

Criteria for Small Serviced Accommodation

INTRODUCTION

This booklet describes the requirements for the Quality Standards for Small Serviced Accommodation.

We have based the requirements for the Star grades on the existing criteria of all the partner organisations plus extensive research into the needs and expectations of visitors. We have also consulted widely with the hospitality industry.

The feedback we received from the industry shows strong support for a common quality standard for serviced accommodation throughout the countries where the schemes operate. Our aim for this revised quality standard is to work continually with the industry and to strive together to raise quality standards in line with the ever-evolving expectations of consumers.

Any establishment operating with the word 'Hotel' as part of their business name will be assessed using the new criteria for hotel accommodation. There is strong evidence to support this from research into consumers' expectations and understanding of what services and facilities should be provided in a hotel.

Designators

We have developed a number of designators to help consumers understand the different types of accommodation available.

The range for non-hotel serviced accommodation is as follows:

Bed & Breakfast, Guest House, Farmhouse, Inn, Restaurant with Rooms and Guest Accommodation.

All designators are intended to apply to establishments offering tourist accommodation.

Establishments in each of these designators should fulfil all Minimum Entry Requirements listed below.

Designator	General Description
B&B	Accommodation offering bed and breakfast, normally but not always, in a private house run by the owner. B&Bs will usually have no more than six bed spaces, and may or may not serve an evening meal.
Guest House	A Guest House will normally have a minimum of four letting bedrooms. Breakfast will be available and evening meals may be provided by staff or the owner. It will normally be commercially rated.
Farmhouse	Accommodation offering B&B or Guest House accommodation on a working farm, croft or smallholding.
Inn	An Inn will normally provide bed and breakfast within a licensed establishment where the food and beverage operation is a significant part of business. The restaurant and/or bar will usually be open to non-residents and will provide bar or restaurant food at lunchtime and evenings.

Restaurant with Rooms

A Restaurant with Rooms will normally provide bed and breakfast accommodation within a licensed establishment where the restaurant operation is a significant part of the business and will usually be open for non-residents. The restaurant should offer a high standard of food and restaurant service. A restaurant license and a maximum of twelve bedrooms should be provided.

Guest Accommodation

Any establishment that meets the minimum entry requirements and does not meet one of the above designators, is eligible for this general designator.

Minimum Entry Requirements

Establishments in each of these designators should fulfil all Minimum Entry Requirements listed below. The Key minimum entry requirements for achieving a One Star grade are:

- A cooked breakfast or substantial continental available.
- Proprietor and/or staff available for guests' arrival, departure and at all meal times.
- Once registered, resident guests have access to the establishment at all times unless previously notified.
- All areas of operation meet the minimum quality requirements for cleanliness, maintenance and hospitality as well as facilities and the delivery of services.
- A dining room or similar eating area available unless meals are only served in bedrooms.
- You must meet all the current statutory obligations and provide Public Liability insurance cover.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS AT HIGHER GRADES

As well as enhanced quality standards there are certain key requirements you will need to achieve:

- **Three Star and above** – access to both sides of all beds for double occupancy.
- **Three Star and above** – bathrooms/shower rooms cannot be shared with the proprietor.
- **Three Star and above** – washbasin in every guest bedroom (either in the bedrooms or en-suite/private facility).
- **Four Star** – 50% of guest bedrooms to be en-suite or with private facilities.
- **Five Star** – all guest bedrooms to be en-suite or with private facilities.

DISPENSATIONS

Dispensations for certain individual requirements within the quality standards may be given as long as all the remaining requirements and quality levels for that grade are met or exceeded. This flexibility will be on a case-by-case basis and will have to be agreed by the Standards Review Group (SRG), which represents all the organisations who operate the Quality Standards – VisitScotland, VisitWales, EnjoyEngland and AA. Any exceptions will need a proportional increase in quality in other areas to compensate for the area where an exception is sought.

