



A Guide to the
Star Grading Scheme

**SERVICED HOTEL
ACCOMMODATION**

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1.0 General Introduction

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Common Standards Across Britain

Following an extensive quality review involving all of the common standards partners, a new set of hotel criteria has been developed which places more emphasis on quality rather than facilities to determine the star rating of your property.

Visit Wales will now use these new common standard requirements to determine the Star rating for your establishment. Your rating will be the same whether you choose Visit Wales or the AA to carry out your assessment. You can of course choose to be assessed by more than one organisation and each organisation will award you the same star rating and designator. Additional marketing awards for food, comfort and service e.g. the Visit Wales Gold award however are not part of this agreement.

1.1.2 The Requirements

We have based the requirements for the star ratings on the existing standards of all the organisations. We have also consulted with the hospitality industry. The feedback we received from the industry shows strong support for a common quality standard for serviced accommodation throughout the countries where we operate the schemes. Our aim for this revised common quality standard is to work continually with the industry and to strive together to raise quality standards in line with the ever-evolving expectations of consumers.

1.1.3 Dispensations

Dispensations for certain individual requirements within the quality standards may be given as long as all the remaining requirements and quality levels for that rating are met or exceeded. This flexibility will be on a case-by-case basis. Any exceptions will need a proportional increase in quality in other areas to compensate for the area where an exception is sought.

1.1.4 How Does The Assessment System Work?

Briefly, there are three elements to the process.

Step 1 – The Visit Wales Quality Advisor (QA) quality scores the whole business.

Step 2 – The QA then checks that certain elements of the business meets what are called ‘Sectional Qualifiers’ in terms of quality.

Step 3 – Finally, the QA checks that facility and service requirements, appropriate to the Star rating, are present and available.

Step 1

The visit begins with our Quality Advisor carrying out an objective, qualitative assessment of every aspect of your business from the condition of the building itself, the furniture, furnishings etc. to the services offered to the guests. Essentially, a numerical score is given to every aspect assessed and that score equates to a quality level description. A scale of 1 to 5 is used, so if something is of an Excellent quality, it gets 5 points; if it’s considered to be Acceptable a score of 1 is given. In order to remove any bias, our Quality Advisors are trained and follow set guidelines. The different points value signifies ascending levels of quality, like this:

- Excellent quality – 5 points
- Very good quality – 4 points
- Good quality – 3 points
- Quite Good quality – 2 points
- Acceptable quality – 1 point

Once the report form is complete and scores have been allocated, they are totalled, and a percentage score for the quality of the whole business is calculated. By looking at the star banding percentage range, the Quality Advisor gets an indication at this stage of what the overall Star rating might be.

Star Rating	Entry Level Percentages
★	30 – 46%
★★	47 – 54%
★★★	55 – 69%
★★★★	70 – 84%
★★★★★	85 – 100%

However, before the final result is determined, there are two further steps.

Step 2

The QA must now check for consistency of quality, using what we refer to as ‘Sectional Qualifiers’. The purpose of this approach is to

ensure that one aspect of the business has not been scoring high marks, driven up the overall percentage mark into the next Star rating level giving a false impression to the guest of the overall quality. Research has shown to us that the quality of certain areas within a hotel are particularly important to guests. If these aspects fall below guests' expectations at any given Star rating, they are likely to be disappointed customers. It is therefore very important that the quality of these critical areas match the overall grade of the business.

The key areas are Cleanliness, Hospitality, Service, Bedrooms, Bathrooms and Food and scores achieved in these areas are used to confirm the final Star rating. Each one of these Qualifying areas has a minimum percentage score at each level but if the minimum score for 1 Star is not reached then no Star rating will be given.

Below are the minimum percentage score at each level.

Star Rating	★	★★	★ ★★	★★ ★★	★★ ★★★
Cleanliness	40	50	65	75	90
Hospitality	30	47	55	70	85
Service	30	47	55	70	85
Bedrooms	30	47	55	70	85
Bathrooms	30	47	55	70	85
Food	30	47	55	70	85

Step 3

Finally, a check must be made to ensure that any additional facilities/services required at each particular level are present and available, as well as those required at all preceding Star levels.

Why is Quality Important

Visit Wales understands that quality is the key to success in the hospitality industry. In order to perpetuate Wales's international reputation for providing a friendly and warm welcome to visitors, it's crucial that we continue to support tourism businesses to remain competitive and improve their product offering; the Quality Assurance scheme is designed to help businesses do just that.

Quality never goes out of style – your stars of excellence help visitors make informed decisions, give confidence in the level of service and quality you deliver and enable your business to truly shine with distinction.

A considerable number of tourism operators in Wales already take part in the scheme. These

businesses receive impartial and expert advice to inform their investment decisions – driving-up quality and creating jobs.

When assessing quality, Visit Wales takes into account the following:

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

Service and Hospitality

A smile, a warm and genuine interest and a willingness to please and serve customers is a common requirement and expected across all star ratings.

A small hotel might be able to provide excellent hospitality and friendly, efficient service with a very small number of staff. Larger hotels will require a team of well-trained staff, and this presents a different challenge.

At four star level it is expected that staff will be highly trained and skilled, anticipating the needs of their guests and providing an efficient service in all areas, with hospitality to match.

Five star hotels in Wales should offer a level of service and hospitality excellence that would be universally recognised as five stars by visitors from around the world.

