

Acknowledgments

The EcoGuide Program was developed with the aid of seed funding from a National Tourism Development Program Grant from the Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science and Resources to the Ecotourism Association of Australia (EAA).

Additional cash support was provided by the Ecotourism Association of Australia. Major in-kind support was provided by the EAA, Monash University and NRE Victoria.

The following working party provided input into the development of the EcoGuide Program:

Project Manager: Alice Crabtree (Ecotourism Association of Australia and Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program)

Project team: Rosemary Black (Interpretation Australia Association and Monash University), Jean-Pierre Issaverdis (Ecotourism Association of Australia), Betty Weiler (RMIT and Monash Universities) Matt Whitting (Ecotourism Association of Australia).

Steering Committee: Doug Baird and Andrew Jackson (Tourism Council of Australia/TCA Environment Committee); Susan Briggs (Tourism Training Australia), Russell Boswell (Savanna Guides/TAFE); Department of Industry, Science and Resources representatives; Brian Doolan (Department of Natural Resources and Environment); Peter Egan (Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission/Outdoor Recreation Council of Australia); Gil Field (Department of Conservation and Land Management, WA); Tony Lee (Australian Tourism Operators Network/Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program); Len Taylor (Inbound Tourist Operators Association); Janine McLeod (Institute of Australian Tourist Guides); and Peter O'Reilly (Ecotourism Association of Australia).

The EcoGuide Program Working Party would like to thank the following guides, assessors and organisations for participation in the pilot assessment workshops:

Guides: David O'Brian, Warren Ikin, Jutta Wildeforster, Jamie Anderson, Nicola Dowding, Kyo Inoue, Geoff Weir, Glen Withers, Brenda Heath, Joel Russell, Debby Lange, Mark Westwood, Andrew Mathews, Karyn Austen, John Brakel, Bruce Rapkins, Stuart Meagher, Danielle Ternes, Andrew Walker, Bradley Clarke, Nicole Murray, John Jackson, Benita Lamond, David Bannear, Brigid Vaughan, Alex Giannuzzi, Jill Flemming, Daphne Cheah, Mark Burrows.

Assessors: Rosie Williams, David Costello, Ross Constable, Pat Darlington, Johnathon Howard, Noeline Gross, Terry Carmichael, Rosemary Black, Alice Crabtree, Susan Hansen, Tony Lee, Jean-Pierre Issaverdis.

Organisations: Jack Drover Tours, Savanna Guides, Quicksilver Connections, Reef Biosearch, Kingfisher Tours, Werribee Zoo, Marine Discovery Centre, Skyrail, NSW NPWS Discovery Ranger Program, Montague Island Guides, Parks Victoria, Ocean Spirit Cruises, Rainforest Habitat, and the Interpretation Australia Association.

The EcoGuide Program Working Party would like to thank: Philip Island Nature Park for trialling the completed program.

Last but not least the EcoGuide Program Working Party would also like to thank all of the guides and operators who have provided input into the development of the program through responding to mail-outs, conference presentations, focus groups, telephone surveys and email requests. Whilst too numerous to name individually they provided us with clear direction, goals

Authors: Alice Elizabeth Crabtree and Rosemary Susan Black

Contributors: Rosemary Black wrote and researched an early draft, and worked as part of a joint SPIRT award between EAA and NRE Victoria, administered by Monash University on initial revisions of the evaluation instruments, and production of guidelines sections.

Original assessment tools were outcomes of an Australian National Training Authority Research Advisory Council/National Centre for Vocational Education and Research research project: *Developing Competent Ecotour Guides: Does Training Deliver What Tourists Demand?* by Betty Weiler and Alice Crabtree.

The Code of Ethics was produced by Matt Whitting incorporating compiled comments.

Layout and design: Meaghan Colleen Newson

Published by: Ecotourism Association of Australia

ISBN 0 9578472 0 3

© Ecotourism Association of Australia

This work is protected by copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be

National competency standards have been reproduced with the kind permission of Tourism Training Australia but remain the copyright of the ANTA (Australian National Training Authority).

Contents

Foreword	4
Preface	5
How to use this workbook	7
What is the EcoGuide Program?	8
Benefits of certification.....	8
What’s in it for me?.....	9
What are the risks?.....	10
What’s involved?.....	11
Referee reports	12
Code of ethics	13
The criteria.....	14
Portfolio of evidence	16
Your assessors	15
Activity plan	17
Workplace assessment	18
Video assessment	19
Simulated on-the-job assessment.....	20
On-the-job assessment	21
So, what do I have to do?	22
How much does it cost?	22
Appeals	23
APPENDICES	
Appendix 1: Resume guidelines	24
Appendix 2: Log book template	25
Appendix 3: Referee’s report – guidelines	26
Appendix 4: National competency standards	27
Appendix 5: National competency units	28
Appendix 6: Examples of potential indirect evidence and supporting documentation	44
Appendix 7: Activity plan	45
Appendix 8: Sample workplace assessment observation checklist	46
Appendix 9: Video tip list	49
Appendix 10: Resources, bibliography and contact details	51
Appendix 11: Application	57

Foreword



Peter O'Reilly
President, Ecotourism Association of Australia

Australia is a country of exquisite and diverse natural beauty – with breathtaking mountains, amazing coral reefs, the dramatic outback and majestic forests. Combined with our unique fauna and one of the world's oldest surviving cultures we have a very special place.

Ecotourism has often been lauded as a way we can have our cake and eat it too – a way of retaining our special places yet reaping economic rewards. It is no doubt that the distinctiveness and diversity of our natural environment and our not-yet-tarnished green, clean and safe image attracts visitors, and in increasing numbers. This is only going to grow with the success and publicity following the resounding success of the Sydney Olympics. It is vital that while we continue to capitalise on our unique natural environment, flora and fauna, we also make sure we protect these natural assets. It is also vital that we protect our reputation as having ecotourism product second to none. We must ensure both quality product and experiences.

To this end, the Ecotourism Association of Australia (EAA) plays an ongoing role in developing and promoting best practice standards for the nature and ecotourism industry. The Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program (NEAP) - a joint venture between the EAA and the Australian Tourism Operators Network (ATON) encourages tour operators, attractions and accommodation providers to demonstrate their commitment to the principles of ecotourism and continuous improvement.

The EcoGuide Program is another step. It recognises the key role that guides – be they commercial guides, interpretive rangers or volunteers – have on the success or otherwise of our industry. They are our public face, the front line in ensuring customer satisfaction and genuine, quality (interpretive) ecotourism experiences. Guides, in partnership with protected area managers and others are also a vital component of caring for the natural and cultural resources on which this sector depends.

