reasonable' changes to the way things are done – such as changing practices, policies or procedures where disabled people would be at a 'substantial disadvantage' e.g. amend a 'no dogs' policy.
2. Make 'reasonable' changes to the built environment – such as making changes to the structure of a building to improve access e.g. altering or removing a physical feature.
3. Provide auxiliary aids and services – such as providing information in an accessible format, an induction loop for customers with hearing aids.

A service provider cannot legally justify failing to provide a reasonable adjustment. The only question is whether the adjustment is a 'reasonable' one to make. What is 'reasonable' will depend on a number of circumstances, including the cost of an adjustment, potential benefit it may bring to other customers, the resources an organisation has and how practical the changes are.

We Can Help

AA Hotel & Hospitality Services provides tourism businesses with a range of guidance, tools and resources to help increase engagement with the valuable accessible tourism market. Visit www.theaa.com/hotel-services/training-and-consultancy for further information.

1.7 GETTING THE MOST FROM AA RECOGNITION AND YOUR AA INSPECTION

Make sure your team have read and understood the AA Quality Standards booklet.

The debrief with your inspector is two-way conversation.

Whilst it is important to listen to the inspector's account of the stay and to note any tips and advice they offer, it is also an opportunity to ask lots of questions and to advise them of any plans you may have to make changes or improvements to your operation.

It is critical that you advise us of changes to your operation.

This may be something like a change of chef, which we need to know about if you have AA Rosettes, or about refurbishment you have carried out or you are planning. You may want us to postpone your visit because of work being carried out or you may want us to reflect the changes you have made in your description.

Your inspector is here to help, as is our customer support team.

Please feel free to contact us. We are available year-round and not just at the time of inspection.

Make sure you familiarise yourself with all the benefits.

They could save you money or enhance your marketing. Visit www.theaa.com/hotel-services/scheme-benefits for details.

Send us good quality pictures to improve your establishment page on our website.

Good pictures will enhance a customer's first impression of a property and could influence them to make a booking.

Fill in the questionnaire we send you each year about your establishment.

This ensures we have up-to-date information about your property on our website and in our annual Hotel Guide.

Make sure your AA signage is correct and up-to-date.

For information on signage or to purchase now or additional signs, telephone 01256 844455. Logos for online use are supplied via a logo validation service so your customers can be assured they are viewing an authorised AA rating.



2 DETAILED QUALITY GUIDANCE



2.1 OVERALL STANDARDS

2.2 HOSPITALITY & SERVICES

2.3 DINING

2.4 BEDROOMS

2.5 BATHROOMS

2.6 PUBLIC AREAS

2.7 EXTERNAL AREAS

2.8 ANNEXES

2.1 OVERALL STANDARDS

2.1.1 STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS

Minimum Entry Requirements (All Star Levels)

ALL GRADES

- **Public Liability Insurance:** whilst not a statutory requirement, it is a requirement for participation in this scheme. Proprietors may be asked to provide evidence that Public Liability Insurance cover is being maintained and that the requirements are being fulfilled.

Fulfilment of all relevant statutory obligations including but not restricted to:

- **Fire risk assessment:** to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005; supply evidence that a fire risk assessment has been carried out annually
- **Food safety/hygiene:** register with the local Environmental Health department
- **Health and safety:** operate safely with due regard to health and safety legislation
- **Planning:** comply with local planning regulations
- **Licensing:** comply with all local licensing regulations
- **Hotel Proprietors Act:** comply with this act
- **Data Protection Act / GDPR as of May 2018:** comply with this act/these regulations
- **The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008:** comply with these regulations by describing accurately in any advertisement, brochure, or other printed or electronic media, the facilities and services provided
- **Equality Act 2010:** comply with this act. Welcome all guests courteously and without discrimination in relation to gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief. Make 'reasonable' adjustments to improve services for disabled customers. Produce an Accessibility Guide – information on the accessibility of your facilities and services

2.1.2 SAFETY AND SECURITY

Minimum Entry Requirements (All Star Levels)

- Proprietor and/or staff to be on site and on call to resident guests 24-hours a day. Printed instructions, provided in the bedrooms, for summoning assistance during an emergency at night. If the proprietor lives away from the hotel, it is expected that a member of management or staff sleep on site and that their night-time contact details are clearly advertised in every bedroom.
- A high degree of general safety and security, including information on evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency, to be advertised in every bedroom. Multilingual emergency procedure notices or use of symbols/diagrams clearly displayed in every bedroom.
- Particular attention given to the safety and security of guests and their belongings in car parks, ground floor and annexe bedrooms including external paths and walkways.
- Once registered guests should have access to the hotel at all times.
- In the interests of safety, guests to be escorted to bedrooms if requested.
- The hotel entrance should be clearly identifiable and the doorway illuminated when it is dark. Adequate levels of lighting for safety and comfort in all public areas, including sufficient light on stairways and landings at night.
- A telephone accessible 24 hours a day, unless direct dial telephones provided in each bedroom.
- Adequate measures for the security of guests and their property. Means of securing bedroom doors from inside and out, and a key or key card provided. The issuing of a bedroom key to guests and charging of items to account always done discreetly to ensure guest security.
- Security fittings installed on any window which could be left open and access gained from outside, e.g. windows near fire escapes.



- Use of energy efficient lightbulbs

2.1.3 MAINTENANCE

Minimum Entry Requirements (All Star Levels)

- Buildings, their fixtures, furnishings, fittings, exterior and interior décor maintained in a sound, clean condition and fit for the purpose intended.
- All electrical and gas equipment in good working order and regularly serviced to ensure guests' safety.
- Monitoring procedure in place for reporting of broken/damaged items in guests' bedrooms.

2.1.4 CLEANLINESS

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Four Star)

A high standard of cleanliness maintained throughout the property.

As the cleanliness of hotels at every star grade is of paramount importance to the consumer, the highest standards of cleanliness are not expected to vary between star gradings.

Particular attention should be given to bathrooms, shower rooms and toilets especially items involving direct contact with guests, including:

- Bedding, linen and towels.
- Baths, showers, washbasins and WCs.
- Flooring and seating.
- Crockery, cutlery and glassware.
- All bathrooms and shower rooms cleaned daily and checked to ensure very high standards of cleanliness.
- Bathrooms and shower rooms clean and fresh smelling. Particular attention paid to WCs, plug-holes, shower curtains, mirrors and extractor fans.
- All walls, ceilings, pipes, ledges, equipment and fittings, which are beyond reach from floor level, cleaned on a regular basis. All flat surfaces, equipment and furniture free from dust, dirt, grease and marks.