Bedrooms and Bathrooms

Whatever the style or concept of the bedrooms and bathrooms, both quality and comfort is what guests and our assessors look for, specifically:

- The quality and comfort of the bed.
- The quality of the bed linen.
- The controllability and usability of the lighting and heating systems.
- The quality of bathroom fittings, towels and toiletries.
- In-room technology and connectivity.

Cleanliness

Cleanliness is of paramount importance to all customers at all star levels. It is expected that all hotels will be clean in both front and back of house.

Sense of Place

Whilst quality never goes out of style, adding a Sense of Place to the visitor experience will go a long way to make their stay a truly memorable one.

It can be something simple, like adding signage, a product, or a feature to your business to add a touch of local flavour. Or discover some interesting information about your area that adds to your regional knowledge, and pass it on to your visitors. A simple 'croeso' also makes a delightfully distinctive first impression.

We've pulled together an overview on the Wales brand and some guidance on our sense of place. Hopefully these tools will provide you with some ideas on how to create an unforgettable visitor experience.

Visit <https://businesswales.gov.wales/tourism/other-useful-links> for further information.

Food and Drink

Food and drink go hand in hand with hospitality and tourism in Wales. More and more food is an important influence on people's decision to visit Wales. Visitors are more discerning now and take an interest in where their food comes from and what happens on its journey to their plate.

Combine quality seasonal food and local ingredients, interesting places to eat and stay, and some of the world's best chefs, and you define the hospitality sector in Wales with its deserved reputation for excellence.

To help businesses develop their food offer we've developed some simple to use toolkits.

The Food Tourism Toolkit – Hints, tips, sample menus and best practice that will be useful to your business.

The Welsh Breakfast Toolkit – More hints and tips on offering a great Welsh breakfast with sample menus.

Visit <https://businesswales.gov.wales/tourism/other-useful-links> for more information.

1.2 Category

1.2.1 Hotel

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

1.2.2 General Description

A commercial establishment providing a minimum of five letting bedrooms and serving breakfast. The establishment may have a license to serve alcohol. Where no meal service is offered this will be made clear to the consumer at the time of the booking and clearly advertised on the web site and a range of quality places to eat and drink must be within easy walking distance.

1.3 Determining the Star Rating

A hotel will need to satisfy three elements to reach a particular star rating:

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

There are nine key areas of assessment. The six most critical areas are:

- Cleanliness
- Hospitality & Friendliness
- Service & Efficiency
- Bedrooms
- Bathrooms
- Food Quality

The star rating level across all of these six areas must be met in order to achieve a particular star rating. The remaining three areas are: exterior, public areas, dining room/restaurants. Where additional facilities are provided e.g. spa, these will also be assessed.

2.0 Detailed Requirements

2.1 Overall Standards

2.1.1 Statutory Obligations

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star) All Grades

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

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

- Fire risk assessment: to comply with the Fire Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Food safety/hygiene.
- Health and safety: operate safely with due regard to health and safety legislation.
- Planning: comply with local planning regulations.
- Licensing: comply with all local licensing regulations.
- Hotel Proprietors Act.
- Data Protection Act/General Data Protection Regulations (from May 2018).
- The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.
- Equality Act 2010.

2.1.2 Safety and Security

One Star

- Proprietor and/or staff to be on site and on call to resident guests 24-hours a day. Printed instructions, provided in the bedrooms, for summoning assistance during an emergency at night. If the proprietor lives away from the hotel, it is expected that a member of management or staff sleep on site and that their night-time contact details are clearly advertised in every bedroom.
- A high degree of general safety and security, including information on evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency, to be advertised in every bedroom. Multilingual emergency procedure notices or use of symbols/diagrams clearly displayed in every bedroom.
- Particular attention given to the safety and security of guests and their belongings in car

parks, ground floor and annexe bedrooms including external paths and walkways.

- Once registered guests should have access to the hotel at all times.
- In the interests of safety, guests to be escorted to bedrooms if requested.
- The hotel entrance should be clearly identifiable and the doorway illuminated when it is dark. Adequate levels of lighting for safety and comfort in all public areas, including sufficient light on stairways and landings at night.
- A telephone accessible 24 hours a day, unless direct dial telephones provided in each bedroom.
- Adequate measures for the security of guests and their property. Means of securing bedroom doors from inside and out, and a key or key card provided. The issuing of a bedroom key to guests and charging of items to account always done discreetly to ensure guest security.
- Security fittings installed on any window which could be left open and access gained from outside, e.g. windows near fire escapes.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- As minimum.

Sustainability Good Practice

- Use of energy efficient light bulbs and fittings, combined with appropriate controls to ensure lights are not on unnecessarily, can significantly reduce cost. Daylight sensors (photo cells), motion sensors (PIR) and timers can be used on external lighting. Lighting in public areas and corridors can be controlled with motion sensors and timers, for example. External lighting can usually be reduced after midnight, especially where it is decorative.
- Always make sure to maintain minimum light levels so as not to compromise health and safety standards.
- Many businesses can achieve additional savings by using light-emitting diode (LED) or luminescent Exit signs.

2.1.3 Maintenance

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

All Grades

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- As minimum.