The Ecotourism Association of Australia is proud to have played a pivotal role in developing recognised best practice standards and increasing professionalism across the nature and ecotourism industry. Please use the tools and standards provided by the EcoGuide Program to help build a viable industry with a well-deserved reputation for excellence.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Peter O'Reilly".

Preface

Industry driven, industry run

The EcoGuide Program is an industry 'qualification' that recognises guides that achieve certain competencies and specified standards. These standards have been developed with extensive consultation with the nature and ecotourism industry (at both operator and guide level) and other major stakeholders for use by both nature and ecotour guides. The program is voluntary and designed to recognise and reward best practice nature and ecotour guiding.

The EcoGuide Program is now managed and administered by the Ecotourism Association of Australia (EAA), with help from:

- a panel of experts (with representatives from protected area managers, mainstream tourism bodies, guiding associations and training organisations, chaired by the EAA);
- a network of Workplace Assessors; and
- a Program Administrator.

Eligibility

The EcoGuide Program is designed to be equally relevant and accessible to guides who have gained their abilities (competence) through life experience and on-the-job training as to those who have obtained competence through the formal training (i.e. through courses provided by traditional providers such as TAFE colleges or in-house programs). We encourage all nature and ecotour guides with relevant experience, be they commercial guides, interpretive rangers or volunteers to go through the program.

Outcomes

The program is not designed to *train* guides, but to *assess* guide's skills, knowledge, attitudes and actions. Competent individuals that complete the program will be awarded an industry certificate and are provided with a pathway to formal, nationally recognised qualifications. The EcoGuide Program can be used not only to award qualifications but also as a means to benchmark existing operations, or to highlight training needs. It is hoped that guides going through certification will learn more about effective communication, interpretation and guiding, the ecotourism industry and its principles, and themselves.

Process

Although any form of assessment can be daunting, we have tried to make the process simple and straightforward. We have designed the program to be as user-friendly as possible and attempted to reduce the potential for the guide to feel overwhelmed by providing flexibility, a range of options and progressive assessment so that they can go at their own pace and in their own comfort zones. Staged assessment also allows guides to self-assess or to obtain preliminary feedback on their performance before attempting the next stage.

To help guides complete certification successfully the appendices of this workbook provides a source of information on where they can obtain relevant reading material, self-paced programs, links to more formal training and contact details for organisations and associations. The list is not all-inclusive, but we hope participants and readers will find it a useful beginning and add resources they find useful to our lists.



Links to the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program

The EcoGuide Program complements and supports the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program (NEAP II) that accredits nature and ecotourism product. These two programs are working in tandem to provide standards for nature and ecotourism that ensure quality and continual improvement in the Australian industry.

NEAP II will award bonus points that count towards advanced ecotourism accreditation status to operations that employ certified guides. NEAP III (due to be released in 2003) will require ecotourism product to have head or lead guides EcoGuide certified, or demonstrate they meet EcoGuide Program standards for any operation conducted in a protected area.

The first edition of the EcoGuide Program was launched at the Ecotourism Association of Australia's National Conference in November 2000, with the Program certifying guides from January 2001.

There is one category of recognition, "EcoGuide", that is applicable to both nature and ecotour guides.

For further information on the EcoGuide Program, please contact the EcoGuide Program Office or look at the guide section on the Ecotourism Association of Australia's website at www.ecotourism.org.au

EcoGuide Program

Ecotourism Association of Australia

GPO Box 268

BRISBANE

Qld 4001

Phone: 07 3229 5550

Fax: 07 3229 5255

Email: mail@ecotourism.org.au

How to use this workbook

This workbook contains information that should explain more about the program, what's in it for you, and how you go about getting certified. We recommend that you:

- Talk to other guides that have been through, or are going through the certification process, or more experienced colleagues to get a feel for what is needed, give you advice, guidance and support.
- Read through the workbook carefully. Guide certification is divided into a number of distinct assessment stages.
- Consider getting a group of guides from the same organisation, same bio-geographical area or guides using the same delivery mechanisms (e.g. touring, snorkeling) to arrange a joint assessment workshop and training sessions.
- Make sure you have the knowledge, skills or required experience to be able to achieve competency before applying for each stage. The package clearly states the pre-requisites required and the procedures you need to follow at each stage.
- Once you have read through the information and you feel ready to apply for certification, complete the application form and supporting documentation and submit them with appropriate payment to the EcoGuide Program Office. Certification involves several stages and a Workplace Assessor will help mentor you through the process.

There is supplementary information provided in the Appendix that will provide background material to help explain terms you may not be familiar with, provide you with examples or templates that you may use, and give you details on useful readings, self-paced packages and contact details for appropriate organisations and associations.

What is the EcoGuide Program?

The EcoGuide Program is a voluntary, industry-driven and run certification program for nature and ecotour guides. It was developed to help promote best practice guiding standards through recognition and reward.

It was developed by a Steering Group of major stakeholders, including representatives from the mainstream tourism industry, protected area managers, training providers, our industry training advisory board, guiding and tourism/ecotourism associations and of course, the guides themselves! During the development phase of the Certification Program extensive consultation took place - including telephone surveys, piloting of the workplace assessment methods, pilot guide schools to examine the viability of simulated on-the-job assessment, and a full pilot of the certification process. Dissemination of information on the program occurred through direct mail-outs, conference and workshop presentations and numerous articles in industry-based newsletters as well as a dedicated section in the Ecotourism Association of Australia's quarterly newsletter, *Ecotourism News*.

The EcoGuide program is NOT a training program but an assessment system. However, the certification program will no doubt influence training through providing established industry benchmarks. We encourage the use of the program not only as a means of obtaining certification and formal qualifications but as a development and diagnostic tool. Assessment can be used to help determine guide training gaps and needs, a performance indicator for recruitment and promotion, and a developmental tool to help you achieve recognised better practices.



Benefits of certification

The EcoGuide program is designed to provide a range of benefits to a variety of nature and ecotourism stakeholders.

Benefits to nature and ecotour guides

- A recognised industry qualification
- Baseline benchmark to determine the degree of which their services meet the standards of best practice nature and/or ecotour guiding
- An opportunity to promote guiding services as genuine nature/ecotourism
- A defined competitive edge rewarded through factors such as better job opportunities
- Access to relevant, appropriate and reduced cost training materials and networking opportunities
- Pathway to nationally recognised and portable formal qualifications within the Australian Qualification Framework (Certificate III Tourism (Tour Guiding)).

Benefits to nature and ecotourism operators

- A simple method of recognising and recruiting quality guides
- A standard or benchmark within which guide performance can be continually improved to a standard recognised as best practice.

