

Guide of Australia

Application Kit

National Tour Guide Accreditation Program

Provided by:



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National Tour Guide Accreditation Program	

Guides of Australia (GoA)

Guides of Australia (GoA) is a National Accreditation Program designed by Guiding Organisations Australia and managed by Tour Guides Australia.

The Program provides a skills benchmark for all Tour Guides in Australia.

It is suitable for all types of Tour Guides located anywhere in Australia and engaged in any sector of the tourism industry.

There are a range of Tour Guide titles throughout Australia and around the world below are a sample of some of the roles Tour Guides may fulfil:

- City Sights Guide
- Walking Tour Guide
- Meet and Greet Guide
- Driver Guide
- Tour Guide
- Tourist Guide
- Urban Guide
- Language/ Linguist Guide
- Auslan (Sign Language) Guide
- Vision or Mobility Assist Guide
- Site Guide
- Step on Guide
- Business Guide
- Heritage Guide
- Adventure Guide
- Forest/ Wilderness Guide
- Wildlife Guide
- Birding Guide
- Nature/ Eco Guide
- Special Interest Guide
- Cruise Guide
- Overlander Guide
- Tour Escort
- Tour Manager
- Tour Director
- Professional Tour Guide

Tour Guides work in a variety of locations, in cities as well as regional and remote areas, in natural, historical and culturally significant environments, and they may conduct tours of varying length from 30 minutes to extended tours of up to 30 days or more.

Guides of Australia accreditation uses the term “Tour Guide” to mean any person who leads or presents to a group of tourists on an organised tour or activity, of any length, and regardless of their type of employment status.

Benefits of the Guides of Australia Accreditation Program

Using professional Tour Guides are of benefit to the whole of the Tourism Industry. The Guides of Australia Accreditation ensure guide compliance with a high level of knowledge, skills, training (incl. First Aid) and adequate insurance. Through Tour Guides Australia, guides are also provided with ongoing Professional Development, networking and job opportunities.

Many stakeholders benefits from the raised level of skills and knowledge, including:

- Tour Guides ○ Tour Operators ○ Tourism Councils ○ Industry Organisations
- Training org's ○ Plus: Visitors & Tourists

Benefits to individual Tour Guide:

- National recognition of practical skills and professionalism
- A pathway to national qualifications (i.e. Certificate III and IV in Guiding)
- Competitive edge for employment
- Access to professional development opportunities
- Regular news updates from Tour Guides Australia and other industry assoc.
- Identifiable as a professional Tour Guide (Professional badge provided)
- Listing on the National Register of Accredited Tour Guides

Benefits to the Tourism Industry:

- Provide a high benchmark for Tour Guides as well as for employers
- Improves the safety standards for guests
- Raises the level of professionalism amongst Guides in the Tourism industry
- Improves the customer service satisfaction ratings
- Potential for increased visitation and business opportunities for agencies using guides.

Benefits to Stakeholders:

- Provides high benchmarks for protected areas or sites with special access arrangements
- Establish clear and recognisable high standard benchmarks of required Tour Guiding skills
- Improves professionalism and success from the Front line staff of the Tourism Industry

Benefits to the Tourist:

- Greater understanding and appreciation of the cultural, and natural values Australia has to offer, increases the level of customer satisfaction, engagement, connection and excitement.
- Improves the services & standards of professionalism provided by using only Australian Tour Guides, who have completed the National Tour Guide Accreditation Program.

Application Policy, Procedures & Requirements

Eligibility

It is recommended to read through this kit in full before completing or submitting any documentation, to ensure you are fully eligible for accreditation.
Accreditation will be granted to all applicants who successfully meet all the requirements.

Guides of Australia Initial Accreditation Requirements

- 100 days of experience as a Tour Guide throughout your career
OR - 60 days in the past 6 months.
OR - A completed cert. III or IV, from a registered training organisation in Guiding, Tourism, Eco-tourism, or other relevant course.
- Plus 6 months of Tour Guiding experience.
OR - If courses are not available, the equivalent of 30 full days of guiding work.
- Please check the TGA website for any additional local details.