Five Star

- A pristine and immaculate presentation



- Ensure housekeeping staff do not move furniture and personal items in the bathroom or bedroom as in most cases they are placed in positions that are accessible to the guest.
- Ensure housekeeping trolleys do not obstruct corridors.



- Consider using low impact and chlorine-free cleaning products, such as microfibre cloths that reduce the amount of cleaning liquid required.

2.2 HOSPITALITY & SERVICES

2.2.1 GENERAL

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

- At all grades, guests should be greeted and acknowledged in a friendly, efficient and courteous manner throughout their stay. Staff should have a helpful attitude.
- A relatively straightforward range of services offered – often provided by the proprietor and family/staff.
- All enquiries, requests and reservations, correspondence and complaints from visitors dealt with promptly and politely.
- Every effort made to take account of individual guest's needs.
- The style of the hotel may dictate how staff dress – from formal uniforms to informal and casual outfits.
- Service, efficiency and technical skills of a very good standard.
- All staff demonstrate a positive attitude and willingness to help.

Two Star

- Basic guest service, anticipating guests' requirements.

Three Star

- Good guest service, with ample numbers of staff to provide a prompt, courteous and efficient service.

Four Star

- Very good social skills and anticipation of individual guest's needs evident. The ability to personalise the guest experience encouraged.

Five Star

- Excellent social skills and anticipation of individual guest's needs to create unique and memorable experiences.
- Service and efficiency of an exceptional standard without detriment to other service areas at any time delivered by a structured team of staff with a management and supervisory hierarchy.
- Where there is a market need some consideration should be given to having multilingual staff.
- Staff impeccably presented.



- Ensure staff ask if the guest has any accessibility needs.
- Assistance dogs must be welcomed (this is a legal requirement). Many disabled people rely on assistance dogs to provide them with independence. See the dog as being part of the person.
- Ensure guests identifying themselves as being disabled, e.g. those with visual impairments, are offered a familiarisation tour.
- Ensure the fire evacuation strategy details emergency exit procedures for disabled people. Remember, guests with hearing impairments may not hear knocking at the door. Record room location and any specific requirements and pass to staff at change of shift.
- Consider learning to communicate in basic British Sign Language (BSL).
- Specific training is available for staff on how to welcome all types of guests e.g. Welcome All and WorldHost Customers with Disabilities.



- Consider drafting and promoting an environmental policy, setting out the environmental and sustainable management.

2.2.2 RESERVATIONS, PRICES AND BILLING

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

There should be a simple and efficient booking service that includes the following:

- Prospective visitors told clearly what is included in the prices quoted for accommodation, meals and refreshments, including service charge, taxes and other surcharges.
- Ability to make a prompt and effective reservation during the day and evening.

Communication with prospective guests, whether verbal or written, should be prompt, efficient, professional and helpful. A good first impression is critical at all grades. Therefore:

- The price agreed at the time of booking must not be exceeded.
- All agreed prices must include service charges, taxes and other surcharges where applicable.
- Every endeavour should be made to advise guests in advance about the hotel location, any car parking restrictions and the location of their room if it is in an annexe.
- Other information which may impact on the guests' stay, e.g. smoking policy, refurbishment work in progress, planned functions/ events etc. provided. Where house policy dictates that certain facilities need to be pre-booked, e.g. spa treatments, dinner etc., these should also be mentioned at the time of booking.
- Where no or limited meal service is provided this should be made clear at the time of booking and on your website to avoid disappointment.
- Full details of the hotel's cancellation policy. Information about charging credit cards for cancellation or changes to the booking is particularly important.
- Information about deposits if required, including details of how the deposit is taken and whether or not it is refundable on cancellation.
- Clear explanation of charges for additional services or available facilities including cancellation terms.
- Information about any unacceptable types of payment, e.g. credit cards etc.
- Confirmation provided on request by hotel (not only from third party booking site) by e-mail, text or letter.
- Prospective guests left confident that their booking was recorded accurately.
- As a minimum, name, address, and/or contact telephone number recorded at the time of booking.
- All bookings handled in a friendly and courteous manner, even if there is no dedicated reservations department.
- Provide each guest with printed or clearly written details of payment due and a receipt on request.
- Presentation of accounts ensuring that purchases are clearly detailed.
- The VAT element of the account (where applicable) should be clearly identified.

Three Star

- Guests should be able to charge all account services to one main account.

Four Star

- Confirmation provided by email/text or letter from hotel (not only from third party booking site).

Five Star

- Ability to make a prompt and effective booking, 24 hours a day.



- Offer your guests a choice of how to contact you, e.g. telephone, fax, letter, email and find out about Text Relay used by people with hearing impairments at www.textrelay.org
- Always ask if the enquirer or any of the guests in the party have any specific access requirements.
- Promote your Accessibility Guide.



- Include public transport options for getting to the property in promotional and booking information.

2.2.3 RECEPTION AND LUGGAGE HANDLING

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Three Star)

- As reception is likely to be the guests' first and last point of contact with a hotel, special attention should be given to providing a high standard of customer care.
- Direct guest contact given priority over other reception duties.
- Guests clearly directed to their room and given a brief explanation of location of hotel facilities.
- Assistance with luggage available on request throughout the day and evening.

- Once registered, resident guests have access to the hotel at all times. Proprietor and/or staff to be on site and on call to resident guests 24-hours a day.
- It is acceptable for a front door key or security code to be issued.
- Guests informed of meal times, bar opening times etc.
- Secure short term luggage storage.

Four Star

- Reception services available and at least between 7am and 11pm.
- Consideration should be given to providing 24 hour reception where there is a market need.
- Assistance with luggage offered on arrival and advertised as available for departure.

Five Star

- 24 hour reception to be provided where there is a market need for example city centre hotels.
- Where valet parking offered, guests greeted outside the hotel without delay.
- Guests are shown to their room and given a full orientation of hotel and bedroom facilities.
- Hotel staff taking control of luggage from guest's arrival outside to prompt delivery in bedroom. The same quality of service repeated on departure.

2.2.4 OTHER RECEPTION, CONCIERGE AND HOUSEKEEPING SERVICES

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- Iron and ironing board available.
- Appropriate tourist, travel and/or local information available suitable to market needs.

Three Star

- Well-presented travel and/or local information such as details of visitor attractions, taxi firms, banks, churches, railway stations etc. available in bedrooms.