- An opportunity to promote guided products as best practice nature and/or ecotour guiding giving greater product appeal and a marketing advantage
- Improved guiding practices that lead to fewer negative environmental and cultural impacts and increased client satisfaction

Benefits to nature and ecotourism consumers

- An assurance of guides that are committed to providing quality nature or ecotourism experiences in a safe, culturally sensitive and environmentally sustainable manner

Benefits to protected area managers

- Improved guiding practices that lead to fewer negative environmental impacts
- Guides who role model and ensure good environmental and culturally appropriate behaviour.
- Guides committed to a partnership in providing a front-line of defense in environmentally sensitive or fragile areas
- Ability to identify operators who employ staff with appropriate training and qualifications for reviewing permit applications in sensitive areas
- A framework of standards applicable to interpretive rangers

Benefits to the environment

- Guides providing relevant and appropriate interpretation that inspires clients and workplace employees and encourages minimal impact actions and a conservation ethic.



What's in it for me?

The main purpose of the EcoGuide Program is to recognise and reward best practice nature and ecotour guiding. By undertaking the program you will receive industry recognition for the skills you have as a guide.

We will help you prove your competence or assist you identify your training gaps and needs. Indeed, in going through the certification process you should be able to identify for yourself any areas in which you need to upgrade your own skills and competence. The staged structure of the program allows and encourages you to ensure you have the requisite skills and knowledge before attempting the next step of the program.

An increasing number of tourism operations (particularly in the nature/ecotourism sector) are demanding specific qualifications of their guides. The linkage between the EcoGuide Program and the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program encourages accredited operators to employ certified EcoGuides or meet the standards of the EcoGuide Program. Many protected area managers are investigating, or already link their permitting system to operators who employ appropriately qualified staff. Visitors are also becoming increasingly discerning and realise the importance of a good guide. EcoGuide Certification will provide you with a distinct competitive advantage.

The close relationship between the EcoGuide Program and the national competency standards means that you are also provided

obtain qualifications that will be recognised right around Australia. TAFE and other training providers will accept these qualifications for entry into advanced courses.

Guides going through the certification process are eligible to receive reduced cost training materials, certain publications and free copies of the guiding section of the Ecotourism Association of Australia's Newsletter, *Ecotourism News*.

You will be provided with excellent networking and professional development opportunities, with guides going through certification and already certified guides encouraged to attend or organise joint training and workshoping sessions. Discounted training, workshop fees and conference attendance will be provided where possible.

Other benefits such as reduced insurance fees, famils and an industry discount card are being examined to give you as many tangible benefits as possible



What are the risks?

The EcoGuide Program is an entirely voluntary program. It involves assessment of your competence as a nature or ecotour guide. Although the program hinges on assessment it is not a traditional 'test' in which we try and catch you out.

There is nothing to fear from the assessment itself. You have a say in what evidence is collected and some choice on how it is collected (i.e. a negotiable portfolio), as long as we obtain sufficient evidence of each competency standard. You will need to accept that the program may highlight areas where you need to improve your skills.

Those involved with your assessment and application will treat you with respect. You can receive copies of the assessment plans and records. You will receive statements of attainment and certificates when issued. Copies will be kept on file in the National Office. The only details of your application that can be released without your permission is your result (ie 'requires training' or 'competent'). Please let us know if you do not want your employer or anyone else approached for confirmation of details that we need to ensure valid and fair evidence is collected of your skills, abilities and attitude.

There is an appeal system in place to ensure that you get a fair go.

Participating in a new program has its advantages and disadvantages– it will take some time, efficient marketing and selling of the benefits to operators, protected area managers, trainers, visitors and other consumers before a competitive advantage is borne out of recognition of the EcoGuide Program. However, the Program does not just offer a marketing advantage, it also offers a pathway to formal qualifications and a development tool that will not fail in its ability to deliver consistent standards and increasing professionalism in the nature and ecotour guiding industry.

What's involved?

On entry to the program, guides need to prove they are eligible to undergo certification by providing proof of working as a guide. They also need to obtain two referees reports. Finally they need to declare their intent to provide high quality nature or ecotourism experiences in a safe, culturally sensitive and environmentally sustainable manner through signing a professional code of ethics.

Qualified assessors then work with the guides to help them collect and produce evidence demonstrating they have the **skills** and **knowledge** as well as **attitudes** and **actions** necessary to their job as an ecotour or nature guide.

The EcoGuide Program recognises that guides gain their competence through a variety of very different ways – and hence the proof of competence the program needs to collect (the **portfolio of evidence**) will vary from guide to guide.

Evidence may be indirect, such as a reference from an employer or peer, a certificate from training courses or records from work such as minutes of meetings, work rosters, letters of thanks from visitors, visitor book comments, interpretive activity plans or even products you have produced (e.g. self-guide brochures, video or slide show.)

However, at least some of your evidence must be direct, and is collected through some form of workplace assessment.

Workplace assessment

Workplace assessment is mainly used to observe the most frequently used and key guiding skills of communication and interpretation. Supporting evidence for a range of other skills that are easily demonstrated in the workplace (customer safety, workplace health and safety, risk management) or areas where documented evidence is insufficient may also be collected.

Workplace assessment evidence may take different forms:

- **Video assessment** (reserved for remote candidates where physical assessment is too costly)
- **Simulated on-the-job assessment** -this may be in your own workplace with a simulated client group, or a pre-set course in a specific environment or a role play at a guide workshop
- **Real life on-the-job assessment.**

On completion of assessment competent guides become certified EcoGuides, and if they wish, can access nationally recognised formal qualifications. Guides who do not yet reach the specified standards are provided with feedback on their training gaps and information on how these may be addressed.

Eligibility for certification

To be eligible for certification guides will have to meet minimum criteria of:

- A minimum of 12 months relevant work experience as a tour guide;

- A recognised and approved formal guiding (Certificate III Tourism (Tour Guiding)) or ecotourism qualification and a minimum of 3 months relevant work experience as a tour guide.

Anyone who meets these minimum requirements can apply for certification, regardless of their current or previous employment status. Commercial guides, interpretive rangers and volunteers are equally eligible as long as the basic eligibility requirements are met.

NOTE: The work experience may be paid or unpaid, and must be full time or an equivalent number of hours (i.e. at least 1600 hours equivalent for 12 months, 450 hours for three months). A substantial part of the work experience should be in a position that includes guided tours or interpretive activities and delivering guided experiences. The work experience may be in any sector of the tourism industry and tours may be in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sector.

The program has been designed so that it is equally relevant and accessible to guides with AND without formal education / qualifications - the portfolio of evidence required is negotiable and specific assessment items can be achieved through oral means. Experienced competent Guides will NOT be expected to go back to the classroom or undergo formal training as extensive Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Current Competence (RCC) are built into the program to ensure that guides without formal training are not disadvantaged by the certification process.

