

Click to see the [Quality Assurance](#) guidance notes for [Tour Operators](#).

Click to view the current [Scottish Government guidelines](#) for reopening and operating your business.

Considerations from the VisitScotland Quality Assurance Grading Scheme for Tour Operators

*The following guidance refers to additional considerations for Tour Operators, **specifically** with regards to achieving high standards within the Quality Assurance Scheme for this designator whilst implementing temporary Covid19 measures. Please remember to advertise your [Quality Assurance](#) logo and [We're Good to Go](#) mark – both are ways to reassure the visitor and show that you adhere to national standards.*

Pre-Arrival: Ease of Use and Information Provision

- User friendly booking system; comprehensive information about what the tour experience will entail – changes, protective measures, instructions for visitors. This is all about expectation setting and management - have clear and concise information up front
- Contingency plans in place regarding required actions should a staff member or visitor start to feel ill during a tour, protecting the health and safety of staff and visitors. This should be clearly stated to visitors as part of your terms and conditions and cancellation policy at the booking stage

Staff: Hospitality and Friendliness

- Warm greeting; eye contact; smile (even behind a face covering); body language; personal introduction; personalisation of the interaction; build rapport – all characteristics of a high standard interaction. Staff members and guides should also be easily identifiable and contactable throughout the experience

Staff: Service and Efficiency

- Pre-empt visitor needs; be proactive; be patient (always make the visitor feel welcome and reassured) – all characteristics of a high standard interaction
- Consider measures to minimise contact time, whilst making the experience easy to navigate for visitors. This could include, but not limited to: advance booking; comprehensive pre-arrival communication which could be personalised; contactless payments and receipt with option to email; well organised itinerary; takeaway food and drink options as part of the itinerary; additional communication with visitors via phone or messaging app

Arrival and Core Experience

- Even when communicating temporary measures, aim for use of high-quality materials and link any signage and information to the theme of your experience (use of logos, professional look and feel). Make it fun and engaging – consider something that can be tailored to your own experience and has potential for social media opportunities. Make information as

simple as possible; for example, a universal symbol is much easier and quicker to absorb than a wordy phrase

- Consider use of microphones and other measures to reduce need for tour guides and visitors to raise voices

Cleanliness

- The highest standards will be expected in all areas throughout the day
- Sanitising stations within vehicles and at common touchpoint surfaces (entrance/exit points, door handles, handrails, etc); regular cleaning during stops and rest periods throughout the experience. Consider wipeable surfaces for high contact areas, e.g. wipeable covers on head rests

All sections: Group Management and Visitor Flow Management

- Separate out groups according to households; well-ordered embark/disembark process; use of multiple entry and exit points on vehicles, where possible; allocated seating/area; clear and well organised queuing systems; review layout of each area, wherever possible; physical distancing markers; one-way system introduced, where possible; reduced capacity; guides on hand to assist customers

Dispensation/Allowances

*In order to comply with Government Guidance, some temporary Covid-19 measures will appear to be contrary to certain criteria elements and quality scoring considerations under normal operation of the Quality Assurance (QA) Scheme. Please note that **dispensation will be given for any QA elements which would be out-with Government guidance, and these elements will be obsolete until such time that normal operation can resume.** The main aspects which will be affected are: -*

Tour Content – Quality & Presentation

Interactive and 'hands on' shared tools such as tablets and phones may not be advisable under your temporary Covid-19 measures. Presenting this information via alternative methods such as guides, and individual digital channels will enable you to enhance the visitor experience.

Visitor Information

Leaflet displays regarding other local attractions and activities will mostly be removed from public access under temporary Covid-19 measures during the de-cluttering process. Providing this information via staff and your digital channels will enable you to still provide assistance to visitors. Information relevant to the experience could be emailed to visitors in advance or individual information/welcome packs prepared for each group.

If you have any questions about Quality Assurance, or would like to speak to one of our expert Quality & Tourism Advisors, please make contact via business.advice@visitscotland.com