

## Sustainable Tourism Accreditation Standards

When completing the online assessment within the Quality Tourism Framework:

- **Only make claims you can verify** with real actions, data, or examples.
- **Avoid broad or vague statements** such as “eco-friendly”, “green”, “sustainable”, or “environmentally responsible” unless you can clearly explain what you mean.
- **Use measurable commitments** (e.g., percentages, timelines, specific actions) rather than general aspirations.
- **Do not claim impacts or outcomes** (e.g., “we reduce emissions”, “we protect wildlife”) unless you can show how you do this.
- **Describe what you actually do**, not what you hope to do in the future.
- **Be honest about limitations**, transparency builds trust and avoids greenwashing.

Section	Section Subheading	Quality Tourism Framework Standard Requirement
<b>Business Details</b>		<p>Businesses must ensure that their core business details within the Quality Tourism Framework (QTF) platform are accurate and up to date. This includes information such as business name, Australian Business Number (ABN) region of operation, contact details, business structure, and primary contacts.</p> <p>In addition, the business is to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Upload a current version of their business logo. This logo may be used in reports or materials generated through QTF programs.</li> <li>- Upload Certificate of Registration from the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC)</li> <li>- Select at least one primary sector from the dropdown list provided in the assessment. This sector should best represent the core activity of the business.</li> <li>- Businesses may select additional sector categories that further describe their operations. This question is optional.</li> <li>- Businesses may voluntarily indicate whether the majority of their owners identify as First Nations. This is a self-identification question and is not subject to verification.</li> </ul>
<b>Insurance</b>	<b>Public Liability</b>	<p>All participating tourism businesses must hold <b>current Public Liability Insurance (PLI) with a minimum cover of \$10 million</b>. A certificate of currency must be provided to confirm that the policy is active and meets or exceeds the required minimum level of cover.</p> <p>If a business does not hold \$10 million PLI, a written explanation must be provided.</p> <p><i>The only exception to this requirement is where the business has obtained a formal assessment from a qualified insurance provider confirming that Public Liability Insurance is not required for their operations. Written evidence of this assessment must be supplied.</i></p> <p><b>GSTC Alignment - A.2.2</b> The organisation complies with all applicable local, national and international legislation and regulations.</p>

	<p><b>Workers Compensation</b></p>	<p>If a business employs staff, it must hold a current and valid Workers Compensation policy in accordance with the requirements of the relevant State or Territory.</p> <p>Businesses must provide evidence of their policy by uploading a certificate of currency or relevant documentation through the assessment.</p> <p>If a business does not employ staff, Workers Compensation Insurance is not required. If a business indicates “No” but does employ staff, it must provide a written explanation that aligns with applicable State/Territory exemptions.</p> <p>State-based exceptions may apply (e.g., in Victoria, a Workers Compensation policy may not be required if total annual employee payments are less than \$7,500). Businesses relying on an exemption must provide evidence or a valid justification.</p> <p><b>Staff and Volunteer Insurance Coverage</b></p> <p>If a business employs staff <b>or</b> works with volunteers, it must hold appropriate insurance that covers both <b>on-site and off-site duties</b>.</p> <p>A “No” response is only acceptable if the business does not have staff or volunteers.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.2</i> The organisation complies with all applicable local, national and international legislation and regulations.</p>
	<p><b>Other Insurance</b></p>	<p>Businesses must hold any additional insurance required to comply with local, national, or international legislation and regulations relevant to their operations. The type of insurance required will vary depending on the nature of the business.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Motor vehicle or vessel insurance</b> (for tours, transport, hire, or charter operations)</li> <li>• <b>Professional Indemnity Insurance</b> (for Visitor Information Centres or advisory services)</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Marine hull insurance</b> (for vessels used in tourism operations)</li> </ul> <p>Where applicable, businesses must upload a <b>certificate of currency</b> or other documentation confirming the insurance is valid and current.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.2</i> The organisation complies with all applicable local, national and international legislation and regulations.</p>
	<b>Verification Permission</b>	Businesses must agree to allow the Accreditation Officer to contact relevant insurance providers for the purpose of verifying the information supplied.
<b>Licence, Permits &amp; Compliance</b>	<b>Licence &amp; Permit</b>	<p>Businesses must hold all licences and permits required to legally operate within their sector and jurisdiction. This includes all current and relevant approvals, registrations, certifications, or agreements needed under State, Territory, and local regulations.</p> <p>Businesses must upload copies of their licences and permits as part of the assessment.</p> <p>Licence requirements vary across different tourism sectors and across States and Territories. It is the responsibility of the business to ensure that all required licences are current and applicable to their operations.</p> <p>Businesses should list and provide copies of all relevant documents, which may include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism activity licences</li> <li>• Commercial operator or commercial permit authorisations</li> <li>• Vehicle, vessel or transport operation licences</li> <li>• Agreements from industry associations regarding standards or codes of conduct</li> <li>• Local government approvals</li> </ul>

		<p><i>Note: This is not an exhaustive list. Refer to <a href="#">Appendix 1</a> for a list of common licences.</i></p> <p><b>Franchised businesses</b> must also record the name of the franchise and upload a copy of their franchise agreement.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.2</i> The organisation is in compliance with all applicable local, national and international legislation and regulations.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.8.1</i> Land and water rights and property have been acquired in a legal manner.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.7.1.1</i> Land use is in compliance with zoning requirements.</p>
	<p><b>Compliance</b></p>	<p>If the business serves alcohol as part of its operations, it must hold a current Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) certificate. A copy of the certificate must be uploaded.</p> <p><i>In many States and Territories, a liquor licence is also required when alcohol is included as part of a paid service (e.g., included in a tour ticket, offered during an experience). Businesses must comply with the licensing laws in their jurisdiction.</i></p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.2</i> The organisation complies with all applicable local, national and international legislation and regulations.</p> <hr/> <p>If the business conducts tours within a State or Territory Park, it must hold a valid Tour Operator Licence issued by the relevant parks authority. Businesses must upload a copy of this licence.</p> <p>This requirement applies only to businesses operating within national parks, state parks, conservation areas, or other protected areas.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.2</i> The organisation complies with all applicable local, national and international legislation and regulations.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.7.1.2</i> Land use is in compliance with laws related to protected and sensitive areas and to heritage consideration.</p>

	<p><b>Financial Systems</b></p>	<p>Businesses must have reliable and valid financial systems in place that meet all Australian Taxation Office (ATO) financial reporting requirements.</p> <p>Businesses must agree to comply with these obligations as part of their participation in the Quality Tourism Framework.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.2</i> The organisation complies with all applicable local, national and international legislation and regulations.</p> <hr/> <p>Businesses must demonstrate how they meet their financial reporting obligations, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using a system to record income and expenses</li> <li>• Lodging Business Activity Statements (BAS)</li> <li>• Maintaining employee payroll details (where applicable)</li> <li>• Meeting annual financial reporting requirements</li> <li>• Using accounting software or professional services</li> </ul> <p>The QTF <b>does not require submission of financial statements or financial data</b>, but businesses must describe their processes or upload evidence demonstrating compliance.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.2</i> The organisation complies with all applicable local, national and international legislation and regulations.</p>
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	<b>Adventure Activity Standards</b>	<p>The following section is only applicable to business that operate adventure activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Abseiling</li> <li>- Archery</li> <li>- Artificial Climbing</li> <li>- Bushwalking</li> <li>- Canoeing/Kayaking and Sea Kayaking</li> <li>- Canyoning</li> <li>- Caving</li> <li>- Challenge Ropes Course</li> <li>- Four Wheel Driving</li> <li>- Horse Trail Riding</li> <li>- Mountain Biking</li> <li>- Rafting</li> <li>- Rock Climbing</li> <li>- Recreational Angling</li> <li>- Recreational SCUBA Diving</li> <li>- Snorkelling and Wildlife Swims</li> <li>- Snow Sports</li> <li>- Surfing</li> <li>- Trail Bike Touring</li> </ul> <p>If operating any of the above adventure activities, the business must agree to comply with the relevant Adventure Activity Standards and demonstrate how they comply. See <a href="#">Appendix 2</a>. for more information.</p>
	<b>Verification Permission</b>	Businesses must agree to allow the Accreditation Officer to contact relevant insurance providers for the purpose of verifying the information supplied.