Sustainability Good Practice

- Ensure equipment, such as boilers, refrigeration and extract ventilation and grease traps in kitchens, is properly maintained and regularly cleaned and serviced, so it operates efficiently and its life is prolonged. Establishing a simple equipment and maintenance schedule will save on energy and costs.
- Having staff undertake scheduled walk rounds throughout the premises at different times of day with a checklist, can be an excellent opportunity to note down any maintenance issues and get an idea of where energy might be wasted through lights and equipment being left on.
- Refrigeration can be a significant energy user in hotels and following some simple advice can deliver big energy savings: ensure door seals are checked and replaced if damaged; condensers and evaporator coils are free from dust; strip curtains are fitted to walk-in fridges and freezers and freezers are regularly defrosted. Make sure staff are trained to switch off lights in cooled spaces; do not keep doors open for longer than absolutely necessary; do not overfill units.
- Record and understand your energy consumption. Take meter readings once

- a month and check against your invoices to ensure accurate billing. Relating your energy consumption data to other measures, for example calculating energy consumption per bed night, can provide even more useful information. This will give you a better understanding of how energy is being used, help you to track benefits of energy saving measures implemented and identify any unusual changes. Automatic meter-reading systems are available and are a cost-effective and simple way to collect detailed energy data.
- If you are on a water meter, monitoring your water consumption regularly will help you manage usage and cost and identify any leaks quickly.
- Knowing what type and amount of waste is being produced and in what part of the business, can help target areas for reducing waste. Work with your waste contractor to ensure you receive detailed information on the amount of waste that is being recycled, going to landfill, or that is processed otherwise. This will allow you to set and monitor targets to increase recycling and reduce waste generated overall.
- Share results from monitoring with staff to get them involved and keep them engaged in efforts to save energy and water and reduce waste.

2.1.4 Cleanliness

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

All Grades

A high standard of cleanliness maintained throughout the property.

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

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

- Bedding, linen and towels.
- Baths, showers, washbasins and WCs.
- Flooring and seating.
- Crockery, cutlery and glassware.
- All bathrooms and shower rooms cleaned daily and checked to ensure very high standards of cleanliness.
- Bathrooms and shower rooms clean and fresh smelling. Particular attention paid to

WCs, plug-holes, shower curtains, mirrors and extractor fans.

- All walls, ceilings, pipes, ledges, equipment and fittings, which are beyond reach from floor level, cleaned on a regular basis. All flat surfaces, equipment and furniture free from dust, dirt, grease and marks.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- Excellent standards of housekeeping.

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Ensure that all relevant staff are appropriately trained on usage and dosing of cleaning chemicals. Encourage staff to reduce energy and water used when cleaning rooms, for example by only flushing the toilet once when finished cleaning, turning lights and entertainment equipment off and adjusting heating controls.
- Consider using environmentally friendly and chlorine-free cleaning products, such as microfibre cloths that reduce the amount of cleaning liquid required.
- Regular cleaning and maintenance of all fixtures, fittings, materials and equipment prolongs their life, reducing the need to replace them.
- Lighting is essential for providing a pleasant guest experience, so it is important to keep windows, skylights and light fittings clean, to take full advantage of the light available.

2.1.5 Hospitality and Services

General

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

- At all Grades, guests should be greeted and

acknowledged in a friendly, efficient and courteous manner throughout their stay.

Staff should have a helpful attitude.

- A relatively straightforward range of services offered – often provided by the proprietor and family/staff.
- All enquiries, requests and reservations, correspondence and complaints from visitors dealt with promptly and politely.
- Every effort made to take account of individual guest's needs.
- The style of the hotel may dictate how staff dress – from formal uniforms to informal and casual outfits.
- Service, efficiency and technical skills of a very good standard.
- All staff demonstrate a positive attitude and willingness to help.

Two Star

- Quite good guest service, anticipating guests' requirements.

Three Star

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

Four Star

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

Five Star

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

Accessibility Good Practice

- Ensure staff ask if the guest has any accessibility needs.
- Assistance dogs must be welcomed (this is a legal requirement). Many disabled people rely on assistance dogs to provide them with independence. See the dog as being part of the person.

- Ensure guests identifying themselves as being disabled, e.g. those with visual impairments, are offered a familiarisation tour.
- Ensure the fire evacuation strategy details emergency exit procedures are available for disabled people. Remember, guests with hearing impairments may not hear knocking at the door. Record room location and any specific requirements and pass to staff at change of shift.
- Consider learning to communicate in basic British Sign Language (BSL).

Sustainability Good Practice

- Consider drafting and promoting an environmental policy, setting out the environmental and sustainable management actions taken by your business. If your hotel is part of a larger organisation that has an environmental policy, make sure everybody knows how it applies to your specific site. The policy should be available publicly. For example, it could be available on the business's website, on site in the lobby and in room folders, and on notice boards in the staff areas. Ensure all staff are fully briefed and updated on the hotel's sustainability policy.
- Engaging and involving staff in planning sustainability related activities and how to implement them can be the key to their success. Setting up a 'Green Team' that meets regularly, including management and key staff from different departments, can be helpful in getting buy-in from staff and keeping them engaged and motivated. All staff should be made aware of the hotel's sustainability policy and should be trained on how to implement sustainable actions relevant to their area of work.
- Information on getting around by public transport in your area, where appropriate, especially to key attractions could be useful and encourage some guests to use their car less. Ensure staff are aware of options and can make recommendations on how to get to places without a car, and recommend walks from the hotel.

2.2 Services

2.2.1 Reservations, Prices and Billing

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

- Prospective visitors told clearly what is included in the prices quoted for accommodation, meals and refreshments, including service charge, taxes and other surcharges.
- Ability to make a prompt and effective reservation during the day and evening.
- Communication with prospective guests, whether verbal or written, should be prompt, efficient, professional and helpful. A good first impression is critical at all grades.