Policy & Procedures for On-site Assessment

- 1 The Cet IV accredited Independent Assessor will review and sign off on the Applicants on-site Assessment.
- 2 It is the Applicant responsibility to ensure the on-site **Tour Activity Plan** is provided to the Assessor at least 24 hours before the assessment, so the Assessor may have time to familiarise themselves with both venues and activities.
- 3 The duration of the on-site assessment should last approximately one hour.
- 4 Assessment shall be conducted in a real tour experience with at least 2 participants/visitors as arranged by the applicant.
- 5 Applicants must meet the required criteria as is set out in the 'On-Site Assessment Criteria'.
- 6 The Assessor will complete a recommendation form and forward it to the local professional guiding tour guiding associations membership secretary, who will advise of the outcome.
- 7 If the applicant fails to meet the Guides of Australia requirements in the on-site assessment, then a written explanation will be given by the local professional tour guide association together with suggestions for further training.
- 8 Once ready, an applicant may undergo a subsequent on-site assessment.
- 9 If an Applicant is unsuccessful at the second assessment, suggestions will be made for appropriate training and work experiences which may assist in meeting the required criteria. Once this has been completed a re-assessment can be done.

What is included in the Accreditation Fees?

- ★ Application for Accreditation includes the Initial Assessment
- ★ A Photo ID card
- ★ Tour Guides Australia communication and support
- ★ Listing on the National Register of Accredited Tour Guides
- ★ Representation of Professional Tour Guides at Industry and Government levels.
- ★ ACCREDITED GUIDES may be eligible for a reduced rate on Public Liability Insurance.
For current fees please check your associations website.

Application Check List – *Have you got it all?*

Include Signed:

- Completed Membership Application Form to your local Tour Guide association
- Passport sized digital photo for Professional ID Card (Your name on the back)
- Terms and Conditions of Accreditation (Appendix A, page 9)
- Australian Tour Guides Code of Conduct (Appendix F, page 14)

Copies of:

- Relevant tour guide, or equivalent, qualifications (if applicable)
- Current First Aid Certificate including CPR.
- Resume with relevant guiding experience or similar
- Proof of identity (passport photo page, driver license, or birth/citizenship certificate)
- Plus, for non-Australian citizens, your current visa or Medicare card
- Tour Guide Indemnity insurance. (If you have this – or can be arranged when accredited)

Successful completion of:

- **On Site Assessment based on relevant Tour Plan** (Appendix B, page 9)
- On Site Assessment Criteria – helpful documents (Appendix C page 10 –11)
- In cases where on-site assessment is difficult or impossible, zoom or skype will be offered.

Submit:

- Your **Tour Plan to the Assessor** at least 24 hours before the on-site Assessment.
- **Applicant Feedback form**, together with other copies to be sent after assessment.

Payment of:

Accreditation fees to be made by Direct Deposit.

For current fees, and account details see the TGA website.

Annual Renewal & Maintaining Accreditation

Your TGA membership together with your Guides of Australia accreditation must be paid up at all times. Fees are due annually. A grace period of 30 days applies, after which time the accreditation process must be completed again.

As a Professional Tour Guide you are expected to engage in ongoing professional development every year, and keep your First Aid certificate current (renewal every 2 years)

Benefits of Professional Developments include:

- Continued enhancement and growth of your skills and knowledge
- Networking providing you with additional job opportunities

To ensure continuation of your accreditation please ensure any changes to your contact details are communicated to the membership secretary.

TGA holds regular professional development opportunities for its members.

Information about National and International Professional Development events and job opportunities are provided through the TGA communications. Via emails & newsletters.