<p><b>Business &amp; Marketing</b></p>	<p><b>Business &amp; Marketing Plans</b></p>	<p>The business must be able to provide evidence or demonstrate they have a business and marketing plan that appropriately reflects the needs of its type and size.</p> <p>This should include, at a minimum, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mission and/or vision statement</li> <li>• Clear business goals</li> <li>• Identification of weaknesses and threats with mitigation strategy</li> <li>• Identification of product differentiation</li> <li>• A clear definition of the target customer and how to attract them</li> <li>• A detailed target market profile</li> <li>• Market positioning strategy</li> <li>• Evidence of market research</li> <li>• Alignment of marketing activities with the target market</li> <li>• Sales forecasts &amp; tracking</li> <li>• Marketing channels</li> </ul> <p>If the business does not wish to upload documents a contents page of the actual document can be uploaded. The full document can be cited at a site visit.</p>
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	<p><b>Online Marketing</b></p>	<p>The business must demonstrate responsible marketing practices by ensuring that all advertising, promotional materials, images, and sustainability-related claims are truthful, transparent, and do not overpromise.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.6.1</i> Promotional materials are accurate with regard to the organisation and its products and services, including sustainability claims.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.6.2</i> Marketing communications are accurate with regard to the organisation and its products and services, including sustainability claims.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.6.3</i> Promotional materials and marketing communications are transparent.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.6.4</i> Promotional materials and marketing communications do not promise more than can be delivered by the organisation.</p> <p>The business must have an online presence such as a website, social media page, or online listing that provides essential information customers need to understand and contact the business.</p> <p>At a minimum, the business’s web presence must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic product or service information</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening hours</li> <li>• Contact details</li> </ul> <p>Additional online content such as high-quality images, videos, links to social media, or customer testimonials is recommended but not required.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.6.3</i> Promotional materials and marketing communications are transparent.</p>
	<p>The business engages with consumer review sites to enhance its online presence, build credibility, and support customer decision-making. Businesses must indicate which review platforms they currently use.</p> <p>Common review sites include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TripAdvisor</li> <li>• Expedia</li> <li>• Booking.com</li> <li>• Airbnb</li> <li>• Facebook</li> <li>• Google Business Profile</li> <li>• Yelp</li> <li>• Other relevant platforms</li> </ul>

		<p>Businesses may select whether they actively encourage reviews during or after the guest experience, or whether they do not actively encourage guest reviews.</p> <p>If the business is active on online review sites, it must have at least one strategy in place to encourage guests to leave reviews.</p> <p><i>Did you know that once you're accredited under the QTF, you can activate your complimentary <a href="#">Shiji ReviewPro Reputation</a> account? This tool lets you easily monitor and respond to online reviews from more than 68 review platforms and OTAs, including Google, Tripadvisor, and Booking.com.</i></p> <p><i>By tracking reviews, guest sentiment, and competitor insights in one place, the platform helps you understand what guests value and where improvements can be made. This gives your team clear, actionable information to strengthen service delivery and enhance the overall guest experience.</i></p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - <b>A.5.2</b> Corrective action is taken where appropriate.</i></p>
		<p>Businesses must provide the URLs for the following online review platforms they use. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TripAdvisor</li> <li>• Google Reviews</li> <li>• Booking.com*</li> </ul> <p>*Booking.com is only applicable to accommodation providers.</p> <p><i>Providing these URLs enables activation of the business's complimentary Shiji ReviewPro Reputation account, available to all Sustainability Accredited Quality Tourism Businesses. These links ensure the platform can gather review data so businesses can monitor feedback and manage their online reputation.</i></p>

	<p><b><i>Continuous Improvement</i></b></p>	<p>The business must demonstrate its commitment to continuous improvement by providing either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An uploaded Continuous Improvement Plan, <b>or</b></li> <li>• A written response outlining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What the business has achieved over the past 12 months</li> <li>○ Planned improvements for the next 12 months</li> <li>○ At least one specific improvement the business intends to implement</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Businesses may choose whether to upload a full plan or provide the required written information directly within the assessment.</p>
<p><b>Human Resources Management</b></p>	<p><b><i>Staff Training</i></b></p>	<p>All staff must be appropriately trained in the following essential areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer service</li> <li>• Emergency evacuation procedures</li> <li>• Safe work practices</li> </ul> <p>Businesses must confirm that this training is in place by uploading evidence or providing a written response outlining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How training is delivered (e.g., in-house training, online modules, external providers)</li> <li>• The frequency of training (e.g., onboarding, annual refreshers)</li> <li>• Who conducts or oversees the training</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How training records are maintained</li> </ul> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - B.7.4</i> Employees are offered regular training, experience and opportunities for advancement.</p>
	<p>At least one staff member must be trained in First Aid and available at all times during business operations.</p> <p>Because this is a legal requirement under Australian workplace health and safety laws, it is a mandatory standard for accreditation.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.1</i> Legal requirements considered include health, safety, labour and environmental aspects.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - B.7.4</i> Employees are offered regular training, experience and opportunities for advancement.</p>
	<p>The business must provide evidence on how they comply with employment legislation including non-discrimination requirements, Fair Work Act 2009, Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012, and provides equal employment opportunities without discrimination by gender, race, religion, disability or other factors.</p> <p><i>GTSC Alignment - A.2.1</i> Legal requirements considered include health, safety, labour and environmental aspects.</p>
<b>Human Resource Manual</b>	<p>The business must have a formal Human Resource (HR) Manual or equivalent documentation that outlines key employment processes and workplace standards.</p> <p>A comprehensive HR Manual should include, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment procedures</li> <li>• Job descriptions</li> <li>• Induction processes</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rostering and staff communication</li> <li>• Dismissal or grievance procedures</li> <li>• Staff training requirements</li> </ul> <p><i>GTSC Alignment - B.2.1</i> Local residents are given equal opportunity for employment.</p> <p><i>GTSC Alignment - B.2.2</i> Local residents are given equal opportunity for advancement.</p> <p><i>GTSC Alignment - B.2.3</i> Local residents are given equal opportunities for employment and advancement, including in management positions.</p> <p><i>GTSC Alignment - B.5.1</i> The organisation has a policy against commercial, sexual or any other form of exploitation and harassment.</p> <p><i>GTSC Alignment - B.5.3</i> The policy is being implemented by the organisation.</p> <p><i>GTSC Alignment - B.6.1</i> The organisation offers equal employment opportunities without discrimination by gender, race, religion, disability or in other ways.</p> <p><i>GTSC Alignment - B.6.2</i> The organisation offers equal employment opportunities in management positions without discrimination by gender, race, religion, disability or in other ways.</p> <p><i>GTSC Alignment - B.7.1</i> Labour rights are respected.</p> <p><i>GTSC Alignment - B.7.2</i> A safe and secure working environment is provided.</p> <p><i>GTSC Alignment - B.7.3</i> Employees are paid at least a living wage.</p> <p><i>GTSC Alignment - B.7.4</i> Employees are offered regular training, experience and opportunities for advancement.</p>
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<p><b>Customer Service</b></p>		<p>The business must have documented customer service procedures that guide staff in delivering professional and consistent service.</p> <p>At a minimum, documented customer service procedures must cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding to customer enquiries</li> <li>• Handling complaints</li> <li>• Managing customer feedback</li> <li>• Applying the cancellation policy</li> <li>• Recording bookings (where relevant)</li> <li>• Greeting and interacting with customers professionally</li> <li>• Assisting customers with special needs</li> </ul> <p>Documentation should also outline how staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to questions</li> <li>• Communicate effectively</li> <li>• Provide inclusive and respectful service</li> </ul> <p>Ongoing staff training related to customer service should be recorded.</p> <p>GSTC Alignment - <b>A.5.2</b> Corrective action is taken where appropriate</p>
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		<p>The business must have a clear and reliable booking process that ensures all bookings are recorded accurately and prevents double bookings.</p> <p>Businesses must provide;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How bookings are recorded</li> <li>• Steps in the booking process from enquiry to confirmation</li> <li>• How double bookings are prevented (e.g., booking system, diary, wall planner, digital calendar, or reservation software)</li> </ul> <p>Documentation or examples of booking tools may be uploaded but are not mandatory.</p>
		<p>The business must provide at least one clear and accessible source of information to help customers locate the business or meeting point.</p> <p>Businesses must outline how they inform customers about how to find them. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting points</li> <li>• Signage</li> <li>• Directional information</li> <li>• Maps or access instructions</li> <li>• Parking information</li> <li>• Designated pick-up or drop-off locations</li> <li>• Staff uniforms (for easy identification)</li> </ul>