1. General

1.1 STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS

ALL GRADES

Fulfilment of all statutory obligations, where applicable, relating to:

- Fire Precautions
- Price Display Orders
- Food Safety/Hygiene
- Licensing
- Health & Safety
- Discrimination
- Trade Description
- Data Protection
- Hotel Proprietors Act

We may ask you to provide evidence that Public Liability Insurance Cover is being maintained and that the above requirements are being fulfilled.

1.2 SAFETY AND SECURITY

ALL GRADES

- The main entrance should be clearly identified and the doorway illuminated.
- You should maintain a high degree of general safety and security. All information on emergency procedures should be kept up to date.
- In every bedroom there must be printed details explaining to guests how to summon help if there is an emergency during the night. If you have foreign guests, you need to consider the best ways of helping them understand this information, possibly by using symbols and/or diagrams to show the exit routes.
- You should take adequate measures to protect the security of guests and their property. In particular you need to consider the safety and security of guests staying in bedrooms on the ground floor.
- For the safety of guests, all car parks should be adequately lit.
- As a matter of best practice, all establishments are encouraged to display clear fire instructions where appropriate. An emergency evacuation notice or diagram should be clearly displayed in all bedrooms.

1.3 CLEANLINESS

ALL GRADES

Cleanliness is of paramount importance to guests in every type of establishment so a high standard of cleanliness must be achieved and maintained throughout the property.

- Bathrooms and shower rooms should be clean and smell fresh with particular attention paid to fittings and sanitary ware, plug-holes, shower curtains, flooring, mirrors, extractor fans and towels.
- You also need to pay special attention to wherever guests have direct contact – seating, crockery, cutlery, glassware, beds, bedding and linen.
- All bedrooms and bathrooms should be cleaned and checked daily to ensure a very high standard of cleanliness.

1.4 EXTERIOR AND CONDITION OF BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT

ALL GRADES

- Buildings, their fixtures, fittings and exterior décor must be maintained in a sound, clean condition and must be fit for the purpose intended. All electrical or gas equipment should be safely maintained and in good working order.

1.5 ANNEXES

ALL GRADES

- If you are offering guests accommodation in an unconnected annexe or with separate external access, you must tell them when they are booking. You must also advise them if there is any change to a booking that involves an annexe or separate external access. You should also tell them where the annexe is.
- Paths or passageways to the annexe must be in good condition, well surfaced and adequately lit.

1.6 BOOKINGS AND PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION

ALL GRADES

- You should describe fairly to all guests and prospective guests the amenities, facilities and services that your establishment provides – either by advertisement, brochure, word of mouth or any other means.
- You should make clear to guests exactly what is included in the prices you quote for accommodation, meals and refreshments. You must include service charges, taxes and other surcharges. Legally, you should not exceed the price you agree at the time of booking. You should explain in detail any charges for additional services or available facilities and cancellation terms, if applicable. If a deposit is required, you need to tell guests when they book and explain how it will be taken and whether or not it is refundable if they cancel.
- When you are taking a booking you should describe in detail any in-house policies, e.g. no-smoking policy, payment methods, access restrictions.
- If prospective guests ask to see the accommodation before they book, you must show them.
- You must tell all prospective guests about any major refurbishment work that might affect their stay.

1.7 GUEST ARRIVAL, WELCOME AND ACCESS

ALL GRADES

- The proprietor or staff should be on duty during the main arrival and departure periods and during meal times. It is acceptable that the entrance may be locked and the guest may have to ring or knock for access.
- Registration of all guests on arrival.
- Once guests have registered, they should have access to the establishment and to their bedrooms at all times unless they were previously told about any restrictions. A key or security code may be given for the main entrance.
- You should provide service that is appropriate to the style of accommodation, and deal promptly with all enquiries, requests, reservations, correspondence and complaints from guests.
- There must be an effective means for guests to call for the attention of the proprietor or staff, who need to be available at all reasonable times (as above). If the proprietor or staff live away from the property a telephone contact number needs to be provided and clearly displayed. If you have foreign guests, you need to consider the best ways of helping them understand this information, possibly by using symbols and/or diagrams.