Therefore:

- The price agreed at the time of booking must not be exceeded.
- All agreed prices must include service charges, taxes and other surcharges where applicable.
- Every endeavour should be made to advise guests in advance about the hotel location, any car parking restrictions and the location of their room if it is in an annexe.
- Other information which may impact on the guests' stay, e.g. smoking policy, refurbishment work in progress, planned functions/events etc. provided. Where house policy dictates that certain facilities need to be pre-booked, e.g. spa treatments, dinner etc., these should also be mentioned at the time of booking.
- Where no or limited meal service is provided this should be made clear at the time of booking and on your website to avoid disappointment.
- Full details of the hotel's cancellation policy. Information about charging credit cards for cancellation or changes to the booking is particularly important.
- Information about deposits if required, including details of how the deposit is taken and whether or not it is refundable on cancellation.
- Clear explanation of charges for additional services or available facilities including cancellation terms.
- Information about any unacceptable types of payment, e.g. credit cards etc.

- Confirmation provided on request by hotel (not only from third party booking site) by e-mail, text or letter.
- Prospective guests left confident that their booking was recorded accurately.
- As a minimum, name, address, and/or contact telephone number recorded at the time of booking.
- All bookings handled in a friendly and courteous manner, even if there is no dedicated reservations department.
- Provide each guest with printed or clearly written details of payment due and a receipt on request.
- Presentation of accounts ensuring that purchases are clearly detailed.
- The VAT element of the account (where applicable) should be clearly identified.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

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

Five Star

- Every booking confirmed by letter, email or text message.

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Consider putting a paperless booking and billing process in place to save money on stationery and postage and reduce waste. Paper products that are being used in the office could be from recycled paper stock.
- Include public transport options for getting to the property in promotional and booking information. General information on nearest stops and stations and getting around by public transport at the destination, where

appropriate, could also be useful and encourage some guests to use their car less or even leave their car at home.

- Let guests know about the natural and cultural attractions and events in the local area. Tell them about nearby activities catered for, e.g. walking and cycling, and offer ideas or itineraries on your website before they book. This may encourage them to stay longer.
- For quieter times off season, you could have special offers for guests and create packages with other businesses in the local area, such as attractions, restaurants, and activity providers.

2.2.2/3 Reception and Luggage Handling

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

- As reception is likely to be the guests' first and last point of contact with a hotel, special attention should be given to providing a high standard of customer care.
- Direct guest contact given priority over other reception duties.
- Guests clearly directed to their room and given a brief explanation of location of hotel facilities.
- Assistance with luggage available on request throughout the day and evening.
- Once registered, resident guests have access to the hotel at all times. Proprietor and/or staff to be on site and on call to resident guests 24-hours a day.
- It is acceptable for a front door key or security code to be issued.
- Guests informed of meal times, bar opening times etc.
- Secure short term luggage storage.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

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

Five Star

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

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

Accessibility Good Practice

- Luggage service offered as standard.

2.2.4 Other Reception/Concierge/ Housekeeping Services

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

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

Five Star

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

Accessibility Good Practice

- Provide a vibrating alarm clock for hearing impaired guests.

- Provide hotel information in a range of formats, e.g. large print, Braille, photographs, MP3 downloads and audio description on websites.

Sustainability Good Practice

- If it is common practice to provide each room with a complimentary newspaper in front of the door, guests should be asked explicitly whether they would like one, in order to avoid waste.
- Make best use of local tourist information in both the hotel's promotional literature, on the website and visitor information located in the bedrooms.
- Information could include for example promotion of natural and cultural heritage attractions in the area, local specialities like food and drink and arts and crafts, walking and cycling opportunities, and public transport advice.
- If the business supports any local charities or participates in a visitor payback program this can also be promoted in relevant places.

2.3 Dining Information

2.3.1 General

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- At least one restaurant open to residents for all meals during hotel opening hours.

- Restaurant tables should have sufficient space around them to allow a high degree of privacy and freedom of movement.

Accessibility Good Practice

- Try to be flexible with meal times to help diabetic people regulate their blood sugar.
- Ensure tables are stable and provide support for people rising from their chairs.
- Ensure crockery contrasts with table linen or surface to assist visually impaired guests.
- Dining tables are high enough or are of a design whereby wheelchair access can be easily accommodated.

Sustainability Good Practice

- Kitchens in hotels can consume large amounts of energy and are also one of the areas generating the most waste. Effective energy management in kitchens can lead to substantial savings and improvement of working conditions for staff.
- Appropriate planning and layout of the kitchens, as well as regular maintenance and cleaning of equipment can increase energy efficiency and cut costs.
- Raising awareness among kitchen staff and providing training on equipment use, energy and water efficiency, as well as waste management can lead to significant overall savings.
- Work with your suppliers to reduce food waste and optimise packaging such as the use of returnable packaging.
- By law you must not dispose of used cooking oil with the rest of your catering waste or foul water drains. You should collect your used cooking oil in suitable containers that are fully sealed and safely stored. All used cooking oil must be removed by an authorised waste carrier, many of whom offer a free collection service.

2.3.2 Meal Service Staff

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

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

Five Star

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

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

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

2.4 Breakfast Provision

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

a regular basis. Where provided, buffets laid out and operated in a practical and customer friendly manner.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

- Table service advertised and available on request.

Five Star

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

2.4.1 Breakfast Menu and Range of Dishes

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

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

Three Star

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

Four Star

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

Five Star

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

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Where possible, source food and drink products locally. Build up relationships with local producers and traders.
- Menus highlighting local specialities can really help differentiate your offering from that of your competitors. Incorporate a short description of where ingredients are sourced, who the producer is and why you have chosen them.
- Staff dealing with food and drink service should be fully briefed on the source, characteristics and significance of local food and drink products.
- Carefully plan portion sizes to reduce waste, especially if offering a buffet. Provide guests with options on how much food they want and when. For example, when serving breakfast avoid wasting bread by checking if guests want toast and if so, how much and when.
- Where unavoidable, food waste should be segregated from other waste, for pick up or composting onsite.