Four Star

- Laundry and possibly dry cleaning service provided and advertised with prices.
- Newspapers can be ordered and delivered to guests' bedrooms.

Five Star

- 24-hour return laundry service.
- A shoe-cleaning service advertised and available.
- A full concierge service provided where appropriate to market. This may vary depending on location and style of the hotel but may include some or all of the following: theatre bookings, sightseeing trips, taxi bookings, valet parking, travel and other requests.



- Provide a vibrating alarm clock for hearing impaired guests.
- Provide hotel information in a range of formats, e.g. large print, Braille, photographs, MP3 downloads and audio description on websites.



- Make best use of local tourist information in both the hotel's promotional literature, on the website and visitor information located in the bedrooms.

2.3 DINING

2.3.1 GENERAL

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Four Star)

- Guests informed when they book if dinner is not available.
- Provision is made for a variety of dietary requirements.
- Where dinner is served in a restaurant which is separate to the hotel or contracted out, the hotel guests must be informed at the time of booking.
- There is a facility for guests to charge meals and drinks to their hotel account.
- Individual tables available for each guest or party.

Five Star

- At least one restaurant open to residents for all meals during hotel opening hours.
- Restaurant tables should have sufficient space around them to allow a high degree of privacy and freedom of movement.



- Try to be flexible with meal times to help diabetic people regulate their blood sugar.
- Ensure tables are stable and provide support for people rising from their chairs.
- Ensure crockery contrasts with table linen or surface to assist visually impaired guests.

2.3.2 MEAL SERVICE STAFF

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- Sufficient staff to ensure prompt service at all meals served.
- Polite and courteous staff providing a basic standard of customer care.
- Staff demonstrating knowledge about the dishes being served.

Three Star

- Staff providing a good standard of customer care and demonstrating very good levels of food, beverage and wine product knowledge and service skills.

Four Star

- Unobtrusive, polite and courteous staff providing an very good standard of customer care and demonstrating very good levels of food, beverage and wine product knowledge and service skills.
- Staff demonstrate proactive service, anticipating customer requirements.

Five Star

- Unobtrusive, polite and courteous staff providing an excellent standard of customer care. Highly trained, professional and pro-active staff.
- A personalised welcome and guests escorted to their table in all areas where food and drinks are served.
- Staff demonstrating excellent levels of food, beverage and wine product knowledge and service skills.



- Offer guests a choice of seating location. Provide a selection of chairs with and without arm rests.



- Staff dealing with food and drink service should be fully briefed on the source, characteristics and significance of local food and drink products that are being served.

2.3.3 BREAKFAST PROVISION

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- A cooked and/or continental breakfast provided.
- Appropriate breakfast times where there is a specific market need, e.g. city centre hotels, airport hotels and rural hotels.
- Breakfast price on display when a room-only rate option is available.
- The price of any breakfast items carrying an additional charge clearly advertised.
- Self-service buffet style is acceptable. However, buffets should be replenished on a regular basis. Where provided, buffets laid out and operated in a practical and customer friendly manner.

Three Star

- A cooked and continental breakfast provided in a designated eating area on the premises and advertised as such.
- Hot beverages are served at the table but the additional option of high quality vending machines is acceptable.

Four Star

- Table service advertised and available on request.

Five Star

- Table service proactively offered.



- Offer guests assistance with self-service buffets where appropriate.
- Try to be flexible with meal times to help diabetic people regulate their blood sugar.

2.3.4 BREAKFAST MENU & RANGE OF DISHES

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

- A set menu is acceptable.
- A choice of hot and cold items, including vegetarian options and other dietary requirements and healthy options.
- A verbal explanation of dishes available is acceptable.
- Continental offering to include as a minimum: fruit juice, cereal, yogurt, coffee, tea and toast. Cooked breakfast to include at least three hot items e.g.: bacon, egg, sausage, mushroom, baked beans plus coffee, tea and toast.

Two Star

- A clean and well-presented menu provided for breakfasts served from the kitchen.

Three Star

- A good range of hot and cold items, together with a choice of good quality accompaniments. Examples include preserves, ground and decaffeinated coffee, teas, butters and spreads.
- Guests offered a choice of how their eggs are cooked to include fried, poached, boiled and scrambled.

Four Star

- A menu detailing the full breakfast range provided.
- A superior range of hot and cold items.

Five Star

- A menu, presented to the highest standard, detailing the full breakfast range provided.
- A comprehensive range of excellent quality hot and cold dishes. Examples might include freshly squeezed juices, a variety of fresh fruits in season and ripe, cold meats and cheeses, free range eggs, local specialities, fresh fish, range of bakery items and pastries, special dietary produce and a comprehensive range of appetising hot items.



- Provide a large print menu (minimum font size 16 point) in a clear font such as Arial.
- Provide for different dietary requirements, e.g. dairy-free, wheat-free, lactose-free, nut-free.



- Where possible, source food and drink products locally. Build up relationships with local producers and traders.
- Menus highlighting local specialities can really help differentiate your offering from that of your competitors. Incorporate a short description of where ingredients are sourced, who the producer is and why you have chosen them.
- Staff dealing with food and drink service should be fully briefed on the source, characteristics and significance of local food and drink products.

2.3.5 DINNER PROVISION

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Four Star)

- Dinner served at specific times according to market need and clearly advertised.
- Where dinner is not provided this must be clearly communicated to the guest. Hotel should provide further information as to alternative options.
- A self-service operation e.g. carvery or buffet-style, is acceptable.

Five Star

- All courses served to the guest at their table.



- Offer guests assistance with self-service buffet where appropriate.
- Try to be flexible with meal times to help diabetic people regulate their blood sugar.

2.3.6 DINNER MENU & RANGE OF DISHES

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- It is acceptable instead to offer a verbal description of the dishes available.
- A set menu available, this can be a limited choice.
- More than one course available. The main course should be a substantial hot dish.
- Acceptable, clean and well-presented written menus, with accurate descriptions. However, it is acceptable instead to offer a verbal description of the dishes available.
- The price of dinner should be displayed if the accommodation tariff does not include dinner.
- Clearly advertised price for any surcharge made for a particular dish.
- Additional charges, such as VAT, service, and cover charge, clearly identified on the menus.

Three Star

- A choice of substantial hot and cold dishes.
- Quality written menus with prices clearly displayed.

Four Star

- As three star.

Five Star

- An extensive choice of food.
- A broad range of dishes of outstanding quality.
- Immaculately presented menus.