		<p>This requirement does <b>not</b> apply to online-only businesses.</p> <p>Businesses may provide a written description or upload supporting evidence.</p>
		<p>The business must consider and, where appropriate, provide for visitors with specific needs that may differ from the general customer base. These needs may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different language needs</li> <li>• Dietary requirements</li> <li>• Family or child-friendly considerations</li> <li>• Pet-friendly options</li> <li>• Other non-disability-specific needs</li> </ul> <p>Businesses must provide a written description or attach evidence outlining how they cater to these needs.</p> <p>At a minimum, the business must have considered whether its product or service is suitable for a wider range of customers and identified any accommodations or support it provides.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.7.4.1</i> Access is provided for persons with special needs, where appropriate.</p>
	<b>Accessibility</b>	<p>The business must consider whether its products and services are accessible to people with disabilities or other access requirements and must outline how it provides (or plans to provide) equitable access and inclusive experiences.</p> <p>Businesses should describe how they support accessible tourism in areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical accessibility</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensory or cognitive accessibility</li> <li>• Communication and information access</li> <li>• Service delivery that enables safe, comfortable, and inclusive participation</li> </ul> <p>If the business is currently unable to provide equal opportunities for the Accessible Tourism market, it must provide a clear and valid explanation. Acceptable explanations may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage, landscape, or structural constraints that legally limit modifications</li> <li>• Being in the early stages of accessibility planning, with identified improvements</li> <li>• Limited resources but demonstrated commitment to future improvements</li> </ul> <p>The business must demonstrate that it has assessed its level of accessibility and how relevant information is communicated to visitors with specific needs.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.7.4.1</i> Access is provided for persons with special needs, where appropriate.</p>
	<p>The business must explain how it makes accessibility information available to customers and ensure that this information is easy to find, clear, and useful for people with specific needs.</p> <p>Businesses should outline how they communicate accessibility features, limitations, or support options.</p> <p><i>Did you know the QTF has the <a href="#">Accessible Tourism Program</a> available to support business development in this space</i></p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.7.4.2</i> Access information is provided for persons with special needs.</p>

		<p>The business must understand and comply with all relevant Australian consumer protection and human rights legislation, including the Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986.</p> <p>This includes operating legally, treating all customers fairly, and meeting obligations relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer rights</li> <li>• Fair trading</li> <li>• Anti-discrimination</li> <li>• Provision of tourism services in an ethical and lawful manner</li> </ul> <p>Compliance with consumer law and human rights legislation is a mandatory requirement for accreditation.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.2</i> The organisation is in compliance with all applicable local, national and international legislation and regulations.</p>
<p><b>Business Operating Systems</b></p>		<p>The business must have a system in place to ensure that tasks are carried out consistently, efficiently, and safely. This may be in the form of an Operations Manual or equivalent documented procedures.</p> <p>At a minimum, the business must have documented processes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening and closing procedures (where applicable)</li> <li>• Receiving payments</li> <li>• Daily and weekly task lists</li> <li>• Booking or reservation procedures</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any other operational policies relevant to the business</li> </ul> <p>These processes may be documented in an operations manual, daily procedures, checklists, or other formal guidelines.</p> <p>Businesses may upload their Operations Manual or provide outline details if documented in another format.</p>
		<p>The business must have documented cleaning and maintenance procedures that comply with relevant legislation and ensure hygiene, safety, and proper operation of facilities and equipment.</p> <p>Businesses must provide a written response (with the option to upload supporting files) outlining their cleaning and maintenance processes.</p> <p>These procedures should confirm compliance with all relevant health, safety, labour, and environmental requirements.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.1</i> Legal requirements considered include health, safety, labour and environmental aspects.</p>
	<b>Food Safety &amp; Ordering</b>	<p>If the business handles, prepares, or serves food to visitors, it must comply with all relevant state and territory food safety laws and regulations.</p> <p>The business must demonstrate that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets applicable food safety requirements</li> <li>Follows state or territory rules for food handling, preparation, and service</li> <li>Holds any required permits or certifications</li> <li>Notified local government (if applicable)</li> <li>Applies safe food practices appropriate to its operations</li> </ul> <p>Compliance with these requirements is mandatory for accreditation.</p>

	<p>GSTC Alignment - <b>A.2.2</b> The organisation is in compliance with all applicable local, national and international legislation and regulations.</p>
	<p>The business must have documented procedures that ensure safe food handling and preparation. These procedures must cover, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storage and thawing</li> <li>• Preparation</li> <li>• Cooling and freezing</li> <li>• Reheating</li> <li>• Displaying and packaging of food on-site</li> <li>• Safe handling during transport (if food is taken off-site)</li> </ul> <p>A written response must outline these processes, with the option to upload supporting documentation.</p>
	<p>The business must have documented procedures for ordering and purchasing food and supplies. These procedures must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Processes for selecting suppliers</li> <li>• Record-keeping to ensure all food remains within its “use by” or “best before” dates</li> <li>• Confirmation that food-related equipment meets Australian standards</li> </ul> <p>A written response must describe these procedures.</p>