2.5 Dinner Provision

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

- Dinner served at, specific times according to market need and clearly advertised.

- Where dinner is not provided this must be clearly communicated to the guest. Hotel should provide further information as to alternative options.
- A self-service operation e.g. carvery or buffet-style is acceptable.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- All courses served to the guest at their table.

Accessibility Good Practice

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

2.5.1 Dinner Menu and Range of Dishes

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

- As three stars.

Five Star

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

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Where possible, source food and drink products locally. Build up relationships with local producers and traders.
- Menus highlighting local specialities can really help differentiate your offering from that of your competitors. Incorporate a short description of where ingredients are sourced, who the producer is and why you have chosen them.
- Staff dealing with food and drink service should be fully briefed on the source, characteristics and significance of local food and drink products.
- Carefully plan portion sizes and offer guest portion size options to avoid food being wasted. Where unavoidable, food waste should be segregated from other waste.
- You could offer guests the option to take leftovers away with them in a take home container. It is recommended to include specific instructions on appropriately re-heating the food and making guests aware that once food is taken off the premises it becomes the sole responsibility of the customer.
- Avoid serving bottled water (in disposable bottles) as standard. Instead serve plain or filtered tap water in reusable jugs or bottles, to minimise transport and packaging waste. Water coolers that are plumbed into the water mains are also available and suitable for use in conference and event areas and back of house for staff use.

2.5.2 Alcoholic Drink Services/Licences/Wine Service

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

- A current residential liquor licence or equivalent.

- As applicable under the licensing laws in Wales.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

- Superior range of drinks offered.
- An informative and detailed wine list.

Five Star

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

Sustainability Good Practice

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

2.5.3 Light Refreshments, Snacks, Lunch and Afternoon Teas

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

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

Five Star

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Where possible and appropriate, Fair Trade products, for example tea, coffee, chocolate and sugar, should be used. Make sure to promote this to customers on menus.

2.5.4 Room Service Provision

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

- Optional except in the case of illness.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- Room service should be provided and delivered to the bedroom where there is a market need during service hours (including breakfast and dinner).

Five Star

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

Accessibility Good Practice

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

2.6 Bedrooms

2.6.1 Bedroom Provision

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star) All Grades

- Minimum of five letting bedrooms.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- As minimum.

Accessibility Good Practice

- Try to provide a ground-floor bedroom.

2.6.2 Size and Spaciousness

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star) All Grades

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- All bedrooms with good free space.

Four Star

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

Five Star

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

Accessibility Good Practice

- When requested, the layout of bedroom furniture would be altered. This improves bedroom accessibility and usability.

2.6.3 Suites

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

- Not required.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

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

2.6.4 Bed Size and Access

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

- A choice of larger sized beds.

Five Star

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

Accessibility Good Practice

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

2.6.5 Bedding Requirements

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- As minimum.

Accessibility Good Practice

- Provide hypoallergenic bedding.

Sustainability Good Practice

- Spare bedding does not need to be wrapped in plastic bags; it can be placed in a reusable cotton or fabric bag.
- It is acceptable to have only one set of pillows on the bed, with another set available for guest use kept in the bedroom, e.g. in the wardrobe. This can reduce laundry and staff time taken to change sheets.
- It is common in many hotels to have a towel and linen policy in place, so guests can agree to less frequent changes. This can reduce the use of energy, water and detergent and thus costs, as well as environmental impact.
- It is important to train staff on the towel and linen policy and ensure that they adhere to a guest’s choice to reuse. Changing towels regardless is likely to send the wrong message and reduce guest support for other sustainability actions of the business.

2.6.6 Heating and Temperature Control

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- Individually controlled thermostatic heating.

Four Star

- Individually controlled thermostatic heating operable 24 hours.

Five Star

- Individually controlled thermostatic heating operable 24 hours.
- Air conditioning, mechanical ventilation or ability to cool the room with fresh air that doesn’t allow noise or pollutants in the room.

Sustainability Good Practice

- Heating can account for more than 40% of energy used in a building like a hotel.

- There is a range of heating controls available such as timers, thermostats, and zone controls. Good controls not only save energy, but also maintain a consistently comfortable environment for guests and staff, and reduce equipment maintenance costs.
- Staff should be trained on how to operate heating controls. As part of housekeeping procedure, it should be ensured that heating is at a comfortable level (19–21°C) and able to be adjusted where necessary.
- Ensure that there is clear information available for guests on how to operate heating controls.
- A significant amount of heat can escape via uninsulated roofs and walls, which can add hundreds of pounds a year to your heating bill. Insulating roof spaces and unfilled external cavity walls is an effective and inexpensive way of reducing heat losses. Improvements are most effective during refurbishment projects and should always be considered when the opportunity arises.
- Many hotels have a high heating and hot water demand. Significant financial and carbon savings can be made through the use of a more efficient heating fuel – for example changing from oil or LPG to biomass or installing solar thermal to heat hot water and offset fuel use. There is a range of specialist advice available on the most suitable options for your site and any financial support on offer like interest free and low interest loans and other incentives.

2.6.7 Lighting

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

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

- Room lighting controllable from the bedside.

Five Star

- A range of lighting options controlled by the guest.