Tour Guide Qualifications

GoA accreditation makes use of the National Tourism, Hospitality and Events Training Package, which includes competency standards and national qualifications for Tour Guides.

There are three relevant certificates:

Certificate III in Guiding

Certificate IV in Guiding

Certificate IV in Tourism

TGA supports Registered Training Organisations in the training of Tour Guides to achieve Certificate III or IV in Guiding and encourages them to assist with Recognition of Prior Learning for Accredited Tour Guides.

On Site Assessment

The accreditation process incl. the requirement of an on-site assessment with 2 elements:

1. Tour Plan (appendix B, page 9)

Must be submitted to the Assessor at least 24 hours before your on-site Assessment.

As a Tour Guide, you are required by law to ensure that you provide all activities as per itinerary set out by the Tour Operator. A plan helps you to establish what you will talk about, when, and what props you will need along the way. It also helps you to tailor the tour to the expected customer group. And it aids in your review afterwards.

The Tour Plan template (p. 9) allows you to demonstrate your planning for the Assessment. A Self Assessment & Customer Feedback form is provided (Appendix D, page 12). It is recommended that you complete this document immediately following the On Site Assessment.

2. Assessment

The on-site Assessment will take approximately 1 hour, allowing you sufficient time to show of your skills. Your tour must be conducted in a real on the job situation with a minimum of 2 customers/participants, plus the Assessor. Alternatively, a simulated tour reflecting real circumstances may be evaluated. This will require an Audio recording of min.30 mins plus a 30 mins video recording (- can be combined)

Your Assessor

Once an application has been received and checked, an Assessor will be assigned. The on-site Assessor will use the same evaluation tools as you have received (Appendix B & C) plus an On-site Assessment evaluation form. The Assessor will contact you to organise a mutually convenient date and time to conduct the On-site Assessment. Assessors are Cert IV qualified and experienced with extensive knowledge of Tour Guide qualification requirements, plus experience in work place assessment. Should an applicant fail to meet the requirement, then a written explanation will be made for appropriate training and work experience, which may assist in meeting the required criteria. Once applicant feel ready, a reassessment can be arranged.

Appeals and Feedback

If you are not happy with the outcome, a formal appeal may be lodged in writing to tour Guides Australia within 14 days. An independent Assessor will be assigned to consult with you and the initial Assessor. A second on-site Assessment may be required. The applicant is encouraged to provide feedback via **Accreditation Applicant Feedback form** (appendix E, p. 13).

Photo ID Card

Upon completion of all requirements, your Guide of Australia Photo ID Card will be forwarded to you. Photo should be a digital image, passport style & size, reflective of you as a guide. Make sure to always display your card prominently so that Customers, and the industry, can identify you as a Guides of Australia Accredited Tour Guide. For card replacement please contact your local tour guide association.

Guide Declaration

The information I have supplied in this application is true and correct, and I will continue to supply accurate information should any additional information be required.

I have attached the requested documents with my application – including a resume, copies of Certificates, plus a signed Code of Conduct. First aid and insurance certificates (if available) and a photo.

Once I have successfully completed the accreditation process I will be able to list my details providing me with exposure to job opportunities on both the National Database of Accredited Tour Guides and my local guiding organisations website.

Please tick you preferred choice:

YES: I would like to take advantage of the offered listings and hereby give permission for my contact info to be displayed on both the local tour guide association and GOA websites. OR -

NO: I prefer not to have my details shown on any tour guiding websites. Should my circumstances or contact details change, then I shall notify Tour Guides Australia immediately.

I agree to abide by the Australian Tour Guide’s Code of Conduct.

As a professional tour guide I shall keep my First Aid & CPR certificate current at all times.

For as long as I work as a Tour Guide, I shall ensure my insurance is paid up and current. I acknowledge that any incorrect/misleading information or failure to provide information as set out in the Guides of Australia Application Kit, or any breach of these terms and conditions, or failing to comply with the Australian Tour Guides’ Code of Conduct may lead to refusal to grant or renew accreditation, or the withdrawal of my accreditation.