- Provide a large print menu (minimum font size 16 point) in a clear font such as Arial.
- Provide for different dietary requirements, e.g. dairy-free, wheat-free, lactose-free, nut-free.



- Where possible, source food and drink products locally. Build up relationships with local producers and traders.
- Menus highlighting local specialities can really help differentiate your offering from that of your competitors. Incorporate a short description of where ingredients are sourced, who the producer is and why you have chosen them.
- Staff dealing with food and drink service should be fully briefed on the source, characteristics and significance of local food and drink products.

2.3.7 ALCOHOLIC DRINK SERVICES, LICENCES AND WINE SERVICE

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- A current residential liquor licence or equivalent.

Three Star

- Staff demonstrate good knowledge of drinks, including wines and spirits.

Four Star

- A very good range of drinks offered.
- An informative and detailed wine list.

Five Star

- Excellent range and quality of drinks offered.
- Staff demonstrate excellent drinks knowledge and service skills. Likely to involve dedicated wine team (sommelier).



- Where possible, source drink products (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) locally or regionally and highlight this on your menu.
- Staff dealing with food and drink service should be fully briefed on the source, characteristics and significance of local food and drink products.

2.3.8 LIGHT REFRESHMENTS, SNACKS, LUNCHES & AFTERNOON TEAS

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- Hot and cold drinks available to residents and their guests in the public areas during the day and evening. Guests may be required to order at reception or at the bar. Vending option in the public areas may be acceptable. (Referral to in-room facilities is not acceptable).

Three Star

- Light refreshments of at least hot and cold drinks and sandwiches available to residents and their guests in the public areas during service times. This service is to be clearly advertised.

Four Star

- Light refreshments and hot and cold snacks available to residents and their guests in the public areas during service times.
- Guests able to order and be served at their table.

Five Star

- Full afternoon tea to be available where there is a market need.
- A superior brasserie/bistro/bar is acceptable for lunches, providing that guests are able to eat in comfort, and order and be served at the table.

2.3.9 ROOM SERVICE PROVISION

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Three Star)

- Optional except in the case of illness.

Four Star

- Room service should be provided and delivered to the room where there is a market need during service hours (including breakfast and dinner). It is acceptable to have a central area where guests can help themselves to a range of food and drink.

Five Star

- 24-hour room service of hot and cold snacks and drinks including alcoholic drinks where there is a market need.
- Guests able to choose from the full dinner menu during restaurant hours.
- For breakfast a wide choice of substantial hot and cold dishes.
- Room size and layout, and delivery method ensures the highest guest dining experience.



- Provide meals in rooms (on request) where appropriate, e.g. for disabled guests.

2.4 BEDROOMS

2.4.1 BEDROOM PROVISION

Minimum Entry Requirements (All Star Levels)

- Minimum of five letting bedrooms.



- Try to provide a ground floor bedroom.

2.4.2 SIZE & SPACIOUSNESS

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- All bedrooms should have sufficient space for guests to move easily around the room.
- When we assess bedroom size we take into account the usable space available around furniture and fittings.
- It should be possible to fully open doors and drawers without having to move other furniture.
- Rooms for family occupation need to be significantly larger.
- Easy and convenient use of facilities, e.g. use of surfaces without moving tea tray or TV, access to power points etc.

Three Star

- All bedrooms with good degree of spaciousness.

Four Star

- All bedrooms with a higher degree of spaciousness, allowing ample ease of use for guests and considerably exceeding the minimum entry requirements.

Five Star

- The significant majority of bedrooms very spacious, allowing generous ease of use for movement, comfort, dining and relaxation.

2.4.3 SUITES

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Four Star)

- Not required.

Five Star

- A minimum of one permanent luxury suite/superior luxury room available. N.B. A suite consists of at least three separate rooms – bedroom, bathroom and sitting room, all with a door.

2.4.4 BED SIZE & ACCESS

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- Minimum bed sizes, including sofa beds and bunks, as follows:
 - Single: 190cm x 90cm/6ft 3ins x 3ft
 - Double: 190cm x 137cm/6ft 3ins x 4ft 6ins (122cm/4ft beds to be designated as singles).
- 76cm/2ft 6ins beds are unacceptable, except in family rooms where they are clearly designated for children only.
- Sofa beds are not acceptable as permanent bed spaces.
- Bunk beds (permanent bed spaces) are acceptable for child use only. When bunk beds are used, guests must be told when they make the booking. N.B. Bunk beds should have a minimum 75cm/30ins clear space between the mattress of the bottom bed and the underside of the top bed. (Bunk bed regulations 1997).
- All beds including supplementary beds (such as z-beds, sofa beds etc) to be of acceptable quality and in good condition. They should have a sound base and sprung interior, foam or similar quality, modern, comfortable mattress.
- Secure headboard or equivalent on all permanent beds.
- Access to both sides of beds for double occupancy.

Three Star

- All children's beds to be full adult size. Single: 190cm x 90cm/6ft 3ins x 3ft.
- Sofa beds meeting the bed size requirements for permanent beds.

Four Star

- A choice of larger sized beds.

Five Star

- Bunk beds are not acceptable.
- Beds for single occupancy to exceed 90cm (3ft.) width.
- Beds for double occupancy to be at least 153cm (5ft.) in width.



- Provide zip and link beds so that a guest and partner or a guest and carer can be accommodated, particularly in accessible bedrooms.
- Provide blocks so that bed heights can be adjusted.

2.4.5 BEDDING REQUIREMENTS

Minimum Entry Requirements (All Star Levels)

- Adequate bedding and bed linen provided suitable for the season. Additional bedding available on request.
- Sufficient quantity of linen provided for each guest.
- All beds made daily. Bed linen changed at least once in every week and for each new guest.
- Where feather duvets or pillows are used, a non-allergenic alternative to be available on request.
- A mattress protector provided for each bed. Plastic or rubber mattress protectors are not acceptable except for children's beds.



- Provide hypoallergenic bedding.



- Spare bedding does not need to be wrapped in plastic bags; it can be placed in a reusable cotton or fabric bag.

2.4.6 HEATING & TEMPERATURE CONTROL

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- Fixed heating provided, and controllable (on/off) by the guest.
- Supplementary heating provided in rooms on request when heating levels are not within the control of the guest, e.g. some central heating systems.

Three Star

- Individually controlled thermostatic heating.

Four Star

- Individually controlled thermostatic heating operable 24-hours.

Five Star

- Air conditioning, mechanical ventilation or ability to cool the room with fresh air that doesn't allow noise or pollutants in the room.