1.8 GUEST DEPARTURE

ALL GRADES

- You should provide written details of payments due and a receipt to any visitor who requests it. You need to clearly identify the VAT element of the bill where applicable.

2. Bedrooms

SIZE AND SPACIOUSNESS

- All bedrooms should have sufficient space for guests to move easily around the room.
- Bedrooms that are smaller than the following sizes are unlikely to meet the minimum requirements:
 - Single 5.6sq.m / 60sq.ft
 - Double 8.4sq.m / 90sq.ft
 - Twin 10.2sq.m / 110sq.ft

When we assess bedroom size we take into account the usable space available around furniture and fittings. For a higher quality grade, rooms will be expected to considerably exceed these minimum sizes.

- The ceiling height for the major part of the room needs to be sufficient for a person of 6ft to move around without stooping. Sloping eaves and ceilings are acceptable as long as they do not restrict guests' movement to an unacceptable degree.
- 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.

N.B. Where there is access to only one side of a double bed, a maximum grade of Two Star can be awarded.

2.1 BEDS AND BEDDING – SIZE AND QUALITY

Minimum bed sizes:

- Single 190 x 90cm / 6ft 3ins x 3ft
- Double 190 x 137cm / 6ft 3ins x 4ft 6ins

Beds of 183 x 75 cm / 6ft x 2ft 6ins will only be acceptable for children and can only be used as part of a family room. Beds of 190 x 122 cm / 6ft 3ins x 4ft beds will be acceptable for single occupancy only.

- Rooms with bunk beds only are not acceptable for adult use. Bunk beds should have a minimum of 75cm / 2ft 6ins clear

space between the mattress of the bottom bed and the underside of the top bed (Bunk Bed Regulations 1997).

- All mattresses should be comfortable and have mattress protectors, a sprung interior or be made of foam or similar. Plastic or rubber mattress protectors are not acceptable except when used for small children.
- All beds and mattresses should be of sound condition with a secure headboard or equivalent.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Three Star

- Access to both sides of all beds for double occupancy

2.2 BEDDING – QUALITY AND PROVISION

- All beds should be made daily.
- All bedding should be clean and in sufficient quantity, according to the season and the needs of guests.
- As a guide each bed should have either:
 - a: two sheets, two blankets and a bedspread or
 - b: a duvet with duvet cover and one or two sheets.
- There should be two pillows in individual pillowcases per person. If feather pillows or duvets are provided, a non-allergenic alternative should be available on request.
- All bed linen (sheets, pillow cases and duvet covers etc) should be fresh for each new guest. It should be changed once every four days, except where there is a clearly advertised environmental policy that invites guests to agree to less frequent changes of linen e.g. weekly.
- If duvets are provided, alternative bedding should be available on request.
- Spare blankets and pillows should be available on request. For best practice, we suggest that you also use pillow protectors and that any spare pillows and bedding are clean, fresh and preferably wrapped.
- 100% man made fibre sheets are not acceptable.

2.3 FURNITURE, FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

Each bedroom should have:

- A bedside table, cabinet or shelf for each bed although twin beds may share and 75cm / 2ft 6ins bunk beds are exempt.
- A dressing table or equivalent, with a mirror adjacent.
- A chair or a stool.
- If a lounge is not available, a comfortable easy chair should be provided in the bedroom for guests to use whilst reading etc.
- A wardrobe or clothes hanging space with at least six hangers per person. An alcove with a rail is acceptable but coat stands, hooks on walls or behind doors are not. Wire hangers are not acceptable.
- Adequate drawer or shelf space. The drawers should run freely.
- Opaque curtains, blinds or shutters 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.

N.B. Where bedrooms are located on the ground floor, you should consider providing additional privacy with a net curtain or blind.

2.4 WINDOWS AND VENTILATION

- Every bedroom must have at least one opening window with clear glass to provide natural light and adequate ventilation. Rooms without windows are not acceptable. If windows are sealed, a Local Planning Authority approved ventilation system should be provided.
- Windows should be well fitted, easy to shut and open and remain open.
- Security fittings installed on all bedroom windows where, when open, access could be gained from outside e.g. patio or French doors, ground floor windows and windows overlooking fire escapes.
- You should make an effort to insulate against external noise.