I acknowledge and agree that my tour Guides Australia can refuse to grant or continue my accreditation with 14 days notice.

I acknowledge that if, at Tour Guides Australia’s discretion, I do not meet the specified criteria as set down in the Application Kit, then I may be refused an On Site Assessment or accreditation opportunity.

A fee will be charged for accreditation upon application, standard fees can be found on the local tour guide associations website. This fee may change given circumstances and additional travel cost. I agree to pay all fees and charges within 7 days of invoice.

I acknowledge and agree that Tour Guides Australia accepts no liability for any information, recommendation or advice provided to me and I agree to seek independent specialist advice before relying upon any information, recommendation or advice provided to me by Tour Guides Australia or its employees, agents or contractors.

I agree to be liable for and indemnify Tour Guides Australia, its employees, agents and contractors from and against all claims, actions, demands, liability, damages (including personal injury or death) and expense (including legal costs on an indemnity basis) with tour Guides Australia, its employees, agents and contractors may sustain or incur, which may be brought or made by any person, arising out of or in connection with:

- a) Any wilful, unlawful or negligent act or omission by me;
- b) Any breach of any warranty, terms or condition of accreditation;

Signature:

Name: Date:

Application Kit – **Appendix A**

Applicant – Tour Plan

Guide Name: _____

Tour Name & Brief Description: _____

Tour Date: ____ / ____ / ____ Tour Start Time: _____ Tour Finish Time: _____

Start Location: _____ Finish Location: _____

Commentary – Content, objective, themes and major points that you will cover:

Group movement (i.e. foot, vehicle, static): _____

Equipment, props and resource materials: _____

Customer handouts or loan equipment: _____

Customer Nationalities and Languages: _____ Age Group: _____

Other Info: _____

Safety and Risk Management Issues: _____

Do you - or your employer have a Risk Assessment for this activity/tour? YES NO

Have you prepared Risk, Safety & Security procedures for this activity/tour? YES NO

Are you familiar with the condition of all facilities & equipment to be used? YES NO

Do you have contingency plans in case of unusual events? YES NO

Please Note:

The LOCAL PROFESSIONAL TOUR GUIDING ASSOCIATION does not assess, consider or approve the appropriateness of any risk assessments or safety procedures of the Tour Plan but merely ensures that applicants are aware of and have considered these issues when applying for accreditation. The LOCAL PROFESSIONAL TOUR GUIDING ASSOCIATION accepts no liability in relation to the Tour Plan or its risk assessment, safety or security procedures.

Application Kit - **Appendix B**

Applicant – On Site Assessment Criteria

This document will be useful when preparing your tour plan. It is a general guideline of what you will be expected to cover during your one-hour assessment. This is the same document; your assessor will be working with. Please Note: Some of the suggested criteria may not apply to your specific tour.