- Use of thermostatically controlled radiators helps to manage your energy consumption.

2.4.7 LIGHTING

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- Bedrooms well lit.
- At least one light controlled from the door.
- Bedside reading light for and controllable by each person, in addition to the light controlled by a switch near the door. However, twin beds may share a central bedside light.

Three Star

- Lighting specifically provided to illuminate the writing desk/dressing table.

Four Star

- Lighting specifically for the lobby area, wardrobe area, dining area and easy seating.
- Two bedside lights in a twin-bedded room.
- Room lighting controllable from the bedside.

Five Star

- A range of lighting options controlled by the guest.



- Enable lighting levels to be adjusted using a dimmer switch and/or make available additional bedside/writing table lamps.



- Signs can be used to request guests to switch off lights when not in use
- If it is policy to prepare guests' rooms in anticipation of their arrival by leaving lights on, consider doing this much later in the day.

2.4.8 WINDOWS & WINDOW COVERINGS

Minimum Entry Requirements (All Star Levels)

- At least one window that can be opened safely to provide good levels of direct natural light and ventilation. Air conditioning or mechanical air ventilation provided where windows cannot be opened.
- Windows well fitted, easy to shut and open and remain open. A pole provided to open any Velux-style windows or skylights.
- Rooms without windows are acceptable, but must have air-conditioning and pass all building regulations. The lack of window needs to be clearly communicated to the guest before booking.
- Security fittings installed on all bedroom windows where, when open, access could be gained from outside, e.g. patio doors and windows near fire escapes.
- It is acceptable for a bedroom to overlook a large internal atrium. The bedroom should be air-conditioned and naturally illuminated.
- Opaque curtains, blinds or shutters provided on all windows including glass panels to doors, fanlights and skylight windows so that guests have privacy and can exclude any light from outside the room. All window coverings to be properly fitted or hung.
- Curtains should be reasonably substantial – with or without lining. Curtains large enough to draw easily and completely across the width and height of the window.
- In ground floor bedrooms additional privacy provided by means of a net curtain or blind.



- Ensure windows and curtains can be reached by your guests and are easy to open and close.

2.4.9 FLOORING

Minimum Entry Requirements (All Star Levels)

- All flooring, carpets, rugs, hard wood flooring etc. properly fitted and of an acceptable quality and condition.



- Avoid deep-pile carpets that may cause trips or make it difficult for a wheelchair to manoeuvre.

2.4.10 FURNITURE – TABLES, MIRRORS & CLOTHES STORAGE

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- Writing table or equivalent such as substantial flat surface or desk providing sufficient free space for practical use with mirror adjacent.
- Lighting adequate for use. Conveniently positioned power sockets at desk height.
- A bedside table or equivalent provided for each person. Twin beds may share a bedside table.
- Wardrobe or clothes hanging space.
- Sufficient good quality hangers (not wire).
- At least one mirror in the bedroom preferably full length and to be close to sockets and/or hairdryer.

Three Star

- Dedicated area for unpacking luggage.
- At least two mirrors in the bedroom, one of which must be full-length mirror and one at the dressing table area.

Four Star

- As three star.

Five Star

- A fully fitted or freestanding wardrobe. N.B. Open alcoves not acceptable.
- A generous amount of clothes storage.
- A wide range of quality hangers provided.
- Illumination inside the wardrobe expected.
- A substantial writing table with excellent free space.

2.4.11 FURNITURE – SEATING

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- Single/Double/Twin – one chair or stool to be provided with a degree of comfort.

Three Star

- Single /Double/Twin – one easy chair. Where this is the only chair, consideration given for ease of use at the dressing/writing table, or an additional chair provided.

Four Star

- Double/Twin – one substantial easy chair with another chair positioned at the writing desk.

Five Star

- Single – one substantial easy chair plus an additional chair providing comfortable use at the dressing/writing table.
- Double/Twin – two substantial easy chairs plus an additional chair providing comfortable use at the dressing/writing table.

2.4.12 BEVERAGE MAKING FACILITIES

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- Tea/coffee-making facilities available and accessible 24-hours either in bedrooms or in public areas (Self-service/vending option in public areas acceptable).
- Where only room service is provided, the availability of a hospitality tray at no extra charge to be advertised to guests.

Three Star

- A wider range of hot drinks and snacks likely to be provided, e.g. choice of teas, biscuits, and other drinks such as hot chocolate.
- Tea/coffee making facilities to be provided in the room

Four Star

- As three star.

Five Star

- In-room facilities, where provided, of an excellent standard, e.g. chinaware, teapot, choice of hot drinks including a range of speciality teas, fresh milk and freshly ground coffee.
- May feature bespoke coffee machines in room.

General best practice

- Self-service ingredients for making hot drinks kept wrapped or in lidded containers.
- Fresh milk available on request.



- Ensure hospitality trays are at a height accessible to all guests. Kettles should be cordless and a variety of drinking cups/mugs either provided or available on request.



- For items on hospitality trays, locally produced goods, like biscuits, or Fair Trade products (e.g. tea, coffee, sugar, hot chocolate) could be sourced.
- Items on hospitality trays, such as sugar and biscuits, do not need to be individually wrapped – use can be made of airtight containers for dried goods.

2.4.13 IN-ROOM INFORMATION

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Three Star)

- Hotel services and facilities advertised in all bedrooms possibly in a folder of room information or via in-room technology. This should include the following where applicable:
 - How to summon assistance in a night-time emergency.
 - Multilingual instructions or diagram for fire evacuation. Consideration given to providing multi-lingual information materials where relevant to the customer base.
 - Meal times and menus including rooms service menu where provided.
 - Details on connecting to the Wi-Fi.
 - Local tourist information or a reference to where this is available within the establishment to be included within the room information.
 - How to use TV, radio and other technology in the room.
 - Iron and ironing board advertised as available (if not already provided in the bedroom).
 - Where Apps are available for service elements such as ordering of newspapers or additional items, such as rooms service, or booking a spa treatments, full details to be given during check in and information to be available in the room information.

Four Star

- A more comprehensive guest directory.
- Where technology allows, the guest directory likely to be shown on the room TV or a portable device (i.e. a tablet), including examples of the local visitor attractions, recommended nearby restaurants and public transport information.

Five Star

- Consideration given to multilingual and visually enhanced material.