- You should provide a pole for opening high Velux-style or skylight windows, where these are the only opening windows.

2.5 HEATING

- There should be adequate in-room heating provided at no extra cost.
- Additional heating should be available on request at no extra charge.
- Free standing radiant bar heaters are unacceptable.

2.6 LIGHTING

- Bedrooms should be well lit and there should be adequate natural light.
- As guidance, bedrooms should have overall lighting levels of 160 watts for a single room and 220 watts for a double/twin room. A low energy light bulb equivalent is acceptable.
- The control switch for the main lights should be near the door.
- There should be adequate bedside lighting controllable from each bed. It is acceptable for twin beds to share a centrally situated light. 75cms / 2ft 6ins bunk beds are exempt from providing a light. All bulbs, unless decorative, should have a shade or cover.

ENERGY SAVING LIGHT BULBS CONVERSION TABLE

Energy Saving Bulb	Ordinary light bulb
20 watt – 23 watt	100 watt
15 watt – 18 watt	75 watt
11 watt – 13 watt	60 watt
9 watt	40 watt

2.7 FLOORING

- Bedrooms should have fully fitted carpets or hard flooring with slip-resistant rugs or mats placed by the bedside.

2.8 BEVERAGE MAKING FACILITIES

- If there are no facilities for making hot drinks in the bedroom and they are not available on request, a service of hot drinks should be available morning and evening.
- Where in-room facilities are provided, for safety reasons it is unacceptable for kettles to be boiled on the floor.
- Fresh milk should be available on request and ingredients for making hot drinks should be wrapped or kept in lidded containers.

2.9 TELEPHONES IN BEDROOMS

When telephones are provided, all the call charges must be clearly indicated. It is generally expected that you will provide, as a minimum, the following information to guests:

- The cost of one 5 minute local call at peak rate
- The cost of one 5 minute local call at off-peak rate
- The cost of one 5 minute long distance call at peak rate
- The cost of one 5 minute long distance call at off-peak rate
- The cost of one 5 minute international call at peak rates, e.g. USA
- The cost of one 5 minute international call at off-peak rate, e.g. USA

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

2.10 MISCELLANEOUS REQUIREMENTS

Each bedroom should have:

- A means of securing bedroom doors from inside and out, and a key should be available.

A dispensation may be made in the case of older or architecturally listed properties. Where old or original doors do not allow for the fitting of a lock a: the bedroom door should be capable of being secured from the inside, e.g. a hook and hasp or privacy bolt, and b: guests should be advised in advance that bedroom doors can only be secured from the inside, and c: a lockable facility should be provided within the bedroom to secure guests' valuables, e.g. a wardrobe, drawer etc.

- A waste paper container. It should be non-flammable if smoking is permitted.
- An ashtray if smoking is permitted.
- A drinking tumbler per guest, in clear glass, scratchless plastic or wrapped disposable.
- Sufficient and conveniently situated power sockets to allow for the safe use of all electrical equipment provided.
- Iron and ironing board available on request and advertised in the bedroom.
- Early morning calls available on request or an alarm clock.
- For bedrooms without en-suite or private bathroom, a towel rail or equivalent should be provided with one hand towel and one bath towel per person in the bedroom. There should be fresh soap for each new letting. If you provide liquid soap dispensers, you need to pay particular attention to their cleanliness and hygiene.

2.11 ACCESSORIES

- There are some facilities and accessories that are not requirements but which may be provided in the bedroom. If they are provided, their quality, range, presentation and ease of use will all be taken into account in the quality assessment. Examples include fresh fruit, flowers, radio, hairdryer, sweets, mineral water and hot water bottles.

3. Bathrooms

SIZE AND SPACIOUSNESS

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 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.

- The ceiling height for the major part of the room needs to be sufficient for a person of 6ft to move around without stooping. Sloping eaves and ceilings are acceptable as long as they do not restrict guests' movement to an unacceptable degree.