You will need to obtain proof of your work history and experience. This may simply be your resume (see Appendix 1 for suggested format) with supporting evidence such as a letter from your employer stating the dates of employment and duties undertaken. Other supporting evidence might include a statutory declaration stating that these hours have been achieved, or existing commercially available activity logs (e.g. SCUBA, or other activity specific logbooks) when, and where appropriate. A logbook in the format shown in Appendix 1 would be appropriate proof (as long as the employer or a supervisor signs the log and relevant contact details are provided) and will also be a useful reference for you.



Referee reports

You need to give the Referee Report guidelines to two people that are familiar with your work as a guide. It may be your employer, an immediate Supervisor such as the head guide, another owner operator, or fellow guide. We recommend you also give your referees a copy of an EcoGuide brochure so that they are familiar with what you are trying to achieve and how the process works. The criteria your referees need to address and some general guidelines are provided in Appendix 3. Remember to ask your referees to send their completed report direct to the EcoGuide Program Office.

The reports allows us to collect information on your competence in the following areas:

- General comments on your work performance as a nature/ecotour guide
- How you incorporate environmental best practice into your work as a guide
- Your communication skills with colleagues and customers
- Your ability to be culturally sensitive when serving customers from diverse backgrounds
- How you respond in difficult or emergency situations.

EcoGuide
PROGRAM

If your referee cannot provide us with sufficient information on these and we need to collect additional evidence we may need to contact additional referees. Please provide us with contact details of two more potential referees on your application form.

These reports are confidential.



Code of ethics

All guides are required to sign off on a Code of Ethics that has been generated by drawing on material provided by the United Nations Environment Program and other existing codes of practice. This code was endorsed through extensive consultation with guides, operators and protected area managers.

In becoming signatories to the code guides are clearly declaring their intent to provide high quality nature and ecotourism experiences in a safe, culturally sensitive and an environmentally sustainable manner.

The certified nature or ecotour guide:

- **Adopts best practice standards in relation to safety, interpretation, customer service, product promotion and their own leadership and presentation.**
- **Is committed to implementing minimal impact principles and practices.**
- **Endeavours to maximise the positive and minimise the negative economic, social, cultural and experiential impacts of the tours they conduct.**
- **Is committed to ecoefficient resource use.**
- **Respects and, where appropriate, seeks to build good relationships with local people, colleagues, customers and any other visitors to an area.**
- **Is committed to ongoing professional development**

Through the Code of Ethics the EcoGuide Program seeks to encourage guides' commitment to the long term viability of the natural and cultural resources on which nature and ecotourism depends. Expanding the summary points of the code, the nature or ecotour guide:

1. Adopts best practice standards in relation to:

- safety, based on a combination of legal requirements, organisational policy and their own trained judgment;
- communication, interpretation and the education of visitors, including the provision of accurate information;
- customer service, by taking responsibility for the health, comfort and satisfaction of visitors;
- product promotion, including the generation of realistic expectations; and
- their own leadership and presentation.

2. Is committed to implementing minimal impact principles and practices. This includes introducing appropriate minimal impact principles to visitors (depending on the environment being visited), leading by example, and encouraging visitors' adoption of the corresponding minimal impact practices. Where appropriate, this point also includes guides' willingness to engage in monitoring visitors' use of areas to:

- generate awareness and understanding of the environment;
- assist science and research;

- create a professional relationship with resource managers.

3. Endeavours to maximise the positive and minimise the negative economic, social, cultural and experiential impacts of the tours they conduct by:

- demonstrating an understanding of and respect toward local cultures and environments;
- operating in accord with any guidelines or local rules of the host community, expressed or implied;
- operating in accord with relevant legislation and regulation;
- conveying to visitors the value of local cultures, promoting appreciation for local traditions and environments;
- portraying realistic, authentic and preferably sanctioned images of the host community and the environment in question;
- explaining what it is that constitutes acceptable behaviour in the areas being visited;
- leading by example, using positive reinforcement and taking corrective actions where necessary, to gain visitor compliance with suggested practices; and
- seeking to purchase appropriate consumables, equipment and services from the community in which they operate.

4. Is committed to ecoefficient resource use,

- playing their part in reducing energy, resource use and waste - causing less pollution and contributing to more environmentally sustainable practices;

5. Respects and, where appropriate, seeks to build good relationships with local people, colleagues, customers and any other visitors to an area, based on:

- justice – fairness and good faith in dealings;
- competence – the delivery of services as promised;
- utility - in practical terms, a determination to plan and deliver tours with maximum benefits for all concerned;
- expecting and respecting differences in ability, ethnicity, culture, religious beliefs and personal values, including giving consideration to the space and privacy needs of all parties; and
- allowing adequate time for observation and reflection by customers.

6. Is committed to ongoing professional development, such as participation in training, workshops, networking session and other activities that will help upgrade their ability to communicate with and manage clients within natural and cultural settings.

You will become a signatory to this Code by signing the relevant section on the application form. You will be able to find more information on accepted industry best practice on minimal impact for a range of environments and activities plus details on how to be ecoefficient in the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program manual (NEAP 2000).



The criteria

The criteria selected for EcoGuide certification have been based upon the basic skills, knowledge, attitudes and actions nature and ecotour guides are required to demonstrate in their work.

The criteria for certification is based on work experience as a guide and commitment to a code of ethics, combined with a specified set of industry standards. These industry standards are the national competencies from the Tourism Training Package. (1998). For more background detail on competency standards go to Appendix 4. Major details of the standards (the unit, elements and performance criteria) are reproduced in Appendix 5, and you can obtain the complete standards (with additional details such as the range of variables and evidence guides) free by downloading from the following website: [XXXXXXXXXX](#).

The specific competencies selected for the EcoGuide Program include the basic framework of seven core competencies (marked with an asterix*) that are requirements for the Certificate III in Tourism (Tour Guiding)¹. The EcoGuide Program requires additional 7 core competencies (including first aid). This satisfies the demand of the Certificate III in Tourism (Tour Guiding) of a minimum of 4 elective units and provides candidates with a pathway to formal qualifications. The competencies are:

- Work with Colleagues and Customers*
- Work in a Socially Diverse Environment*
- Follow Health, Safety & Security Procedures*
- Develop & Update Tourism Industry Knowledge*
- Work as a Guide*
- Develop & Maintain the General Knowledge Required by Guides*
- Prepare & Present Tour Commentaries*
- Present Interpretive Activities
- Develop Interpretive Content for Ecotourism Activities
- Research & Share General Information on Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Culture
- Lead Tour Groups
- Plan and Develop Interpretive Activities
- Plan and Implement Minimal Impact Operations
- First Aid

The EcoGuide Program exceeds the Certificate III requirements because of the demand for nature and ecotour guides to have specialist knowledge and skills that distinguish them from mainstream guides. These additional units focus on advanced interpretation, minimal impact practices, basic knowledge and protocols in respect of Indigenous people and culture, and appropriate content and specialist knowledge and skills that allow for greater ecological understanding. ([See Appendix 5.](#))



Your assessors

Your assessors have been specially trained in collecting and judging required evidence for nature and ecotour guide competencies, through undergoing an induction program. All our assessors meet the national standards for Assessors (Workplace Certificate IV, Category 2: BSZ40198). Many are also ACCESS² Assessors.