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Modern low-energy lamps are attractive and provide very good light output. Throughout the hotel, increased use should be made of energy saving light bulbs, such as compact fluorescent (CFL) and LEDs, which use up to 80% less energy and can last up to 50 times longer. CFL warm up to full brightness quite quickly (usually less than one minute), but this may vary depending on the quality of the light bulb and the surrounding temperature.
- Please remember that fluorescent lighting, including compact fluorescent lamps (CFL), need to be stored safely to ensure they do not break and are disposed of separately as they are considered special waste. Often your supplier will take back any old ones.
- Signs can be used to request guests to switch off lights when not in use. Occupancy linked controls that turn off lights and other electric equipment are also an option, such as key card systems or those controlled from the front desk.
- If it is policy to prepare guests' rooms in anticipation of their arrival by leaving lights on, consider doing this much later in the day. Energy saving light bulbs should be used especially for those lights that are left on.

2.6.8 Windows and Window Coverings

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

All Grades

- At least one window that can be opened safely to provide good levels of direct natural light and ventilation. Air conditioning or mechanical air ventilation provided where windows cannot be opened.
- Windows well fitted, easy to shut and open and remain open. A pole provided to open any Velux-style windows or skylights.
- Rooms without windows are acceptable, but must have air-conditioning and pass all

building regulations. The lack of window needs to be clearly communicated to the guest before booking.

- Security fittings installed on all bedroom windows where, when open, access could be gained from outside, e.g. patio doors and windows near fire escapes.
- It is acceptable for a bedroom to overlook a large internal atrium. The bedroom should be air-conditioned and naturally illuminated.
- Opaque curtains, blinds or shutters provided on all windows including glass panels to doors, fanlights and skylight windows so that guests have privacy and can exclude any light from outside the room. All window coverings to be properly fitted or hung.
- Curtains should be reasonably substantial – with or without lining. Curtains large enough to draw easily and completely across the width and height of the window.
- In ground floor bedrooms additional privacy provided by means of a net curtain or blind.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- As minimum.

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- A typical building can lose as much as 26% of its heat through windows. Ensuring windows are draught proof will not only save energy, but also increase guest comfort.
- Closing curtains, blinds or shutters at the end of the day during winter months can reduce draughts and retain more heat. This could be part of the turndown service if provided.
- Thermal and blackout linings on curtains can increase guest comfort and reduce heat loss.
- Double glazing is now a minimum requirement under building regulations when replacing windows. Highly efficient double glazing and triple glazing is available.

Although standard double or triple glazing may not be appropriate in all cases, there will generally be something which can be done to improve thermal performance of windows, even in traditional buildings.

2.6.9 Flooring

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- As minimum.

Accessibility Good Practice

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

2.6.10 Furniture – Tables, Mirrors and Clothes Storage

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

- As three stars.

Five Star

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

2.6.11 Furniture – Seating

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

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

Five Star

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

Accessibility Good Practice

- At least one bedroom chair has a high back with arms.

Sustainability Good Practice

- When renewing any furniture, fixtures and fittings, consider donating them to local charities, community groups or other relevant organisations, so they can be re-used.
- When purchasing new furniture, consider solid wood that can be more easily renovated in the future than composites.

2.6.12 Beverage-making Facilities

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

- As three stars

Five Star

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

Best Practice

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

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- For items on hospitality trays, locally produced goods, like biscuits, or Fair Trade products (e.g. tea, coffee, sugar, hot chocolate) could be sourced.
- Providing smaller kettles in bedrooms, for 1-2 cups, can also cut down on energy used and encourages guests to only boil as much as they need.

2.6.13 In-room Information

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

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

Five Star

- Consideration given to multilingual and visually enhanced material.

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Communicating with guests in a clear and positive way in the right place can be key to engaging and encouraging them to enjoy what the business and local area has to offer and support the sustainability actions of the business.

Each room should contain, where possible, an up-to-date visitor information folder, which may include:

- Information on local heritage and culture, including details of related visitor attractions and special events.
- Details of nearby outlets supplying local food, drink, craft and gift products.
- Where appropriate, information on native plants and wildlife guests could see on the property or in the area. A nature diary could be provided for guests to record any of their sightings.
- Options for car-free travel such as walking and cycling routes, public transport timetables and contact numbers and websites.
- Suggested itineraries for car-free days out.
- The hotel's environmental policy if there is one, and details about any green scheme with which the hotel is affiliated.
- A responsible visitor guide with top tips for guests on how to get involved and reduce their impact.
- If the business is part of a visitor payback scheme, information regarding this scheme should also be included. Any work the business has done to support local charities or community projects can also be mentioned to the guest.

2.6.14 In-room Entertainment

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

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

Five Star

- Adoption of the latest innovation in entertainment technologies expected.

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Where appropriate, ensure televisions and other entertainment equipment is not left on standby. Notices could be used to request that guests completely turn off all equipment when not in use, rather than leave it on standby. Staff could also be trained to turn entertainment equipment completely off when cleaning the room if guests have left it on standby.
- When buying new televisions or other electronics it is strongly recommended to choose the most energy efficient of the suitable options. Look for the energy rating.

2.6.15 General Connectivity and Telephones

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

- Bedroom telephone optional.
- Where not provided, a means of communication with staff in the event of an emergency must be provided, and advertised in the bedroom.
- Telephones, where provided, displaying the hotel telephone number together with the bedroom extension or telephone number.
- Telephones, where provided, with instructions on how to use any additional services such as telephone message service and room-to-room calls.
- Where telephones are provided, rate card displayed in bedrooms illustrating typical charges for local, long-distance, international, internet, use of phone cards and connection to mobile phones. Sample call charges required.
- In addition, an explanation of what constitutes a local and long-distance call should be given as well as a clear explanation of peak and off peak times.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

- An effective means of internal communication should be provided.