- Ensure all information is in clear print at a height accessible to all guests. Consider providing door notices for hearing impaired guests as part of your emergency evacuation procedures.
- Include a copy of your Accessibility Guide with in-room information



- Each room should contain, where possible, an up-to-date visitor information folder, which may include:
- Information on local heritage and culture, including details of related visitor attractions and special events.
- Details of nearby outlets supplying local food, drink, craft and gift products.
- Options for car-free travel such as walking and cycling routes, public transport timetables and contact numbers and websites.
- Suggested itineraries for car-free days out.
- The hotel's environmental policy if there is one, and details about any green scheme with which the hotel is affiliated.
- If the business is part of a visitor payback scheme, information regarding this scheme should also be included.

2.4.14 IN-ROOM ENTERTAINMENT

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- Digital TV available in bedrooms.
- All available channels properly tuned in.
- Televisions in bedrooms can be safely mounted on a wall bracket. Ease of viewing and safety taken into account when positioning television.

Three Star

- TV remote control provided.
- Guests able to watch TV in comfort from both a chair and the bed.

Four Star

- Televisions with generously-sized screens – greater than 61cm/24ins.

Five Star

- Adoption of the latest innovation in entertainment technologies expected.



- Ensure TVs can provide subtitles to benefit hearing impaired and foreign language-speaking guests.



- Where appropriate, ensure televisions and other entertainment equipment is not left on standby. Notices could be used to request that guests completely turn off all equipment when not in use, rather than leave it on standby. Staff could also be trained to turn entertainment equipment completely off when cleaning the room if guests have left it on standby.

2.4.15 GENERAL CONNECTIVITY & TELEPHONES

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- Bedroom telephone optional.
- Where not provided, a means of communication with staff in the event of an emergency must be provided, and advertised in the bedroom.
- Telephones, where provided, displaying the hotel telephone number together with the bedroom extension or telephone number.
- Telephones, where provided, with instructions on how to use any additional services such as telephone message service and room-to-room calls.

Where telephones are provided, rate card displayed in bedrooms illustrating typical charges for local, long-distance, international, internet, use of phone cards and connection to mobile phones. Sample call charges required.

In addition, an explanation of what constitutes a local and long-distance call should be given as well as a clear explanation of peak and off peak times.

Three Star

- Free Wi-Fi and/or internet connection available in all bedrooms and public areas where connectivity allows. A conscious effort to strengthen any weak spots should be evident.

Four Star

- An effective means of internal communication should be provided.

Five Star

- Guests able to call individual hotel departments directly.
- High Speed Broadband available to guests, where connectivity allows.
- Excellent in-room communication technology with best available connectivity and good support to resolve any problems.

General best practice

- Notepad with pen or pencil provided.



- Provide a textphone, e.g. minicom in at least one bedroom, to benefit profoundly deaf guests.

2.4.16 MISCELLANEOUS

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Three Star)

- A drinking tumbler per guest, in clear glass, or scratchless plastic.
- Sufficient and conveniently situated power sockets allowing for the safe use of all electrical equipment provided. Power adapters acceptable, but not overloaded.
- A hairdryer provided in every bedroom.

Four Star

- Easily accessible plug sockets to also include continental sockets or adapters, along with USB sockets
- A superior quality hairdryer.

Five Star

- An in-room safe or facility for the storage of valuables.
- An evening housekeeping service provided or on request – possibly including some of the following services: bed turn-down, bins emptied, curtains drawn, towels tidied, room service trays removed.



- Décor – use could be made of local artist's work, prints and/or photographs of images depicting local scenes and historical and heritage related images – it all adds to a visitor's enhanced sense of place.

2.5 BATHROOMS

2.5.1 SIZE & SPACIOUSNESS

Minimum Entry Requirements (All Star Levels)

- All rooms should have sufficient space for guests' comfort and ease of use. Guests should be able to move easily around the room.
- When we assess the size of the bath, shower and WC rooms, we take into account the usable space available around furniture and fittings. For a higher quality grade, rooms will be expected to afford a higher provision of free space together with more generously-sized equipment, i.e. larger bath, shower and basin.

2.5.2 PROVISION OF EN SUITE

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- All bedrooms to have en suite or private bath/shower room.

Three to Four Star

- All bedrooms to have en suite bathrooms or shower room. All en suites with WC and thermostatically controlled showers, either separate or over the bath.

Five Star

- It is acceptable for 100% of en suite bathrooms to have a shower only, if size and quality are excellent.



- Hot water supply should have at each fitting a mixer valve, controlled to a maximum 41°C to prevent scalding.



- Use thermostatically controlled settings for hot water.

2.5.3 EQUIPMENT

Minimum Entry Requirements (All Star Levels)

- All private and en suite bathrooms or shower rooms equipped with:
- Internal lock or bolt on all private bath or shower rooms (not necessary for en suites)
- A mirror with good lighting situated above or adjacent to the washbasin.
- Adequate storage, with space for guests' own toiletries.
- Soap and soap dish (can be pump action dispenser).
- Hook for clothes.
- Non-slip surface or mat for use in baths or showers to be available on request.
- Towel rail or equivalent sufficient for the number of guests in the room.
- Conveniently located electric shaver point, with voltage indicated or adaptor.
- Toilet paper and holder plus spare toilet paper.
- A lidded sanitary disposal bin and sanitary bags.
- Windows fitted with curtains, blinds or shutters to ensure privacy.



- Provide a selection of equipment such as bath seats, toilet seat height raisers and shower chairs. Provide a support rail by the shower attachments.



- There is no need for soaps and other complimentary products to be individually wrapped or in small containers – these can be presented in suitable attractive refillable dispensers. Assessors check the quality of the products offered and the style of presentation.
- There is no need for the drinking cup/glass to be either plastic, or wrapped.
- Although providing shower facilities can help reduce water consumption, remember that power showers can use more water than a bath. Therefore, consider using reduced flow shower heads or gravity-fed showers where possible.

2.5.4 LIGHTING, HEATING & VENTILATION

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- Adequate covered lighting.
- Adequate heating. N.B. All bathrooms with an external window require dedicated heating. A heated towel rail is acceptable.
- Adequate ventilation and extraction (window or extractor fan).

Three Star

- A means of providing guests with additional dry towels on request.

Four to Five Star

- A heated towel rail or equivalent.



- Use of thermostatic controls on radiators helps to manage your energy consumption.

2.5.5 TOWELS & TOILETRIES

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- A clean, absorbent, hand and bath towel provided for each new guest.
- Bathmat. N.B. Paper mats not acceptable.
- Fresh soap provided for each new guest.

Three Star

- Shampoo and bath gel provided.

Four Star

- A very good range of towels & toiletries.