3.1 PROVISION OF EN-SUITE, PRIVATE OR PUBLIC BATH/SHOWER ROOM

MINIMUM

- Hot water at all reasonable times.
- At least one bath or shower room with washbasin for every six guests.
- At least one WC for every six guests, separate from bath or shower room.
- When an establishment has four or less bed spaces for paying guests, it is acceptable for a bath or shower room to be combined with a washbasin and WC.
- If there are any guest bedrooms without washbasins, there should be a hand washbasin in the WC room.
- Additionally, where the maximum number of guests resident within an establishment, including proprietors, is no more than six, it is acceptable that facilities are shared between guests and proprietors. However this will limit the achievable grade to Two Stars.
- Where a shared arrangement exists, proprietors and their family should avoid prolonged use of the bathroom during the early to mid morning period. They should also remove their personal belongings from the bathroom.

3.2 EQUIPMENT

ALL GRADES

All bath and/or shower rooms – private, public or en-suite – equipped with:

- A bath or shower. If a shower is provided it must have a shower screen or curtain, including those sited over baths.
- A lidded WC.
- A toilet roll holder with toilet paper must be provided.
- A soap dish with fresh soap provided for each new guest.
- A covered bin/open bin with sanitary disposal bags.
- An internal lock/bolt (not for en-suites). Separate private bathrooms need a lock and key so that the guest has sole use and can confidently leave their belongings in the bathroom.
- Appropriate flooring.
- Opaque window, curtains or blinds for privacy and comfort.
- An extractor fan for adequate ventilation or a window that opens.
- Adequate heating. All bathrooms with an external window must have heating.
- A hook for clothes.
- A non-slip bath mat should be available on request when shower trays and baths are not non-slip.
- A towel rail or equivalent. A radiator is not acceptable, but a towel ring or a hanging rack on a radiator is.
- A clean hand and bath towel for each guest. Unless there is a clearly advertised environmental policy they should be changed at least every three days.
- A clean bath mat for each new let.
- An electric razor point or adaptor available within easy reach of the mirror. This may be located in a bedroom or bathroom.
- All bathrooms need to be well lit by a covered light.
- Hot water for bathing/showering should be available at all reasonable times.

3.3 EN-SUITE PROVISION

- **One to Three Star** – there is no minimum requirement for en-suite facilities. However, where they are provided their quality will be assessed as part of the bathroom quality assessment.
- To achieve a **Four Star** grade, you will need to provide at least 50% of bedrooms with an en-suite or a private bath / shower facility.
- To achieve a **Five Star** grade, every bedroom must have an en-suite or a private bath and/or shower facility.

3.4 EN-SUITES

WHAT IS AN EN-SUITE?

An en-suite facility consists of a bath or shower, WC and washbasin connected to a bedroom and entered directly from it. The WC is in its own properly ventilated room. If the shower cubicle is situated in the bedroom then additional ventilation should be added to take account of this.

It is acceptable for the washbasin and shower to be in the bedroom, as long as the WC is contained within a room of its own, within the bedroom. Bedrooms with shower cubicles sited in them are unlikely to achieve a high quality grade.

If the bath or shower cubicle is located in the bedroom, guests must be told when they book.

3.5 PRIVATE BATHROOM AND SHOWER ROOM FACILITIES

WHAT IS A PRIVATE FACILITY?

A private bathroom is one in which the bath or shower, WC and perhaps a washbasin are allocated for the sole use of the occupants of one particular bedroom. The bathroom should be on the same floor and be reasonably close to the bedroom. It should be lockable with a key provided. Access to the bath and/or shower rooms from the bedrooms through a lounge, dining room etc is not acceptable.

3.6. PUBLIC BATHROOM AND SHOWER ROOM FACILITIES

WHAT IS A PUBLIC FACILITY?

A public facility is one that may be shared by the occupants of more than one bedroom and perhaps the proprietors or their family. Access to the bath and/or shower rooms from the bedrooms through a lounge, dining room etc is not acceptable. No charge should be made for the use of these facilities.