	<b>Suppliers</b>	<p>The business must maintain an accessible list of preferred suppliers and contractors that staff can reference when ordering supplies, arranging services, or contacting contractors for maintenance or repairs.</p> <p>This list should be available to staff at all times and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved suppliers</li> <li>• Preferred contractors</li> <li>• Contact details</li> <li>• Service categories (e.g., repairs, maintenance, specialised services)</li> </ul> <p>A written response or uploaded documentation must outline how the business maintains and provides access to this list.</p> <p>Maintaining a preferred supplier list supports consistency, quality standards, and sustainability goals such as local sourcing and responsible purchasing.</p>
		<p>The business must have processes in place to ensure that contractors and suppliers hold the appropriate licences, permits, insurance, and qualifications relevant to the services they provide.</p> <p>This may include (where applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade or professional licences</li> <li>• Relevant permits or accreditations</li> <li>• Public Liability and other required insurance</li> <li>• Appropriate qualifications or certifications</li> </ul>

	<p>Examples of contractors and suppliers may include cleaners, waste disposal providers, plumbers, electricians, caterers, maintenance providers, or activity staff.</p> <p>The business must provide a written description or upload documentation outlining how it verifies and maintains contractor and supplier compliance.</p>
	<p>The business must document its equipment maintenance activities to ensure assets are safe, functional, and well maintained.</p> <p>At a minimum, documentation must be available for maintenance activities undertaken on a weekly, seasonal, or annual basis, or as required.</p> <p>Businesses must outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What maintenance activities are carried out</li> <li>• How often maintenance occurs</li> <li>• Who performs the maintenance (e.g., staff member or contractor)</li> </ul>
	<p>The business must have a documented process that describes how chemicals and substances are stored, handled, used, and disposed of in accordance with their Safety Data Sheets (SDS).</p> <p>These processes must ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe use by staff</li> <li>• Appropriate storage and handling</li> <li>• Controlled access to prevent exposure to customers</li> <li>• Safe disposal in line with regulatory requirements</li> </ul>

		<p>Businesses must provide a written description or upload documentation outlining these procedures.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.2.5.3</i> The storage, use, handling and disposal of chemicals are properly managed.</p>
<p><b>Risk Management</b></p>		<p>The business must have a Risk Management Statement or Risk Management Policy that outlines its approach to identifying, assessing, and managing risks across all areas of operation.</p> <p>The document should demonstrate the business’s commitment to consistent and proactive risk management practices, including consideration of operational, safety, environmental, and reputational risks.</p> <p>If the business does not already have a Risk Management Statement or Policy, it may use the provided template and adapt it to align with its branding and operational context.</p> <p>Businesses must provide a written response or upload their Risk Management Statement or Policy as evidence.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.1.8</i> The Sustainable Management System considers risk and crisis management issues.</p>
		<p>The business must have an Occupational Health &amp; Safety (OHS) Policy that meets the requirements of the relevant State or Territory authority and ensures a safe working environment for staff and contractors.</p> <p>The OHS Policy must outline how the business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a safe system of work</li> <li>• Identifies and manages workplace health and safety risks</li> <li>• Communicates safety expectations to staff and contractors</li> </ul> <p>Where the business employs staff or engages contractors, the OHS Policy must demonstrate compliance with workplace health and safety legislation.</p> <p>If the business does not employ staff or contractors, there is an option to state this.</p>

	<p>Businesses must provide a written description or upload their OHS Policy as evidence.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - B.7.2</i> A safe and secure working environment is provided.</p>
	<p>The business must have a risk and crisis management plan, or supporting documentation, that demonstrates it has identified risks that could affect its operations and has procedures in place for crisis response and business continuity.</p> <p>At a minimum, the business must demonstrate that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risks associated with the business have been identified and assessed</li> <li>• Steps are in place to minimise or manage identified risks</li> <li>• Responsibility for risk management has been clearly assigned</li> <li>• A recovery or contingency plan is in place should an identified risk occur</li> </ul> <p>Risk and crisis management should consider, where relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Environmental risks</b> (e.g. natural disasters)</li> <li>• <b>Social risks</b> (e.g. staffing or community impacts)</li> <li>• <b>Economic risks</b> (e.g. financial or market changes)</li> <li>• <b>Operational risks</b> (e.g. equipment failure or supply chain disruption)</li> </ul> <p>Businesses must provide a written description or supporting documentation outlining how risks are identified, managed, and reviewed, including procedures for crisis response and business continuity.</p>

	<p><i>Did you know the QTF has the <a href="#">Risk Management Business Tool</a> available as a resource to support business development in this space.</i></p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - <b>A.1.8</b> The Sustainable Management System considers risk and crisis management issues.</i></p>
	<p>The business must have documented emergency and evacuation procedures in place to protect the safety of staff, visitors, and contractors.</p> <p>These procedures must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address likely emergency situations relevant to the business</li> <li>• Include clear evacuation processes</li> <li>• Be easily accessible to staff and, where appropriate, customers</li> <li>• Be clearly communicated and understood by all staff</li> </ul> <p>Emergency and evacuation procedures may be documented as part of a broader safety or risk management system and must align with applicable workplace health and safety requirements.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - <b>A.2.1</b> Legal requirements considered include health, safety, labour and environmental aspects.</i></p>
	<p>The business must ensure that clear and visible emergency evacuation information is prominently displayed throughout its premises so that staff, customers, and visitors understand what to do and where to go in the event of an emergency.</p> <p>Emergency evacuation information must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be easy to see and understand</li> <li>• Be located in appropriate areas across the premises</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly outline evacuation procedures and assembly points</li> <li>• Support safe and timely evacuation during emergencies such as fire, gas leaks, natural disasters, or other incidents</li> </ul> <p>This information should complement the business’s documented emergency and evacuation procedures and align with relevant workplace health and safety requirements.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.1</i> Legal requirements considered include health, safety, labour and environmental aspects.</p>
		<p>The business must ensure that emergency fire-fighting appliances and safety equipment are appropriately maintained and kept in good working order.</p> <p>This includes, where applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire extinguishers</li> <li>• Fire blankets</li> <li>• Hose reels</li> <li>• Smoke alarms</li> <li>• Sprinkler or other fixed fire protection systems</li> </ul> <p>Fire safety equipment must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be regularly checked and serviced in line with manufacturer recommendations and relevant regulations</li> <li>• Be maintained by a suitably qualified technician where required</li> <li>• Have records available that demonstrate routine inspection and servicing</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be accessible and suitable for the scale and nature of the business operations</li> </ul> <p>Proper maintenance of fire safety equipment supports the safety of staff, customers, and visitors and forms part of the business’s broader emergency management and workplace safety responsibilities.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.1</i> Legal requirements considered include health, safety, labour and environmental aspects.</p>
	<p>The business must maintain a clear and easily accessible list of emergency contact numbers for staff and guests.</p> <p>The emergency contact list must include, where relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police, fire, and ambulance services</li> <li>• Local emergency services</li> <li>• Building management or site contacts</li> <li>• Key internal emergency contacts</li> </ul> <p>Emergency contact information must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be easy to locate and clearly displayed</li> <li>• Be visible in appropriate locations, such as reception areas, staff spaces, noticeboards, or guest information materials</li> <li>• Be kept up to date so that accurate information can be accessed quickly in an emergency</li> </ul> <p>Providing accessible emergency contact information supports safe and effective responses to incidents and forms part of the business’s overall emergency management and workplace safety practices.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.1</i> Legal requirements considered include health, safety, labour and environmental aspects.</p>