Five Star

- A range of towels which includes bath sheets, robes and face cloths.
- A wider range of luxury guest toiletries and bathroom accessories.

General best practice

- Emergency toiletries such as toothbrush and disposable razor available, possibly for a charge.



- Provide towels that contrast in colour to the walls and floor to assist visually impaired guests.



- Use could be made of a towel agreement sign.

2.6 PUBLIC AREAS

2.6.1 RECEPTION AREAS & LOBBY

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- A clearly designated reception facility with an appropriate flat surface. A clearly designated area at one end of a bar counter is acceptable.
- A bell or internal telephone provided to summon attention when staff not present.
- Acceptable space and comfort for guests, relative to the number of bedrooms.

Three Star

- Dedicated reception area with desk, counter or table, unless alternative, well-managed procedures in place to check in guests in lounge or in guest bedroom.

Four Star

- Greater amount of space and comfort (including seating) for arriving and departing guests.

Five Star

- A clearly designated reception area or a bespoke check in/out process.



- Provide a well lit and uncluttered area allowing ease of access to the reception facility with seating for guests.
- A hearing loop or clip board and pen will assist communication with hearing impaired guests.



- The hotel's environmental policy, if there is one, or details about any green scheme with which the hotel is affiliated, could be promoted in the lobby or reception area.
- Heating – improved insulation and greater use of thermostatically controlled and zoned heating will save on energy use.

2.6.2 BAR, LOUNGE & SITTING AREAS

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Two Star)

- A bar or lounge with adequate comfortable seating for resident guests accessible throughout the day and evening.
- Provision of further seating where there is a market need, e.g. in resort hotels, leisure and business hotels and where non-residents dine or visit the bar.
- The bar and lounge possibly combined and providing the only sitting area in the hotel's public areas.

Three to Four Star

- Suitable seating layout and range of furniture appropriate for meeting the market needs of certain hotels, e.g. hotels where business meetings take place or where refreshments are offered in the lounge.

Five Star

- A variety of seating styles expected.
- Sitting areas not necessarily all lounges but certainly offering a range of environments.



- Provide a variety of seating: low, high, firm, soft, with and without arms.



- Décor – use could be made of local artist's work, prints and/or photographs of images depicting local scenes and historical and heritage-related images – this will add to a visitor's enhanced sense of place.

2.6.3 OTHER PUBLIC AREAS, INCLUDING CORRIDORS & STAIRCASES

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Three Star)

- Corridors and stairs in good repair and free from obstruction.
- Adequately lit 24-hours.
- Particular attention given to the maintenance of door handles, numbers, brassware and glass panels.
- Clear, directional signage to bedrooms and reception (where needed).

Four Star

- Corridors normally wide and spacious.

Five Star

- Corridors and staircases wide and spacious allowing freedom of movement for guests and service trolleys.



- On each step or change of level, provide a nosing strip that contrasts in colour to the floor.
- Provide at least one continuous handrail on steps and where changes in levels occur.
- Provide clear signage. See Sign Design Guide: www.signdesignsociety.co.uk.

2.6.4 LIFTS

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

- Optional.
- Assistance with luggage required when there is no lift.

Two Star

- Where there is no lift, this should be made clear at the time of booking.

Three to Four Star

- A lift is required when there is a guest bedroom more than two floors higher or lower than the ground floor, e.g. on the third floor.

Five Star

- It is expected that a lift will be provided to all floors in the main building and assistance with luggage offered.

General best practice

- Dispensation is possible in older buildings and/or architecturally listed buildings where it can be shown that fitting a lift is impractical or unacceptable to planning authorities.
- A separate lift for hotel services, such as luggage, laundry and room service.



- Ensure lifts provide audible messages and have raised letters and numbers on the control panel. A mirror on the rear wall assists a wheelchair user to manoeuvre in and out.

2.6.5 COMMUNICATION

Minimum Entry Requirements (All Star Levels)

- A telephone accessible 24-hours a day unless direct dial in-room facilities are provided (payphones, house phones or mobile handsets).
- Free Wi-Fi available in public areas for the use of email checking and light internet browsing. Charges are acceptable for downloading of music, films and other heavy internet usage.

2.6.6 PUBLIC AREA WCs

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Three Star)

Where open to non-residents:

- A toilet facility conveniently situated to cater for public areas.
- All toilets well maintained, regularly cleaned, checked and adequately ventilated.
- The following facilities provided as a minimum: washbasin with soap, hand-drying facilities, covered light, mirror, hook on door, lidded sanitary bin and bags, toilet roll holder with toilet paper.

Four to Five Star

- More generous provision of toilets.



- Provide appropriate support rails at urinals, toilets and washbasins.

2.7 EXTERNAL AREAS

2.7.1 EXTERNAL AREAS (AS APPLICABLE)

Minimum Entry Requirements (All Star Levels)

External areas include the appearance of the building, grounds and gardens, pathways, drives and any car parking:

- All areas to be maintained in sound condition and must be fit for the purpose intended.



- Provide within the grounds of the property or identify nearby, a free run/spend area for assistance dogs.
- Ensure paths are kept clear of obstacles, debris, moss, ice and fallen leaves and have firm well-maintained surfaces. Ensure that any permanent features en route are securely fixed, e.g. flower pot arrangements, statues.



- For grounds, gardens and frontages, establishments could consider the use of materials which are in keeping with the local environment and physical characteristics of the local geography, geology and age of the buildings. Consider using local varieties of flowers, plants etc.
- If possible and where available, provision should be made in the car park for a clearly marked public transport pick up and drop off point for taxis, buses and coaches.

2.8 ANNEXES

2.8.1 ANNEXES

Minimum Entry Requirements (One to Four Star)

- Where a hotel has an annexe, the facilities provided will be taken into account when determining the overall grade of the hotel.
- Annexe accommodation may be situated in a separate unit or units within the hotel grounds or within easy walking distance of the main building. Paths or passageways to the annexe must be in good condition, well surfaced and adequately lit.

Five Star

- Undercover access to any accommodation separate to the main building. This could include chauffeured transport or escort with umbrella provided.

APPENDIX: CODE OF CONDUCT, CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION & INSPECTION APPEALS PROCEDURE

CODE OF CONDUCT

The operator/manager is required to undertake and observe the AA Code of Conduct:

Prior to booking

- To describe accurately in any advertisement, brochure, or other printed or electronic media, the facilities and services provided;
- To make clear to guests in print, in electronic media and on the telephone exactly what is included in all prices quoted for accommodation, including taxes and any other surcharges. Details of charges for additional services/facilities should also be made clear, for example breakfast, leisure etc.;
- To provide information on the suitability of the premises for guests of various ages, particularly the elderly and the very young;
- To allow guests to view the accommodation prior to booking if requested.