¹ These standards will change in line with developments of the national standards provided by the Tourism Training Package. It is probable that new standards for the EcoGuide Program will be aligned to the proposed Certificate IV (Nature Guiding).

Assessors are required to have:

- Extensive tourism industry experience, especially in the role of guiding in a natural area over a variety of client types and locations.
- High levels of skill in the units they are assessing (or co-opt expertise).
- Supervisory experience.
- A training and assessment qualification.
- Three written references from people involved in the tourism industry (preferably with at least one reference from an existing EcoGuide Assessor).
- Attended and participated in an EcoGuide assessment workshop.
- A commitment to the EcoGuide Program.

It is important that EcoGuide Program Assessors are both available and active.

There is a small team of inaugural Assessors, however the EcoGuide Program is committing to developing more effective and comprehensive State and Territory representation in the next 18 months. People who can fulfill the majority of the criteria required of Assessors are encouraged to apply. Further details on how to become an Assessor and location of assessment workshops and Assessor induction courses are available from the EcoGuide Program Office.



Portfolio of evidence

To assess you as competent, we need to collect proof that you have the necessary skills, knowledge and attitude for work as an ecotour or nature guide, and that you apply these regularly in your work. The evidence you present us with may be indirect – such as documents or responses to oral questioning, or direct- such as presenting an interpretive activity.

Remember, the EcoGuide Program is designed to be equally relevant and accessible to guides who have obtained their abilities (competence) through life experience and on-the-job training as to those who have obtained competence through the formal training and the qualification framework. You do NOT need to have taken a formal training course or have a formal qualification to have prove your competence.

The first step in compiling your portfolio involves starting to collect as much documented evidence of your competence as possible. This is usually indirect evidence, but is still very much a valid part of your credentials. You will find that your detailed resume (see Appendix 1) that lists your work history with job function or duties will help both you and your assessor by acting as a summary document.

Indirect evidence

You can use a variety of *indirect* methods to help prove your competence. These indirect methods may include presenting a variety of documents. For instance your evidence might include (but is not limited to) the following:

- Testimonials from workmates (peers), your employers or supervisors (i.e. referee report).
- Records from work such as minutes of meetings, work rosters, letters of thank from visitors or visitor book comments.
- Products you have produced (e.g. self-guide brochures, photographs of displays, information sheets, video, slide shows or other audio visual presentations etc.)
- Various industry-based qualifications such as driving licence, first aid certificate, Aussie Host, or an instructors ticket for an recreational activity like scuba diving.
- Log books.

Certificates from training or tertiary courses both external and in-house.

More suggestions on indirect evidence and suggestions for supporting documentation are provided in [Appendix 6](#).

When you have collected your evidence and prepared a suitable resume submit it to the EcoGuide Office. You will be assigned a Workplace Assessor. Together with this Assessor you will complete an **evidence chart** that clearly indicates or explains what evidence you are using for each unit of competence, and indicates which competencies you need to provide more evidence for, or already have enough evidence. The evidence chart will be used to help you and your Assessor formulate an assessment plan.

Direct evidence

The EcoGuide Program has a compulsory workplace assessment component – which directly assesses key components of frequently used and highly critical skills such as communication and interpretation as well as providing supporting or supplementary evidence of a range of other guiding skills that are easily demonstrated in the workplace (customer safety, workplace health and safety, risk management). This evidence may be collected by:

- Video assessment (reserved for remote candidates where physical assessment is too costly)
- Simulated on-the-job assessment (this may be in your own work place with a simulated client group, on a set course in a specific environment or a role play at a guide school or assessment workshop)
- Actual on-the-job assessment of you guiding a real tour.

Your assessor may need to collect some additional evidence of your competence in specific competencies. This may be collected through oral or written questions, short set case study scenarios, or even project work. You might be able to suggest how we can collect evidence that is valid and fair in a number of other ways – existing video footage, articles you have written, awards you have been presented and so on.



Activity plan

Whatever form of workplace assessment you choose, you will need to complete an **Activity Plan** that will show us how you have incorporated the various elements that are important to the success of the tour or the specific interpretive activity you do for your assessment. Your Assessor will need to receive this plan at least three weeks prior to you conducting your workplace assessment.

The Assessor is using the activity plan to examine your performance on the competency unit 'Plan and develop interpretive activities', but an activity plan is really an excellent checklist for you. It will help you ensure you complete the workplace assessment segment successfully.

Be aware that today it is not enough to just provide high quality interpretation, it should also be planned and preferably documented (see Nature and Ecotourism Program criteria 2.3 – interpretive planning (NEAP 2000). Why? Well the activity plan will provide a benchmark of what you want to achieve – why you are providing interpretation (the objectives), what topics you could explore, the particular messages you wish to give, and how to do it effectively. Without a plan its too easy to slip into just presenting information – unrelated facts and figures strung together that whilst interesting, perhaps even fun, do not effectively communicate something worthwhile. Without a plan, random additions and subtractions dilute the opportunity to communicate an effective message and your interpretation is likely to become ineffective. Without planning you will also find it hard to show that you have considered risk, incorporated minimal impact and thought about your target audience.

The Activity Plan may follow whatever format you feel comfortable with (a list of where you can find examples or templates is provided in Appendix 6, which you will find useful to give you ideas). Standard information that must be provided is listed below:

- Name of guide:
- Workplace Assessor:
- Workplace Assessment option:
- Location:
- Date of tour:
- Name of tour:
- Audience (size, type of people, eg. age range, languages spoken etc.):

Planning for the tour

Provide brief details on the information you collected for your tour/ activity e.g. tour objectives, research into potential topics, development of themes/messages, resources used to develop tour content, risk management, safety and legal issues etc.

Think about:

- How you might respond and adapt to this particular group?
- How could you develop rapport amongst the group?
- What questions are they likely to ask?
- How are you going to explain the special features of the area?
- What props and resources will you use?
- How can you encourage questions and develop them as components of the tour?
- What theme or message will you develop throughout the tour?
- What information should you give during staging?
- How will you grab their attention during the introduction?