Five Star

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

Best Practice

- Notepad with pen or pencil provided.

Accessibility Good Practice

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

2.6.16 Miscellaneous

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

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

Five Star

- An in-room safe or facility for the storage of valuables.
- An evening housekeeping service provided and advertised – possibly including some of the following services: bed turn-down, bins emptied, curtains drawn, towels tidied, room service trays removed – where there is a market need.

Sustainability Good Practice

- Options for guests to separate recyclable waste (e.g. paper, glass, plastic, card, cans) should be provided. This could be an additional container like a different coloured and/or labelled bin or a reusable bag. If space is limited a notice for guests to leave recyclables next to the bin could be appropriate.
- Ensure staff are trained on how to appropriately separate waste for recycling. The housekeeping trolley should have suitable bags for staff to use.
- Décor – use could be made of local artist's work, prints and/or photographs of images depicting local scenes and historical and heritage related images – it all adds to a visitor's enhanced sense of place.

2.7 Bathrooms, Shower Rooms and En-Suites

2.7.1 Size and Spaciousness

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star) One Star

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- As minimum.

2.7.2 Provision of En-Suite

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- It is acceptable for 100% of en-suites to have a shower only if size and quality are exceptional.

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Provision of hot water is essential for a hotel but can lead to considerable energy costs. It is possible to save on both water and energy costs by implementing some inexpensive efficiency measures.
- Excessive heating of hot water is wasteful and could scald staff or guests. The optimum temperature for stored hot water is 60°C, which is adequate to kill Legionella bacteria and is sufficiently warm for staff and guests to use. You can review and, where necessary, adjust the thermostat on your hot water tank.

2.7.3 Equipment

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star) All Grades

- All private and en-suite bathrooms or shower rooms equipped with:

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- As minimum.

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Wasting water, especially heated water is literally throwing money down the drain.
- Use could be made of water saving fittings such as water saving taps and dual flush toilets. The toilet flush can also be reduced by simply displacing water, for example by placing an appropriately-sized sealed bottle filled with sand or water into the cistern. Ensure whatever is used to displace the water sits safely at the bottom of the cistern and does not interfere with the flushing mechanism.
- It is recommended to have a sign ('Bag it and bin it!') to encourage guests to use the bins

provided and not dispose of unsuitable items down the toilet, especially if property is on a septic tank.

- There is no need for soaps and other complimentary products to be individually wrapped or in small containers – these can be presented in suitable attractive refillable dispensers. Assessors check the quality of the products offered and the style of presentation.
- There is no need for the drinking cup/glass to be either plastic, or wrapped.
- Although providing shower facilities can help reduce water consumption, remember that power showers can use more water than a bath. Therefore, consider using reduced flow shower heads or gravity-fed showers where possible. These can reduce consumption without diminishing the customer experience, provided the pressure is adequate. You will also save energy as less heated water will be used.

2.7.4 Lighting, Heating and Ventilation

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

- A heated towel rail or equivalent.

Five Star

- As four stars.

Sustainability Good Practice

- Use of thermostatic controls on radiators or heated towel rails helps to manage your energy consumption. A timer can be fitted for a one or two hour pulse to electric towel rails to ensure they are not on unnecessarily.
- Increased use should be made of energy saving light bulbs, such as compact fluorescent (CFL) and LEDs.

- Many hotels have a high heating and hot water demand. Significant financial and carbon savings can be made through the use of a more efficient heating fuel – for example changing from oil or LPG to biomass or installing solar thermal to heat hot water and offset fuel use. There is specialist advice available on the most suitable options for your site and any financial support on offer, like interest-free and low interest loans and other incentives.

2.7.5 Towels and Toiletries

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- Shampoo and bath gel provided.

Four Star

- A very good range of towels and toiletries.

Five Star

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

Best Practice

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

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Use could be made of a towel agreement sign to encourage guests to reuse their towel. This is best placed near the towels in the bathroom.
- Staff should be appropriately trained to adhere to the towel policy to avoid changing towels where guests have agreed to reuse theirs.

- It is acceptable to put only one set of towels out in a room occupied by a single person and make further towels available on request.
- An alternative to individually wrapped soaps and other complimentary products is for these to be presented in suitable attractive refillable dispensers. Assessors check the quality of the products offered and the style of presentation.

2.8 Public Areas

2.8.1 Reception Areas and Lobby

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

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

Five Star

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

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- The hotel's environmental policy, if there is one, or details about any green scheme with which the hotel is affiliated, could be promoted in the lobby or reception area.

- The policy, green scheme membership (if applicable), and any information about the sustainable actions the business may be undertaking can also be promoted on the website. Communicating with guests in a clear and positive way in the right place can be key to engaging and encouraging them to adhere to sustainable activity. Informing potential customers about sustainability activities when they are making booking decisions can create a positive impression.

2.8.2 Bar, Lounge and Sitting Areas

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

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

Four Star

- As three stars.

Five Star

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

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

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

- Where waste bins are available to guests, there could be separate, clearly marked bin(s) for recyclable waste (e.g. paper, cans, and plastic) alongside.

2.8.3 Other Public Areas Including Corridors and Staircases

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- Corridors normally wide and spacious.