		<p>The business must have a documented incident reporting process, including an incident report form, to record any injury, accident, or incident that occurs in association with its business, products, or services.</p> <p>Incident reporting processes must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable staff to record details of incidents, injuries, or near misses</li> <li>• Support investigation of incidents to identify contributing factors</li> <li>• Help inform corrective actions to reduce the likelihood of similar incidents occurring in the future</li> <li>• Form part of the business’s broader workplace health and safety or risk management system</li> </ul> <p>Incident report forms may be digital or paper-based and should be readily available to staff.</p> <p>Maintaining incident records supports continuous improvement in safety practices and helps businesses meet their legal and duty-of-care obligations.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.1</i> Legal requirements considered include health, safety, labour and environmental aspects.</p>
		<p>The business must have appropriate first aid arrangements in place to respond effectively to injuries or medical incidents involving staff, contractors, or visitors.</p> <p><b>First Aid Equipment</b></p> <p>The business must provide at least one first aid kit that is suitable for the size, nature, and risk profile of its operations.</p> <p>First aid kits must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be appropriate to the types of injuries that may reasonably occur</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be clearly identified and easily accessible</li> <li>• Be available during all operating hours</li> </ul> <p><b>Stocking and Maintenance</b></p> <p>The business must have a clear process to ensure first aid kits are kept complete, current, and ready for use.</p> <p>At a minimum, this process must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular checks to confirm required items are present and in usable condition</li> <li>• Prompt replacement of used, damaged, or expired items</li> <li>• Removal of expired products</li> <li>• A nominated person or role responsible for first aid kit maintenance</li> <li>• A documented stock check conducted at least annually, or more frequently where risk levels are higher</li> </ul> <p>First aid kits must be kept clean, organised, and easy to access in an emergency.</p> <p><b>Ongoing Readiness</b></p> <p>First aid arrangements should be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain appropriate as business operations, staffing levels, or risk exposures change.</p> <p>Maintaining effective first aid management supports timely response to injuries and forms an essential part of the business’s workplace health and safety responsibilities.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.1</i> Legal requirements considered include health, safety, labour and environmental aspects.</p>
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		<p>The business must ensure that at least one person with current first aid training is available during operating hours to respond to injuries or medical incidents.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided of one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having a designated first aider on site, or</li> <li>• Ensuring staff rosters are planned so that a staff member with recognised first aid training is present whenever the business is operating</li> </ul> <p>First aid training must be appropriate to the business’s activities and risks and should be kept current in line with recognised training requirements.</p> <p>Ensuring appropriate first aid training and availability supports the safety of staff, contractors, and visitors and forms an essential part of workplace health and safety management.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.1</i> Legal requirements considered include health, safety, labour and environmental aspects.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - B.7.4</i> Employees are offered regular training, experience and opportunities for advancement.</p>
<p><b>Environmental, Social &amp; Cultural Responsibility</b></p>		<p>The business demonstrates a commitment to reducing its environmental impact by integrating sound environmental practices into its business decisions, policies, and procedures.</p> <p>At a minimum, the business must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take practical steps to minimise negative impacts on the environment</li> <li>• Consider environmental impacts when planning operations and making business decisions</li> <li>• Embed environmental responsibility into day-to-day practices, where appropriate to the scale and nature of the business</li> </ul>

	<p>This commitment recognises that responsible tourism businesses play an important role in protecting natural environments and supporting long-term sustainability outcomes.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.1.3</i> The Sustainable Management System considers environmental issues.</p>
	<p>Where a business operates on parks or protected land, it must demonstrate responsible environmental and cultural management practices that minimise impacts on natural and cultural values.</p> <p>At a minimum, the business must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold appropriate documentation outlining how it minimises both business and guest impacts on the environment and cultural sites</li> <li>• Implement practical measures to reduce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Waste</li> <li>○ Pollution</li> <li>○ Energy use</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Provide conservation, land management, and environmental stewardship messages to guests where appropriate</li> </ul> <p>Where a business delivers information or interpretation relating to Indigenous culture, this content must be developed and shared with the consent of the relevant Indigenous community, ensuring respect for cultural authority, knowledge, and intellectual property.</p> <p>These requirements recognise the importance of protecting parks, culturally significant places, and natural environments for future generations.</p>

		<p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.8.1</i> Land and water rights and property have been acquired legally.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.8.2</i> Where applicable, land and water rights and property have been acquired in compliance with local, communal and indigenous rights, including their free, prior and informed consent.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - C.2.1</i> The organisation contributes to the protection, preservation and enhancement of local properties, sites and traditions of historical, archaeological, cultural and spiritual significance.</p>
	<p><b>Environmental Protection</b></p>	<p>The business is asked whether it measures greenhouse gas emissions or uses a recognised service or tool to calculate its carbon footprint. Measuring emissions is a foundational step in understanding climate impact and enables businesses to make informed decisions to reduce emissions over time.</p> <p>For businesses completing the Sustainable Tourism assessment, it is mandatory to respond to this question; however, it is not mandatory for the response to be “Yes”. Where a business responds “No”, they must provide a justification outlining the reasons.</p> <p><i>Participation in the <a href="#">Tourism Emissions Reduction (TER) Program</a> is a prerequisite for <a href="#">EcoStar Accreditation</a>. The TER Program supports businesses at all stages of their sustainability journey, whether they have not yet measured emissions or already have existing data. It provides a practical and accessible way to calculate a carbon footprint, develop a climate action plan, and communicate emissions reduction initiatives to customers.</i></p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment – D.2.1.2</i> Significant greenhouse gas emissions from all sources controlled by the organisation are calculated where possible.</p>
		<p>The business must demonstrate that it is actively working to improve energy efficiency across its operations. Energy efficiency means achieving the same operational outcomes (such as lighting, heating, cooling, or daily activities) while using less energy overall.</p> <p>The business must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific actions taken to reduce overall energy consumption</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of ongoing improvement, rather than a single past action</li> <li>That energy efficiency is actively considered in how the business operates</li> </ul> <p>The business must provide at least two examples that show continuous effort to improve energy efficiency.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.1.3.2</i> Steps have been taken to minimise overall consumption of energy.</p>
	<p>The business must demonstrate that it actively manages waste generated through its operations, with a clear focus on reducing waste where possible, and reusing or recycling materials when waste cannot be avoided. This includes the handling of general solid waste and food waste, where applicable.</p> <p>The business must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two examples of mechanisms in place to reduce waste, and</li> <li>Two examples of how waste is reused or recycled</li> </ul> <p>These examples should reflect current practices and demonstrate active management, not one-off actions.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.2.4.2</i> Mechanisms are in place to reduce waste.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.2.4.3</i> Waste is reused or recycled.</p>
	<p>The business must demonstrate that it actively manages visitor activities to minimise negative impacts on plants (flora) and animals (fauna) within the areas it operates. This includes both direct impacts caused by physical interaction and indirect impacts that result from visitor presence over time.</p> <p>The purpose of this requirement is to ensure businesses take proactive steps to protect natural environments while still allowing visitors to enjoy them responsibly.</p> <p>The business must demonstrate:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two examples of proactive strategies that minimise direct impacts on flora and fauna, and</li> <li>• Two examples of proactive strategies that minimise indirect impacts resulting from visitor presence</li> </ul> <p>Responses should reflect current, active practices and demonstrate deliberate management rather than passive or incidental actions.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.3.3.1</i> The organisation follows appropriate guidelines for the management and promotion of visits to natural sites in order to minimise adverse impacts and maximise visitor fulfilment.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.3.4.1</i> Interactions with free roaming wildlife, taking into account cumulative impacts, are non-invasive and responsibly managed to avoid adverse effects on the animals concerned and on the viability and behaviour of populations in the wild.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.3.1.4</i> Any disturbance of natural ecosystems is minimised.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.3.1.2</i> The organisation manages its own property appropriately in order to support and contribute to biodiversity conservation.</p>
	<p>If applicable, the business may demonstrate whether it has installed or uses on-site infrastructure or built systems that help produce, capture, or recover resources, reducing reliance on external inputs and supporting improved overall resource efficiency.</p> <p>This may include infrastructure that supports renewable energy generation, water capture, reuse or treatment, waste recovery or diversion, and on-site resource or food production.</p>
	<p>The business must have a clear approach to responding to environmental incidents or emergencies that could cause environmental harm. This means the business can identify likely environmental risks linked to its operations (e.g., spills, leaks, erosion, wildlife disturbance, fire, flooding) and has practical response steps in place to prevent or minimise damage if an incident occurs.</p>