- What minimal impact messages and actions do you need to ensure?
- How will you deliver an effective conclusion and finish the tour?

NOTE: The performance criteria for the competency “Plan and develop interpretive activities” gives more details (you can look this up in Appendix 5) that you may find useful to stimulate your thoughts.

Workplace assessment

You will be required to show direct evidence of your competence in a number of areas by presenting to an Assessor/s a guided activity. You have some choice whether it is in your own workplace during the course of a normal tour (on-the-job) or a ‘mock’ tour. A mock tour (simulated on-the-job) might take place in your own workplace with a ‘pretend’ client group, consist of a role-play at a regional centre or on a pre-set course in a work environment similar to your own. In special circumstances we will consider assessing a video of you guiding or presenting an interpretive activity during the course of a normal tour.

In assessing the guided presentation the Assessors will be particularly looking for your competence in the following areas:

- communicates effectively with customers and colleagues (including those with special needs);
- considers customer comfort and safety;
- uses effective and appropriate presentation techniques;
- applies principles of interpretation including:
 - ◆ selects, prepares, organises and presents current, accurate and relevant information tailored to meet the needs of customers;
 - ◆ effectively uses appropriate theme(s); and
 - ◆ use of appropriate props, visual and/or audio tools;
- where appropriate, encourages customer participation, inviting and responding to matters raised courteously and correctly, or offers help;
- incorporates information into guiding activities in an environmentally and culturally appropriate way;
- encourages interaction among participants, as appropriate;
- answers customer questions correctly and in a polite, friendly and welcoming manner; and
- advise customers about, and provides role model of acceptable behaviours in environments and communities.

An example of the assessment instrument the Workplace Assessor is likely to use as a major checklist of your performance is provided in Appendix 8.

There are different advantages and disadvantages to the different types of workplace assessment that you will need to consider before you decide which option you are going to choose.

Video assessment

Video assessment is only provided as an option to candidates in remote or regional areas or on extended tours where other forms of workplace assessment are likely to prove too expensive or present serious logistical problems. If you wish to take this option you will need to contact the EcoGuide Program Office and discuss your situation.

The video footage must be taken of the guide during a normal tour. The tour must be performed in a 'real' setting (with at least a portion of the footage taken in the outdoor environment) with a 'real' audience of visitors. The tour must be one that occurs on a regular basis and has not been produced specially for this assessment.

A package of information that relates to the video assessment is given in Appendix 9. This includes the guidelines of required footage as well as some tips for the camera person. The most obvious disadvantages of this method of assessment includes:

- You require access to video equipment.
- You will need a person to act as a camera person.
- Quality of video footage may be poor (depending on camera person's expertise and weather/light conditions on the day).
- Footage presents very narrow selection/ spectrum of the tour i.e. Assessors will find audience reactions hard to judge, camera person may bias impressions through missing important sections that contribute (or otherwise) to your success.

You should also be aware that filming may be disruptive to clients on the tour and you will need to get your employers cooperation and permission to film.

Due to the difficulty of assessing on-the-job competence from video footage the videos will be assessed by a minimum of two Assessors. It is expected that more extensive additional evidence in the form of questioning, completion of case study scenarios and project work will be required from candidates submitting videos than from candidates who opt for the simulated on-the-job or on-the-job options.

The most obvious advantage of video assessment is it is relatively cheap.



Simulated on-the-job assessment

Simulated on-the-job assessment provides you with a variety of options to present your guiding abilities through presentation of a 'mock' or simulated tour/interpretive activity. The EcoGuide Program is flexible and will allow negotiation on how best you – or indeed a group of guides – might be assessed effectively and appropriately. Whatever the form of mock tour you conduct you must conform with the following points:

- The simulation should be approximately 60 minutes in length.
- Where the tour has to be compressed the guide must ensure appropriate staging, introduction and conclusion to the tour/activity are given, with a selection of supporting points from the main body of the presentation/activity.
- Part of your presentation has to be within a natural setting.

You will generally be assessed by more than one Assessor. Trainee Assessors may also be present.

Guides are encouraged to consider applying for certification as a regional or environment-specific group. This

Simulated on-the-job assessment might take place:

- as a shortened tour in your own workplace with a ‘pretend’ client group;
- as a role play at a regional centre, guide school or assessment workshop (i.e. in setting away from the guide’s normal workplace); or
- on a pre-set course in a work environment similar to your own (e.g. a group of rainforest guides might all conduct a tour over a pre-selected course such as a well-known rainforest boardwalk, or a group of reef guides might conduct a beach walk on a particular beach). In the actual workplace with a simulated rather than ‘real’ tour group, it may be role-play scenarios in a setting away from the guide’s normal workplace.

Your Assessor or the workshop/guide school assessment coordinator will provide you with more information on things such as the audiovisual resources available at the venue or the natural and cultural resources in the area, if and when appropriate.

The most obvious disadvantages of this type of assessment include:

- You may need to undertake significant preparation and planning.
- Simulations or role plays may not be very realistic or lifelike (i.e. ‘pretend’ visitors do not act as real visitors might, props and activity are not spontaneous, acting abilities of participants can vary and bias assessment).
- You may be assessed outside of a familiar environment or your comfort zone.
- Simulations are generally of shorter duration than normal tours and hence selection of material can prejudice results and a full spectrum of your ability can be hard to present effectively.
- You may have to travel to a regional centre or assessment workshop.
- You will not be able to work whilst you are being assessed.

However, there are some obvious advantages to this type of assessment. This includes such things as:

- It’s not disturbing or disrupting tours with paying visitors.
- It’s generally a cheaper option than actual workplace assessment.
- Networking, training workshops and the support provided by a group going through the same process provide on-going professional development and a range of other opportunities.

For an Assessor the obvious advantage that predetermined scenarios present (e.g. critical incidence such as an accident or response to an unexpected event) means that the range of additional evidence they have to collect of your competence is generally reduced.

To take part in assessment workshops (with or without training workshops) or a regional guide school contact the EcoGuide Program Office to find out if, when and where workshops or guide schools are taking place. A list of opportunities will generally be posted in the Guiding section of *Ecotourism News*.



On-the-job assessment involves an Assessor visiting your workplace and assessing you as you conduct your normal tour/s. The tour must be in a 'real' setting with a 'real' audience of visitors. The tour must be one that occurs on a regular basis and has not been produced specially for this assessment. Part of the tour must occur in a natural setting.

This type of assessment is obviously the most effective and valid in assessing how you perform in your actual workplace.

There are some other advantages:

- You are assessed as part of your normal days work
- Less preparation and planning is required than for simulations or video assessment
- You will be assessed in a thoroughly familiar environment.