Five Star

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

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Using energy efficient lighting and improving controls in public areas, as well as back of house, can bring significant cost savings.
- Lighting in corridors and stairwells, which is on for long periods of time, should be low energy, e.g. compact fluorescent (CFL) and LEDs. Replacing older style fluorescent tubes with newer slimmer and more efficient options can also achieve energy savings.
- Controls like occupancy or daylight sensors and timers could be fitted in appropriate areas to avoid lights being on unnecessarily.

2.8.4 Lifts

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

Optional

- Assistance with luggage required when there is no lift.

Two Star

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

Three Star

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

Four Star

- As three stars.

Five Star

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

Best Practice

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

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Sites with a lift should ensure the stairs are clearly signposted. This provides guests with the option to take the stairs where appropriate, which not only saves energy but promotes a more active lifestyle.

2.8.5 Communication

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

- A telephone accessible 24-hours a day unless direct dial. In-room facilities are provided (payphones, house phones or mobile handsets).

- Free Wi-Fi available in public areas for the use of email checking and light internet browsing. Charges are acceptable for downloading of music, films and other heavy internet usage.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- As minimum.

2.8.6 Public Area WCs

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

Where open to non-residents:

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- More generous provision of toilets.

Five Star

- As four stars.

Accessibility Good Practice

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

Sustainability Good Practice

- Use could be made of water-saving fittings such as water-saving taps and dual flush toilets. To avoid wasting water because of taps being left running, use sensor taps or push taps in public WCs. Regular maintenance is necessary to avoid drips and ensure taps operate properly.

- Unnecessary urinal flushing can use significant amounts of water. Fitting flush controllers, many which can be retro fitted or waterless urinals, overcomes this problem. If the water usage is metered, significant cost savings can be made.
- It is recommended to have a sign 'Bag it and bin it!' to encourage guests to use the bins provided, especially if property is on a septic tank. It is generally recommended to have sanitary bins in public toilets. Where appropriate, nappy bins should also be provided.

2.9 External Area (As Applicable)

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star) All Grades

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

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

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

- As minimum.

Accessibility Good Practice

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

3.0 Annexes

Minimum Entry Requirements (One Star)

- Where a hotel has an annexe, the facilities provided will be taken into account when determining the overall grade of the hotel.
- Annexe accommodation may be situated in a separate unit or units within the hotel grounds or within easy walking distance of

the main building. Paths or passageways to the annexe must be in good condition, well surfaced and adequately lit.

Two Star

- As minimum.

Three Star

- As minimum.

Four Star

- As minimum.

Five Star

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

4.0 Code of Conduct

The proprietor/management is required to undertake and observe the following Code of Conduct:

- To maintain standards of guest care, cleanliness and service appropriate to the type of establishment.
- To accurately describe in any advertisement, brochure or other printed or electronic media, the facilities and services provided.
- To make clear to visitors exactly what is included in all prices quoted for accommodation, including taxes and any other surcharges. Details of charges for additional services/facilities should also be made clear.
- To give a clear statement of policy on cancellations to guest at the time of booking i.e. by telephone, fax, email as well as information given in a printed format.
- To adhere to, and not to exceed prices quoted at the time of booking for accommodation and other services.
- To advise visitors at the time of booking and subsequently of any change, if the accommodation is offered in an unconnected annex or similar and to indicate the location of such accommodation and any difference in comfort and/or amenities from accommodation in the establishment.
- To give each visitor on request details of payments due and a receipt, if required.
- To deal promptly and courteously with all enquiries, requests, bookings and correspondence from visitors.
- Ensure complaint handling procedures are in place and that complaints received are

investigated promptly and courteously and that the outcome is communicated to the visitor.

- To give due consideration to the requirements of visitors with disabilities and visitors with special needs, and to make suitable provision where applicable.
- To provide Public Liability insurance or comparable arrangement and to comply with all applicable planning, safety and other statutory obligations in force.
- To allow a Visit Wales representative reasonable access to the establishment, on request, to confirm that the Code of Conduct is being fully observed.

5.0 Conditions for Participation

All establishments participating in the Visit Wales grading schemes are required to:

- Meet or exceed the Visit Wales minimum entry level requirements both in Facilities, Services and quality.
- Observe the Visit Wales Code of Conduct.
- Be assessed, and in the event of complaints by an authorised representative of Visit Wales.
- Pay an annual participation fee.
- Provide an access statement/accessibility guide.

6.0 Change of Ownership

When an establishment is sold, the existing rating cannot be transferred to the new owner. The new owner is required to make an application for participation in the Visit Wales star grading scheme.

7.0 Signage

Where an establishment, for whatever reason, ceases to participate in the Visit Wales grading scheme, all relevant display signs and print material must be removed immediately.

Use of all Star ratings should always be accompanied by the appropriate Visit Wales logo and the Visit Wales official designator.

Failure to observe these conditions may result in the establishment becoming ineligible to display or use the Visit Wales endorsement in any way whatsoever.

8.0 What To Do If You Disagree With The Star Rating Given

If you feel you have reason to disagree with the Star rating given to your property, or disagree with certain aspects of the Quality Assessor's report, then please get in touch with us as soon as possible after you receive your written report.

You can telephone our Aberystwyth team on 0845 0108020 or email us at quality.tourism@gov.wales and we will try to resolve your concerns.

Alternatively, you may wish to write to us at: Quality Assurance Department, Visit Wales, Welsh Government, Rhodfa Padarn, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, SY23 3UR.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Quality Assurance Department
Visit Wales
Welsh Government
Rhodfa Padarn
Llanbadarn Fawr
Aberystwyth
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