In addition to the requirements listed before under 3.2 Equipment, all public bathrooms and/or shower rooms should have:-

- Heating.
- A bathmat that is changed daily.
- Soap as well as the soap provided in the bedrooms.
- Hand drying facilities.
- All public bathrooms need to be well lit.

3.7 GUEST TOILETS

- Access to guest toilets from a bedroom through a lounge, dining room etc is not acceptable.

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

All guest toilets need to have:

- A lidded WC.
- A toilet roll holder and toilet paper.
- A covered bin/open bin with sanitary disposal bags.
- A hand washbasin (not necessarily a washbasin) and hot water, soap and hand towel/drying facilities if all guest bedrooms do not have a washbasin.
- A covered light.
- An extractor fan for adequate ventilation or a window that opens.
- An opaque window, curtain or blind for privacy and comfort.
- An internal lock or bolt.

3.8 WASHBASINS IN BEDROOMS

- Where an en-suite / private facilities are not available, to achieve a Three Star grade all bedrooms require a washbasin – either free standing or in a vanity unit.

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

- The bowl must measure at least 36 cm x 24 cm / 14 ins x 9.5 ins. Its suitability will depend on its shape, position of taps etc.

Where a washbasin is provided in a bedroom there should be:

- A mirror with a light above or adjacent.
- A towel rail or equivalent. A radiator is not acceptable, but a towel ring or a hanging rack on a radiator close by is.
- Shelf space close to the washbasin, safely positioned.
- Hot and cold water.
- A clean hand towel or hand drying facility.
- Fresh soap. A liquid soap dispenser is acceptable.

4. Public Areas

4.1 LOUNGES, BARS, DINING AREAS, RESTAURANTS, HALLWAYS, STAIRS, CORRIDORS AND LANDINGS

- There should be a dining room or breakfast area available unless meals are only served in bedrooms, in which case guests need to be told of this when they book.
- Where televisions are not provided in the bedrooms, there should be access to a lounge that has comfortable easy seating and a colour television at no extra charge. If you have a Peace and Quiet policy that is clearly advertised in your brochure/ website and guests are advised at the time of booking, a dispensation may then be made at the discretion of VisitScotland.
- A payphone should be provided or guests should, on request, be able to make or receive phone calls on the proprietor's own telephone. A charge may be made for this facility.

- Corridors and stairs should be in good repair and free from obstruction.
- The levels of lighting in all public areas should be adequate for safety and comfort. Stairways and landings should also have sufficient light at night.
- All public areas should have an adequate level of heating.

5. Guest Meals

5.1 BREAKFAST

- All food must be properly cooked and carefully prepared and presented.
- A full cooked breakfast, or substantial continental breakfast should be available.
- You must offer a minimum of two hot cooked items. Offering only boiled eggs is not acceptable as a cooked breakfast. If a cooked breakfast is not available, you must make guests aware at the time of booking. A substantial continental breakfast must include a selection of the following: cold meats, cheese, fresh fruits, fruit compotes, preserves, cereals, juices, yoghurts, bakery items and a choice of freshly brewed hot drinks, usually tea and coffee.
- Proprietor and / or staff available at breakfast for responding to guests needs, e.g. clearing of dishes, checking sufficiency etc.
- Where breakfast is served in the bedrooms, service should be of an equivalent or better level than if it were to be served in a breakfast room, this includes service of beverages.
- It is acceptable to offer a buffet style cooked breakfast.

5.2 DINNER – WHERE PROVIDED

- All food must be properly cooked and carefully prepared and presented.
- If requested at the time of booking there must be at least one vegetarian option available.

6. Other Facilities

- There is no requirement to provide these, but we will take into account the quality, range, presentation and ease of use of any optional amenities and services you provide.

Optional amenities and services might include a swimming pool, nature trail, indoor and outdoor sports and games, farm visits, a craft shop, additional food and beverage facilities, TV lounge or room service.