However, although this is generally regarded as the most appropriate, it can be very expensive. Assessment cost vary considerably, bearing in mind factors such as the accessibility of your workplace, whether or not the Assessor can leave once they have collected sufficient evidence and how many guides can be assessed on the same day at the same or a near-by venue. Although not as disruptive to visitors on the tour as video filming of your performance (and Assessors take care to be as unobtrusive as possible and are generally not noticed by visitors) you will still need your employers permission, support and cooperation for assessment to take place.

So, what do I have to do?

Stage 1

Ensure you can meet the initial eligibility criteria. If you don't you may need to gain additional work experience (this may be paid or unpaid work.). Fill in the application form (page x) Gather your proof of work as a guide (log book, statutory declaration or employers letters/ references). Ensure your referees complete a referee's report and send it direct to the EcoGuide office. Sign the agreement to comply with the code of ethics. Send this together with your first years annual fee to the EcoGuide Program Office. Begin to gather your portfolio of evidence.

Stage 2

Once stage 1 is accepted you will be teamed up with a Workplace Assessor who lives nearest you or is in your State. Submit your portfolio of evidence. Your Workplace Assessor, in conjunction with the EcoGuide Program Office will co-ordinate your assessment pathway and assessment plan. Your Assessor may need you to collect additional evidence. This may involve completing a number of short answer questions or providing answers to case studies. Evidence of basic skills and knowledge that are be hard to assess directly or are unlikely to be covered in the workplace assessment will be targeted. These questions may be conducted orally or as a written test.

Stage 3

Once you have completed the stage 2 requirements and your workplace assessment process has been agreed upon you may proceed to submit an Activity Plan. The Activity Plan will need to be presented to the Workplace Assessor at least three weeks before assessment is to take place. Workplace assessment is then conducted, and the Assessor will ensure sufficient evidence is collected to judge your competence as an EcoGuide.

How much does it cost?

Annual fees

Certification costs include two components, a once-off assessment fee and an annual fee. The annual renewal fee costs \$120 including GST. Ecotourism Association of Australia (EAA) members receive a discounted rate of \$100 including GST.

The Ecotourism Association of Australia is the peak industry body for the ecotourism sector. The specific advantages of being a member depend upon your membership level, but all members receive a quarterly newsletter (*Ecotourism News*) that keeps you abreast of current news within the industry, as well as a copy and listing in the annual EAA guidebook. EAA membership also gives you discounted attendance fees for some conferences and workshops, and selected publications. Membership thus

You will need to pay your annual fee when you submit stage 1 of the certification process. There is no time limit or restrictions on how long you take to submit stage 2 of the process. Once you have paid your annual fee you are entitled to receive, or continue to receive:

- Guiding section of *Ecotourism News*
- Listing on the Nature and Ecotour Guide Database
- Email news (if required and when available)
- Eligibility for reduced cost for selected publications and training materials
- Discounted EcoGuide professional development workshops



Assessment fee

The workplace assessment fee is based on cost recovery and varies according to the workplace assessment option conducted, the accessibility of a EcoGuide Assessor and the number of guides being assessed. Guides are encouraged to apply as regional or environment-specific group to reduce each individual's costs. Video assessment is likely to be the cheapest option at \$150 including GST (although the costs of producing the video are the guide's responsibility). Actual on-the-job workplace assessment of a single individual is likely to be the most expensive option – with costs likely to be around \$500. Simulated on-the-job assessment costs are likely to range between \$150 - \$500, with a group of guides being assessed for a standardised simulation expected to be the cheapest variation.

For details of existing assessment workshops, or guides you could network with to arrange a group assessment session, look at the announcements in *Ecotourism News* guiding section or contact the National Office.



Re-certification fees

Certification remains valid for three years, after which re-certification will entail demonstration of currency and proof of on-going professional development. Renewal fees will cost \$150 inclusive of GST.

Appeals

If you are not happy with the process or result and you think you have been unfairly dealt with you can appeal the decision. You should lodge a formal Appeal to the EcoGuide Certification Panel within 14 days of receiving the final results of the assessment and ask them to investigate the situation. The Panel may co-opt additional independent expertise to investigate your appeal. They may:

- uphold your appeal;
- reject your appeal; or
- organise a new assessment for you.

You can have a workmate, a supervisor, or any other person you choose to assist you with your appeal. The appeal process will not be a 'them against us' process. The EcoGuide Certification Panel is keen to solve all the problems with assessment

and improve the system for future candidates, so your concerns will be treated seriously and fairly. If you are still unhappy, you can appeal to the State Training Authority who will investigate the matter. For more information contact the EcoGuide Program Office.

Appendix 1

Resume guidelines

It will help the EcoGuide Program to evaluate your application more efficiently if you provide a resume in a standard format. The resume should be concise and brief, and provide a minimum of the following information:

- Personal details
- Education with qualifications specific to guiding / tourism highlighted
- Work history; including dates of service, name of company, address, position held and main duties. Supporting documentation that you could submit as part of your portfolio of evidence should be listed.

You are welcome to submit additional information that you feel is relevant to your application for EcoGuide certification.

Personal details		
Name:		
Address:		
Phone:		
Mobile:		
Fax:		
Email:		
Education (<i>highlight relevant tourism or guiding qualifications</i>)		
Work History		
	<i>Main Duties (list major duties- i.e. driver, meets and greets, campsight preparation, safety officer)</i>	<i>Supporting evidence (if you have supporting documentation that you are submitting as part of your portfolio please list</i>
Name of Company:		
Dates of service:		
Address and contact details:		
Position Held:		

EcoGuide
PROGRAM

Name of Company: Dates of service: Address and contact details: Position Held:		
---	--	--

Appendix 2

Log book template

We encourage guides to record at least basic elements of their work experience and history in order to be able to prove currency and experience in the industry. The exact details of the logbook at the specific layout is very much up to the individual guide, however we suggest you include:

- Operation/Employer- name of operator plus contact details
- Location - e.g. actual location and type/s of environment you are working in (e.g. Wet Tropics rainforest, Mulga scrub)
- Guiding activities undertaken – driver/guide, A.V. shows, snorkeling tours etc. with brief description of tour and your audience type.
- Duties/ Role – list your major duties (this will help you with your resume at later dates)
- Dates – duration of tour and/or employment

We suggest you also get your employer or immediate supervisor to sign the relevant entries.

Operation/ employer and contact details	Location	Guiding activities undertaken	Duties/ Role	Dates	Employers signature

Appendix 3



Referee's report: guidelines

One of your employees/colleagues is applying to become certified under the EcoGuide Program. This will allow them to achieve a nationally recognised qualification, and will enable them to be identified as guides who can provide quality nature and ecotourism experiences in a safe, culturally sensitive and environmentally sustainable manner.