Preparation – Does the guide have...?	Evidence Guide
Equipment and props ready	I.e. Microphone, AV equipm't, food/drink requirements, ref. books
Access to a First Aid Kit	Appropriate to tour, stocked and nearby if not carried
Professional personal presentation	Professional considers customer expectations, safe and hygienic and well dressed.
A Tour Plan	Written Tour Plan to be given to assessor before tour
Manifest/Activity Numbers	Obtained as appropriate
Introduction – Does the Guide...?	Evidence Guide
Gain the attention of the group	Appropriate and professional – consistent throughout tour
Use an effective Introduction	Welcome, Positive, Tour Length and Route, Intro to topic
Inform group of health and safety issues	Tour practicalities and personal requirements
Commentary & Interpretive Techniques - Does the Guide...?	Evidence Guide
Have a logical order/flow to commentary	In Topics and Theme/s and smooth flow between
Use current, accurate, relevant information	Relevant to topic and to group – consider group demographics, time management, depth of knowledge
Consider the sites cultural and social value	Cultural and social differences
Use effective themes	Appropriate to group
Hold the groups attention	Involve the entire group
Use props appropriately	To environment and group
Demonstrate effective body language	Confident, enthusiastic, positive and professional
Demonstrate effective use of voice	Variety in pitch, appropriate speed, tone of voice and projection
Use appropriate vocabulary	Not too technical, appropriate to group demographics
Use appropriate humour	Professional related info, (rather than just jokes)
Maintain eye contact	Share your attention equally with entire group
Encourage customer participation	In tour activities and use of senses
Remain flexible	Seize opportunities to incorporate customer knowledge and take advantage of chance experiences
Encourage questions from group	Ask if any questions
Answer questions appropriately	Courteous and correct, repeats to group if appropriate and offers to provide answers later if needed
Customer Service & Communication Does the Guide...?	Evidence Guide
Maintain friendly yet professional interactions	Between guide and group, positive and cooperative attitude
Use active listening	Acknowledge and respond to customer comments
Consider customer body language	Acknowledge and respond to individual and group
Recognise cultural and social differences	Consider customers communication skills, treat all with respect

Overcome language barriers if required	Use simple words and gestures, utilise bilingual assistance from within group for important info
Provide for special needs of customer	Identify, and consistently provide for reasonable requests
Meet customer expectations	Identify and provide for customer needs
Action customer dissatisfaction	Identify and promptly action improvement measures
Have effective communication with colleagues	Polite, friendly and professional, in common English and industry terminology
Communicate effectively with serv. providers	Polite, timely & accurate. Forward confirmations, tour/customer
Group Management – Does the Guide..?	Evidence Guide
Lead and control group	Displays leadership, provide effective instructions, encourage clarifications. Lead group without being too far ahead or behind
Check group numbers	Consistently and accurately without being too obvious
Relay to the group tour itinerary/schedule	Scheduled and updated if delayed
Respond to group/individual needs	Providing balanced and flexible service
Encourage group cohesion	Appropriate interaction, team building, ice breakers
Encourage minimal impact	On social, cultural and natural environments
Safety – Does the Guide ...?	Evidence Guide
Assess, reassess and action risks	Action risk management policy and unexpected situations on tour – to customers, self and others
Show their duty of care at all times	Carrying First Aid Kit for walks, and consistently advising groups of health and safety issues
Follow health, safety and security procedures	As per instructions, or as deemed necessary when situations arise. Identify and rectify possible breaches & dangers
Ethics – Does the Guide...?	Evidence Guide
Refrain from soliciting tips or kick backs	Form customers or service providers
Minimise negative impacts	From activity & self, on social, cultural & natural environments
Provide accurate and current information	In all communication – including additional tour services
Legal Issues – Does the Guide...?	Evidence Guide
Provide all tour requirements	As per advertised activity and within specified timeframe
Have all permits and license requirements	Acknowledge specific permit and license requirements, carry required documentation
Conclusion – Does the Guide...?	Evidence Guide
Wind the tour up effectively	Leave group feeling positive, thank group, recap highlights, appropriate on selling of products
Encourage questions and feedback	Utilise feedback forms or verbal feedback
Post tour – Does the Guide...?	Evidence Guide
Notify colleagues of return	In a timely manner, generally within 24 hrs
Follow up on unanswered questions	Research unanswered questions and notify customers
Return equipment	Clean and store, ready for next use
Complete required reporting & Invoice	Tour Report, incident report, faulty equipment, OHS breaches
Conduct evaluations	Consider customer feedback and self evaluation for next tour

<h2>Self-Assessment and Customer Feedback</h2>

Complete the following questions immediately after your tour/activity:

How many participants did you have? _____

How did your group respond to your commentary? _____

What was the highlight of the tour/activity? _____

What interpretation worked well? _____

Why? _____

Was there anything that didn't work well? _____

Why? _____

How did you show care for the safety of the group? _____

How did you show ethical behavior? _____

Can you think of any way you can improve your activity/tour? _____

Customer Feedback: _____

Accreditation – Applicant Feedback

Your Name:

1 Were you given appropriate and sufficient information about the accreditation process?
Yes No N/A

Suggestions for improvement:

2 Were you able to access additional information easily?
Yes No N/A

Suggestions for improvement:

3 Were any queries dealt with promptly?
Yes No N/A

Suggestions for improvement:

4 Was the additional information helpful/useful?
Yes No N/A

Suggestions for improvement:

5 Were you provided with assistance/support by the On Site Evaluator?
Yes No N/A

Suggestions for improvement:

6 Was the On Site Evaluation conducted at a suitable and convenient location?
Yes No N/A

Suggestions for improvement:

7 Was your On Site Evaluator friendly and helpful?
Yes No N/A

Suggestions for improvement:

8 Do you think the On Site Evaluation process was fair and reasonable?
Yes No N/A

Suggestions for improvement:

9 Additional comments:.....

Thank you for your feedback.
Please return this form within 7 days to your local professional tour guiding association.

The Australian Tour Guides' Code of Conduct

I promise to demonstrate the Australian Tour Guides' Code of Conduct in all my actions and encourage its implementation across the industry through interactions with tourism businesses, organisations' and other Tour Guides.

I agree to abide by the **Australian Tour Guides' Code of Conduct** and will:

- 1 Provide a professional service to visitors – ensure they are treated with respect, care and a commitment to best practice guiding. Provide objective, fair interpretations of places visited.
- 2 Make every effort to present true and accurate facts, ensuring that a clear distinction is made between stories, legends, traditions and opinions.
- 3 Act honestly, fairly and professionally in all dealings with those who engage my services and with all colleagues within the tourism industry.
- 4 Educate visitors on the need to be respectful of our precious natural, cultural and heritage environments, minimising our footprint and impacts at all times.
- 5 As a representative of Australia, I will welcome all visitors, and act in such a way as to bring credit to the country and to the promotion of it as a tourist destination.
- 6 Regularly update and upgrade my guiding skills and knowledge through training, professional development and networking activities.
- 7 Declare to customers any relevant personal commercial interests, including commissions. I agree to not engage in forced visitor purchases or soliciting of tips.
- 8 Be mindful at all times of my duty of care and other health and safety issues.
- 9 Provide all goods and services as is presented in the job brief, itinerary and promotional materials.
- 10 Abide by all national, state and territory legislation governing the operation and conduct of tours, tour operators and tour guides.
- 11 As a professional guide I shall establish my own complaint handling procedures.
- 12 Inform my clients that a Complaints Handling Policy covering grievances or other issues with professional tour guides is available through my professional association.
- 13 Continually maintain a valid Certificate II in First Aid & CPR, as a pre-requisite for guiding. First Aid course renewal to be completed every 2 years.
- 14 At all times hold a current *Certificate of Currency for Indemnity insurance to the value of \$10 mill. (Unless working in a permanent part/full time job only, covered by employers insurance.)

* A special low cost insurance deal is available as an incentive for all Guides of Australia (GoA) accredited guides.

Please sign and confirm your agreement with the Australian Tour Guides' Code of Conduct.

Date: ___/___/___

Name: _____ Signature: _____

References:

Further information on Tour Plans and Activity Planning can be found in the following references:

Pastorelli, J. (2003) *An Interpretive Approach to Tour Guiding –Enriching the Experience*, Pearson Education Australia, NSW.

Department of Conservation Western Australia (2000) *Developing Ecotours and Other Interpretive Activity Programs*, Gil Field and Lotte Lent, Department of Conservation Western Australia, Perth.

Crabtree, A. (2000) *Plan and Develop Interpretive Activities*, South West Institute of TAFE, Vic.

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