At the time of booking

- To clearly describe the cancellation policy to guests i.e. by telephone, fax, internet/email as well as in any printed information given to guests;
- To adhere to and not to exceed prices quoted at the time of booking for accommodation and other services;
- To make clear to guests if the accommodation offered is in an unconnected annexe or similar, and to indicate the location of such accommodation and any difference in comfort and/or amenities from accommodation in the establishment.

On arrival

- To welcome all guests courteously and without discrimination in relation to gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief.

During the stay

- To maintain standards of guest care, cleanliness, and service appropriate to the type of establishment;
- To deal promptly and courteously with all enquiries, requests, bookings and correspondence from guests;
- To ensure complaint handling procedures are in place and that complaints received are investigated promptly and courteously and that the outcome is communicated to the guest.

On departure

- To give each guest, on request, details of payments due and a receipt, if required/requested.

General

- To give due consideration to the requirements of guests with accessibility requirements, and to make suitable provision where applicable;
- To ensure the accommodation is prepared for the arrival of guests at all times when the establishment is advertised as open;
- To advise guests, at any time prior to their stay, if there are any changes in what has been booked;
- To have a complaints handling procedure in place to deal promptly and fairly with guest complaints;
- To hold current public liability insurance and to comply with all relevant statutory obligations including legislation applicable to fire, health and safety, planning and food safety;
- To allow AA representatives reasonable access to the establishment, on request, to conform that the Code of Conduct is being observed or in order to investigate any complaint of a serious nature notified to them.

CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

All establishments participating in the AA national quality assessment schemes are required to:

- Meet or exceed the AA minimum entry requirements for a rating in the relevant accommodation sector;
- Observe the AA Code of Conduct;
- Be assessed annually, and in the event of complaints, by authorised representatives of the AA;
- Pay to the AA the annual recognition fee (and applicable taxes) by 28 January of the relevant recognition year, or quarterly if you have opted to do so;
- Allow and facilitate access to employees, agents or representative of the AA to the Establishment for the purposes of any inspection, which the AA wishes to carry out in connection with a recognition (existing or prospective) inspection. The Applicant agrees that telephone calls made by the AA to arrange bookings for inspections may be recorded or the purposes of assessing quality;
- Shall waive or refund the cost of the bed and breakfast for both the initial and subsequent Inspection(s) upon checkout. For the avoidance of doubt, the inspector will pay for all other expenses including meals (excluding breakfast), beverages and parking;
- You give permission to the AA or its representatives to enter the Establishment site at any time to take and create photographs of the Establishment. The copyright and all other rights title and interest in and in respect of such photographs shall vest in the AA;
- On termination of the AA Establishment recognition, howsoever caused, the Applicant shall immediately:
 - comply with the terms and conditions of the sign order form, in particular, unless otherwise notified by the AA, at the Applicant's own expense remove all recognition signs from the Establishment site and return them to the AA;
 - make no further use of, and withdraw from circulation, any documents or other material (including, but not limited to, headed writing paper and promotional brochures) showing the AA logo or otherwise indicating an existing or past AA recognition;
 - make no further representation, in any form that the establishment holds or has held an AA recognition.
- If, after 28 days following termination of the AA establishment recognition, the Applicant has not returned any AA recognition sign(s) to the AA, then the Applicant shall allow the employees, agents or representative of the AA such access as they require to the Establishment site to remove all AA property contained therein. The Applicant shall pay to the AA all costs and expenses thereby incurred.

Anti-Corruption & Anti-Bribery

- You shall not, and shall procure that your directors, employees, agents, representatives, contractors or sub-contractors shall not engage in any activity, practice or conduct which would constitute an offence under any anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws, regulations and codes, including but not limited to the Bribery Act 2010, as may be amended or replaced from time to time.
- You shall have in place adequate procedures designed to prevent any person working for or engaged by you or any other third party in any way connected to this agreement, from engaging in any activity, practice or conduct which would infringe any anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws, regulations and codes, including but not limited to the Bribery Act 2010, as may be amended or replaced from time to time.
- Breach of this Clause shall entitle the AA to terminate this agreement by written notice with immediate effect.

Change of Ownership

When an accommodation business is sold or the method of operation changes, e.g. contracted out, and the new owner does not continue participation in the AA national quality assessment scheme, the existing rating cannot be transferred. If a property is sold as a going concern, for continued use to accommodate guests and details of the new owners are provided to the AA, the rating may be continued under the following circumstances:

- The current (outgoing) owners have made all payments due to date for the current participation year. If payment is made by Direct Debit this should remain active until the change of ownership process is completed.
- The current (outgoing) owners provide forwarding details for themselves along with full contact details for the new (incoming) owners to the AA's appointed assessment contractor.
- The current (outgoing) owners provide the expected completion/transfer date to the AA's appointed assessment contractor.
- The new (incoming) owners apply and pay for participation in the AA national quality assessment scheme within 28 days of the completion/transfer date.

If all these criteria are met then the current (outgoing) owners may be entitled to a pro-rata refund for any complete remaining months paid for in the current participation year.

Please refer to full terms and conditions listed on your application form.

INSPECTION APPEALS PROCEDURE

Proprietors of AA recognised Hotels who wish to appeal against the results of an AA inspection carried out at their establishment must follow the procedure outlined below.

- Any appeal must be made in writing to AA Hotel Services within 21 days of the report being received.
- The appeal should detail the main reason for the appeal i.e. the level of rating, merit score for hotel or level of AA award recommended.
- Should the appeal be about the level of star rating, proprietors should ensure that their establishment meets all the necessary minimum requirements outlined in the AA Quality Standards Booklet.
- Appeals will be formally acknowledged within 7 working days of receipt of the appeal together with a form to organise an appeal visit on an overnight basis.
- The appeal visit will be subject to a non refundable fee as detailed below which would not be organised until full payment had been received.
- Once the application and fee has been received an appeal visit from a member of the senior inspection team will take place within 4–6 weeks of receipt (subject to the establishment's availability).
- The findings of the appeal visit will be fed back in the normal way of both a discussion after check-out and a report following the visit.
- The outcome of this report will supersede the previous visit and will be final.

AA Hotel & Hospitality Services

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General Enquiries

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