		<p>This may be documented as a simple contingency plan, procedures, or operational guidelines, and can be provided as a written response and/or supporting documentation.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.7.1.2</i> Land use is in compliance with laws related to protected and sensitive areas and to heritage considerations</p>
		<p>Where a business operates tours or transport as part of its operations, it must demonstrate that it actively works to minimise the use of resources and reduce environmental impacts associated with those activities. This includes how tours or transport are planned, delivered, and managed to use fewer resources and cause less environmental harm.</p> <p>At a minimum, the business must provide two examples of strategies it has implemented to reduce environmental impacts from tour or transport operations. These strategies should show ongoing operational practices rather than one-off actions.</p> <p>If the business doesn't operate tours or transport as part of their operations may select <b>N/A</b>.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.2.2.1</i> The organisation seeks to reduce transportation requirements in its own operations.</p>
		<p>Where a business operates swimming pools or spas, it must identify and implement actions and systems that minimise water use, reduce energy consumption, and limit environmental impacts associated with pool or spa operations. This includes considerations such as water sourcing, heating methods, evaporation control, and overall efficiency measures.</p> <p>Businesses may select from the following options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of recycled water or rainwater for topping up pools or spas</li> <li>• Installation of thermal pool or spa covers to reduce evaporation and heat loss</li> <li>• Use of energy-efficient or LED lighting in pool or spa areas</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of solar power or other renewable energy sources for heating</li> </ul> <p>If the business doesn't operate with swimming pools or spas as part of their operations may select <b>N/A</b>.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.1.4.3</i> Steps are taken to minimise overall consumption of water.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.1.3.2</i> Steps have been taken to minimise overall consumption of energy.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.1.2.1</i> The organisation carefully manages the purchasing of consumable and disposable goods, in order to minimise waste.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.1.3.3</i> The organisation makes efforts to increase its use of renewable energy.</p>
	<p><b>Social Responsibility</b></p>	<p>The business must demonstrate that it prioritises the use of local suppliers for goods and services where they are available and suitable.</p> <p>If local suppliers are not used, the business must provide a clear and reasonable explanation.</p> <p>Where local suppliers are used, the business must identify which aspects of its operations source locally and provide examples. The focus must be on the location of supplier business operations rather than personal or cultural background.</p> <p>Using local suppliers is a mandatory requirement. If local suppliers are not used, a valid reason must be provided.</p> <p><b>Definition of "local":</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suppliers with business operations based locally, from the same town, region, state, or within Australia.</li> <li>• Focus is on location of operations, not cultural or ethnic background.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid assumptions or judgments based on personal identity, assess based on business location and relevance.</li> </ul> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - B.3.1</i> When purchasing and offering goods and services, the organisation gives priority to local suppliers whenever these are available and of sufficient quality.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - B.4.2</i> The organisation supports local entrepreneurs in the sale of sustainable products and services that are based on the area’s nature, history and culture.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - C.3.1</i> The organisation values and incorporates authentic elements of traditional and contemporary local culture in its operations, design, decoration, cuisine, or shops.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.7.3.1</i> Planning, siting, design, construction, renovation, operation, and demolition of buildings and infrastructure are based on locally appropriate practices and materials.</p>
		<p>The business should demonstrate that it provides employment opportunities to people who live in or near the area where it operates, supporting the local economy and community. The intent of this criterion is to encourage local hiring where feasible, while recognising that workforce availability varies by location, seasonality, and business type.</p> <p>This standard focuses on place of residence, not nationality, ethnicity, cultural background, or citizenship status.</p> <p><i>Is the majority of staff employed from the local area where your business operates?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If Yes, the business will be asked to provide further detail on local employment.</li> <li>• If No, the business must provide a brief explanation outlining the reasons.</li> </ul> <p><b>What does “local area” mean in this context?</b></p> <p>In Australia, “local area” refers to people who live in or near the business location, such as the same town, city, region, or state. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent residents or citizens living locally</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Migrants, refugees, or international workers who are based in the local area</li> <li>• Staff working remotely who reside in the same region or state</li> </ul> <p>“Local” does <b>not</b> refer to cultural background, ethnicity, or personal identity.</p> <p><b>How is “majority” assessed?</b></p> <p>To meet the expectation of “majority,” <b>more than 50% of staff</b> should be based in the local area. Percentages should be plausible and align with the business size, structure, and location. Where the percentage is close to 50%, assessors will consider whether the business demonstrates a clear understanding of its workforce and genuine intent.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - B.2.1</i> Local residents are given equal opportunity for employment.</p>
		<p>The business must provide two clear examples of how it gives back to, supports, or strengthens the local community in ways that respect its cultural significance and values. Examples should demonstrate intentional or ongoing actions, rather than one-off, incidental, or purely promotional activities.</p> <p>Responses should show genuine engagement with the community, such as supporting local initiatives, encouraging staff involvement, partnering with local organisations, or respectfully recognising and celebrating local cultural heritage.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment – C.1.1.</i> The organisation follows international and national good practice for the management and promotion of visits to indigenous communities and culturally or historically sensitive sites in order to minimise adverse impacts and maximise local benefits and visitor fulfilment.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment – A.1.4</i> The SMS considers social and cultural issues.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment – B.1.1</i> The organisation actively supports initiatives for local infrastructure and social community development</p>
	<b>Cultural Protection</b>	<p>The business must demonstrate how it minimises visitor impacts on cultural sites and landscapes, and how visitor experiences are managed in ways that protect, respect, and do not harm cultural heritage.</p>

		<p>To meet this requirement, the business must provide a written response describing how it manages visitor experiences to protect cultural sites and landscapes, ensuring these experiences benefit rather than negatively impact cultural heritage.</p> <p>If the business does not operate on or near cultural sites or culturally significant landscapes, it may select <b>N/A</b>.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - C.1.2</i> The organisation follows locally agreed guidance for the management and promotion of visits to indigenous communities and culturally or historically sensitive sites in order to minimise adverse impacts and maximise local benefits and visitor fulfilment.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.7.2.2</i> Planning, siting, design, construction, renovation, operation, and demolition of buildings and infrastructure take account of the integrity of the natural and cultural surroundings.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - C.2.1</i> The organisation contributes to the protection, preservation and enhancement of local properties, sites and traditions of historical, archaeological, cultural and spiritual significance.</p>
	<p><b>Environmental &amp; Cultural Understanding</b></p>	<p>The business must have a system in place to ensure that visitors are clearly informed about appropriate behaviour in natural environments and cultural heritage settings. This includes communicating conservation principles, land management practices, and cultural respect in a way that helps minimise negative impacts and supports the protection of natural landscapes, biodiversity, and cultural heritage.</p> <p>The business must provide a written explanation of how it communicates these expectations to visitors. This may include signage, staff briefings, guided interpretation, pre-visit information, on-site messaging, or digital communications. The approach should demonstrate that visitor behaviour guidance is intentional, accurate, and integrated into the visitor experience, rather than informal or ad hoc.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - D.3.1.1</i> The organisation supports and contributes to biodiversity conservation.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.6.2</i> Marketing communications are accurate with regard to the organisation and its products and services, including sustainability claims.</p>

		<p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.9.2</i> Interpretation of the natural surroundings, local culture, and cultural heritage is provided to customers.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.9.3</i> An explanation is given of appropriate behaviour while visiting natural areas, living cultures, and cultural heritage sites.</p>
		<p>The business must have a considered and respectful approach to communicating information about Indigenous culture, heritage, and traditions to customers, staff, and visitors. This includes ensuring that Indigenous cultural messages are accurate, authentic, and delivered in ways that are respectful and appropriate.</p> <p>A written explanation is required of how it educates people about Indigenous culture.</p> <p>The approach should demonstrate respect for traditional ownership, cultural significance, and living culture, and aim to foster understanding rather than stereotype, commodify, or misrepresent Indigenous knowledge. There is no single “right” method; assessors will look for intent, care, and cultural awareness rather than perfection.</p> <p>Businesses that are early in their journey may describe how they are learning, consulting, or using recognised resources to improve their approach over time.</p> <p><b>Important note:</b> There is no right or wrong answer to this question.</p> <p><i>The QTF has a <a href="#">Connecting to Culture Toolkit</a> available as a resource to support your journey in this space</i></p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - C.3.1</i> The organisation values and incorporates authentic elements of traditional and contemporary local culture in its operations, design, decoration, cuisine, or shops.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.9.2</i> Interpretation of the natural surroundings, local culture, and cultural heritage is provided to customers</p>

		<p>The business must indicate whether it engages with local Indigenous groups. Where engagement exists, this may include activities such as consultation, partnerships, employment opportunities, cultural collaboration, participation in community initiatives, or other actions that support respectful, ongoing relationships.</p> <p>Engagement does not need to be formal or extensive, but it should show intent, respect, and awareness of local Indigenous communities.</p> <p>Where the business does not currently engage, this does not automatically disadvantage the application.</p> <p><b>Important note:</b> There is no right or wrong answer to this question. The QTF recognises that Indigenous engagement looks different for every business depending on your location, the presence of local Indigenous communities, existing relationships, and the nature of your operations. Some businesses may have deep, long-standing partnerships, while others may be at the beginning of their engagement journey or operate in areas where Indigenous community connections are still being established.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - C.1.1</i> The organisation follows international and national good practice for the management and promotion of visits to indigenous communities and culturally or historically sensitive sites in order to minimise adverse impacts and maximise local benefits and visitor fulfilment.</p>
		<p>If the business has selected that it engages with local Indigenous groups, a written response describing how it engages with local Indigenous communities is required. This engagement should go beyond acknowledgement and demonstrate practical involvement that supports Indigenous voices, culture, and self-determination.</p> <p>Engagement may include, where appropriate, consultation, partnerships, employment opportunities, procurement, cultural collaboration, or other forms of support that reflect mutual respect and ongoing relationship building. The nature and scale of engagement should be appropriate to the business’s location, operations, and stage of its engagement journey.</p> <p>Engagement should demonstrate awareness of Indigenous rights, including respect for land, water, and cultural heritage, and should align with the principles of free, prior, and informed consent where applicable. While businesses are not expected to have formal partnerships in all cases, they should show intent, effort, and respect in how they interact with Indigenous communities connected to the area in which they operate.</p>

	<p><b>Important note:</b> There is no right or wrong answer to this question. The QTF recognises that Indigenous engagement looks different for every business depending on your location, the presence of local Indigenous communities, existing relationships, and the nature of your operations. Some businesses may have deep, long-standing partnerships, while others may be at the beginning of their engagement journey or operate in areas where Indigenous community connections are still being established.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.8.2</i> Where applicable, land and water rights and property have been acquired in compliance with local, communal and indigenous rights, including their free, prior and informed consent.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - C.1.2</i> The organisation follows locally agreed guidance for the management and promotion of visits to indigenous communities and culturally or historically sensitive sites in order to minimise adverse impacts and maximise local benefits and visitor fulfilment.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - C.1.1</i> The organisation follows international and national good practice for the management and promotion of visits to indigenous communities and culturally or historically sensitive sites in order to minimise adverse impacts and maximise local benefits and visitor fulfilment.</p>
	<p>The business must demonstrate how it works with local Indigenous communities in ways that provide meaningful support, involve community members where appropriate, and respect Indigenous culture, knowledge, and traditions.</p> <p>The business must provide a written response explaining how its activities actively engage Indigenous communities and deliver tangible benefits. This may include, where appropriate, collaboration, consultation, employment or training opportunities, procurement, cultural partnerships, or other forms of practical support that reflect mutual respect and shared value.</p> <p>Engagement should demonstrate that Indigenous voices have genuine influence in how the business operates on or relates to traditional lands, and that cultural practices and traditions are respected and upheld. This goes beyond acknowledgement and should reflect intent, effort, and ongoing relationship building, appropriate to the business's location, operations, and stage of engagement.</p> <p><b>Important note:</b> There is no right or wrong answer to this question.</p>

		<p><i>GSTC Alignment - C.1.2</i> The organisation follows locally agreed guidance for the management and promotion of visits to indigenous communities and culturally or historically sensitive sites in order to minimise adverse impacts and maximise local benefits and visitor fulfilment.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.8.2</i> Where applicable, land and water rights and property have been acquired in compliance with local, communal and indigenous rights, including their free, prior and informed consent.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - C.1.1</i> The organisation follows international and national good practice for the management and promotion of visits to indigenous communities and culturally or historically sensitive sites in order to minimise adverse impacts and maximise local benefits and visitor fulfilment.</p>
		<p>The business must agree it complies with all relevant legal requirements for accessing Aboriginal or Indigenous lands where entry permits or permissions are required under applicable state, territory, or Commonwealth legislation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Western Australia:</b> Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972</li> <li>• <b>Northern Territory:</b> Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Commonwealth)</li> <li>• <b>Queensland:</b> Aboriginal Land Act 1991</li> <li>• <b>South Australia:</b> Aboriginal Lands Trust Act 2013</li> <li>• <b>New South Wales:</b> Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983</li> <li>• <b>Victoria, Tasmania, ACT:</b> Various local arrangements and native title considerations</li> </ul> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.7.1.2</i> Land use is in compliance with laws related to protected and sensitive areas and to heritage considerations.</p> <p><i>GSTC Alignment - A.2.1</i> Legal requirements considered include health, safety, labour and environmental aspects.</p>

<p><b>Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW)</b></p>	<p>The business must demonstrate awareness of the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) and its role as Australia’s national tourism content platform.</p> <p>Listing on ATDW is not a compulsory national requirement for accreditation. However, some state and territory tourism organisations require an ATDW listing for businesses seeking visibility on official tourism websites (such as <i>trustthetick.com.au</i> or state tourism platforms).</p> <p>Where the business is eligible, it is strongly encouraged to maintain an active ATDW listing through its relevant State or Territory Tourism Organisation. An ATDW listing supports consistent, accurate destination marketing and improves the visibility and distribution of tourism products across national, state, and regional channels.</p> <p>If the business has an ATDW listing, it should ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The listing information is accurate and current, and</li> <li>• The listing is reviewed and updated at least every 12 months.</li> </ul> <p>If the business is not listed on ATDW, this does not affect eligibility for accreditation; however, the business should demonstrate awareness of ATDW and its relevance to tourism marketing within Australia.</p>
<p><b>Terms and Conditions</b></p>	<p>The business must formally agree to comply with the Quality Tourism Framework (QTF) Licence Agreement and Declaration and the QTF Code of Practice as a mandatory condition of accreditation.</p> <p>By agreeing to these terms, the business confirms that it understands and accepts its responsibilities under the Quality Tourism Framework, including operating in accordance with the framework’s standards, ethical requirements, and ongoing compliance obligations.</p> <p>Agreement to both the Licence Agreement and Declaration and the Code of Practice is compulsory. Accreditation cannot be granted or maintained unless the business confirms its acceptance of, and commitment to, these requirements.</p>

## Appendix 1. Licences and Permits

Below is a list of the typical licences and permits required to operate various sectors within the Australian tourism industry. Please note that requirements can vary by state, territory, and local council, so it's essential to consult the relevant authorities for specific regulations in your area.

For detailed information tailored to a specific business and location, the Australian Business Licence and Information Service (ABLIS) is an excellent resource. It provides a comprehensive database of licences, permits, and regulations applicable across different states and territories.

### 1. Accommodation Providers

**Examples:** Hotels, motels, bed & breakfasts, hostels, caravan parks, short-term rentals (e.g., Airbnb).

**Common Licences & Permits:**

- **Business Registration:** Register business name with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC).
- **Development and Planning Approvals:** Obtain necessary approvals from local councils for building or renovating premises.
- **Health and Safety Compliance:** Ensure compliance with state or territory health regulations, including fire safety and sanitation standards.
- **Food Business Licence:** Required if providing meals to guests.
- **Liquor Licence:** Necessary if serving alcohol on the premises.
- **Signage Permits:** For displaying business signs externally.
- **Waste Disposal Permits:** Adhere to local regulations for waste management.
- **Short-Term Rental Registration:** In some states, like New South Wales, short-term rental accommodations must be registered

## 2. Tour and Transport Operators

**Examples:** Guided tours, adventure tours, wildlife tours, bus charters, boat cruises.

**Common Licences & Permits:**

- **Tour Operator Licence:** Required in some states for conducting commercial tours, especially on public land.
- **Driver Accreditation:** For drivers transporting passengers commercially.
- **Vehicle Registration and Inspection:** Commercial vehicles must meet specific safety standards.
- **Marine Safety Certification:** For operators of boats and other watercraft.
- **Public Liability Insurance:** To cover potential claims from customers.
- **National Parks Permits:** If tours enter national parks or protected areas.
- **Wildlife Interaction Permits:** For activities like whale watching or wildlife feeding.
- **Fishing Tour Operator's Licence:** Required in some states for fishing tours.

## 3. Event Organisers

**Examples:** Festivals, conferences, exhibitions, sporting events.

**Common Licences & Permits:**

- **Event Permit:** Issued by local councils for public events.
- **Temporary Food Stall Licence:** For vendors selling food at events.
- **Liquor Licence:** If alcohol is served.
- **Noise Permit:** Required if the event exceeds standard noise levels.
- **Public Liability Insurance:** Mandatory for most public events.

- **Traffic Management Plan:** For events impacting local traffic.
- **Waste Management Plan:** Outlining how waste will be handled during and after the event.

#### 4. Attractions and Activities

**Examples:** Theme parks, museums, zoos, adventure parks.

**Common Licences & Permits:**

- **Business Registration:** Register your business name with ASIC.
- **Development Approvals:** For constructing or modifying facilities.
- **Health and Safety Compliance:** Adhere to regulations ensuring visitor safety.
- **Animal Welfare Licences:** For attractions involving animals.
- **Food Business Licence:** If offering food services.
- **Liquor Licence:** If serving alcohol.
- **Signage Permits:** For external business signs.
- **Waste Disposal Permits:** Compliance with local waste management regulations.

#### 5. Travel Agents and Booking Services

**Examples:** Travel agencies, online booking platforms.

**Common Licences & Permits:**

- **Business Registration:** Register your business name with ASIC.
- **Australian Consumer Law Compliance:** Ensure all services comply with consumer protection laws.

- **Trust Account Requirements:** Manage client funds appropriately, as required by law.
- **Professional Indemnity Insurance:** To protect against claims of professional negligence.
- **Membership with Industry Bodies:** Optional but can enhance credibility (e.g., Australian Federation of Travel Agents).

### Additional Considerations Across All Sectors

- **Work Health and Safety (WHS):** Comply with national and state-specific WHS regulations to ensure the safety of employees and customers.
- **Environmental Regulations:** Adhere to laws protecting natural and cultural heritage sites.
- **Employment Laws:** Understand obligations under the Fair Work Act, including employee rights and employer responsibilities.
- **Insurance:** Consider additional insurance types such as property, vehicle, and business interruption insurance.

### Appendix 2. Adventure Activity Standards

The **Australian Adventure Activity Standards (AAAS)** and their accompanying **Good Practice Guides (GPGs)** are national, voluntary guidelines that set out best practice for safely conducting outdoor adventure activities involving groups. They aim to support organisations, schools, community groups, and operators by providing clear, consistent advice on how to plan and deliver activities such as bushwalking, paddling, climbing, cycling, surfing, and more. While not legally enforceable, the standards are widely recognised across Australia and often used as a benchmark by insurers, regulators, and courts in assessing duty of care and risk management.

The core AAAS document outlines general principles covering all activities, such as leader competence, risk and emergency management, planning, environmental sustainability, and cultural respect. Each GPG then provides detailed, activity-specific guidance, including supervision ratios, equipment requirements, and conditions under which the activity can be safely delivered. The standards encourage safe, inclusive, and environmentally responsible participation in outdoor activities, helping operators to minimise risks and improve participant experiences while demonstrating professionalism and preparedness.

For more info go here - <https://australianaas.org.au/>