To become certified the guide has to go through a progressive assessment process. A referee's report, together with evidence of work experience and currency forms part of stage 1 of the assessment. We are seeking referees who have direct experience and knowledge of the day-to-day work of the applicant so that we can obtain comments on their work performance. Guides will be required to demonstrate their skills, knowledge, attitudes and actions through a negotiable portfolio of evidence that does include a compulsory element of workplace assessment in later stages of the program.

To assist you in completing the referee's report please review an EcoGuide Program brochure or the Guide Workbook.

Report guidelines

A referee must have direct experience and knowledge of the day-to-day work of the applicant. The specific areas the report must address in relation to the applicant's performance as a guide follows:

- Provide some general comments on the work performance of the guide/applicant as a nature/ecotour guide.
- Explain if and how the applicant incorporates minimal impact principles into their work as a guide.
- Review how effective the applicant is at communicating with visitors and colleagues (including those with special needs) within a range of workplace situations? Is the guide/applicant sensitive of different needs when serving customers from diverse cultural backgrounds?
- Does the guide/applicant respond appropriately in difficult situations e.g. customer complaints, conflict or emergencies?
- Finally, please provide some general comments on the work performance of the guide/applicant as a nature/ecotour guide.

Please ensure you also provide the following details:

- The full name of the guide
- Your connection (employer, supervisor, fellow guide, colleague) to the guide
- Your full contact details (in case we have to contact you in regard to your report).

Thank you for your time.

Please send this report directly to the EcoGuide Program Office: GPO Box 268, Brisbane, Qld 4001.

Appendix 4

National competency standards

Competency standards are statements about the skills and knowledge that people need in order to perform their jobs to the required industry standard, in this case, nature and ecotour guiding. The focus of competency standards is to state, in outcome terms, what people do in their jobs. As such, they define work activities within a particular occupation or role. They are nationally agreed benchmarks for effective business performance in industry.

Competency standards are not training modules and a set of standards is not a training course. You will see that each 'competency' unit consists of several 'elements' which are the building blocks which make up the competency unit. Elements describe vital parts of the process of doing a job i.e they are the elements of a skill that must be carried out for a task to be performed successfully. For example, a vital part of the national competency unit **Work with colleagues and customers** is the element **communication in the workplace** (See appendix 5 to look at this unit).

Each 'element' consists of 'performance criteria' which are statements about the level of performance that is required. The criteria specifically relate to the element in question and are used as the basis for assessment. To follow on from the previous example; when **Working with colleagues and customers** (competency unit), a level of service (performance) would be expected of a competent ecotour guide. That level of service means that '**Communications with customers and colleagues are conducted in an open, professional and friendly manner** (performance criteria).

Competency standards also consist of a Range of Variables, that provide guidelines on different situations and contexts the unit could be used for, and an Evidence Guide that shows the underpinning knowledge and skills needed. These are used to provide guidelines for assessment. If you wish to see the full competency standards you can download them from the following website free of charge: [XXXXXXXXX](#).

Appendix 5

National competency units

Competencies required for Certificate III (Tour Guiding) and EcoGuide certification

	Certificate III (Tour Guiding)		EcoGuide Certification
Core units	Work with Colleagues and Customers	Core units for nature / ecotour	Work with Colleagues and Customers
	Work in a Socially Diverse Environment		Work in a Socially Diverse Environment
	Follow Health, Safety & Security Procedures		Follow Health, Safety & Security Procedures
	Develop & Update Tourism Industry Knowledge		Develop & Update Tourism Industry Knowledge
	Work as a Guide		Work as a Guide
	Develop & Maintain the General Knowledge Required by Guides		Develop & Maintain the General Knowledge Required by Guides
	Prepare & Present Tour Commentaries		Prepare & Present Tour Commentaries
	+ 4 electives, including at least 2 from the guiding pool.		<i>Present Interpretive Activities</i> <i>Develop Interpretive Content for Ecotourism Activities</i> <i>Research & Share General Information on Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Culture</i> <i>Lead Tour Groups</i> <i>Plan and Implement Minimal Impact Operations</i> <i>Plan and Develop Interpretive Activities</i> <i>First Aid (or accredited First Aid course equivalent to Senior First Aid (St Johns/Red Cross))</i>

Unit THHCOR01A

Work With Colleagues and Customers

Unit Descriptor This unit deals with the interpersonal, communication and customer service skills required by all people working in the tourism and hospitality industries.

Element Performance Criteria

- | | | |
|----------|--|---|
| 1 | Communicate in the workplace | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications with customers and colleagues are conducted in an open, professional and friendly manner.• Appropriate language and tone is used.• Effect of personal body language is considered.• Sensitivity to cultural and social differences is shown.• Active listening and questioning are used to ensure effective two-way communication.• Potential and existing conflicts are identified and solutions sought with assistance from colleagues where required. |
| 2 | Provide assistance to internal and external customers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer needs and expectations, including those with specific needs, are correctly identified and appropriate products and services are provided.• All communications with customers are friendly and courteous.• All reasonable needs and requests of customers are met within acceptable enterprise time frames.• Opportunities to enhance the quality of service are identified and taken whenever possible.• Customer dissatisfaction is promptly recognised and action taken to resolve the situation according to individual level of responsibility and enterprise procedures.• Customer complaints are handled positively, sensitively and politely.• Complaints are referred to the appropriate person for follow up in accordance with individual level of responsibility. |
| 3 | Maintain personal presentation standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High standards of personal presentation are practised with consideration of :<ul style="list-style-type: none">• work location• health and safety issues• impact on different types of customers• specific presentation requirements for particular work functions. |
| 4 | Work in a team | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trust, support and respect is shown to team members in day to day work activities.• Cultural differences within the team are accommodated.• Work team goals are jointly identified.• Individual tasks are identified, prioritised and completed within designated time frames.• Assistance is sought from other team members when required.• Assistance is offered to colleagues to ensure designated work goals are met.• Feedback and information from other team members is acknowledged.• Changes to individual responsibilities are re-negotiated to meet reviewed work goals. |

Unit THHCOR02A

Work in a Socially Diverse Environment

Unit Descriptor

This unit deals with the cultural awareness that is required by all people working in the tourism and hospitality industries. It includes the cultural awareness required for serving customers and working with colleagues from diverse backgrounds.

Element

Performance Criteria

1 Communicate with customers and colleagues from diverse backgrounds

- Customers and colleagues from all cultural groups are valued and treated with respect and sensitivity.
- Verbal and non verbal communication takes account of cultural differences.
- Where language barriers exist, efforts are made to communicate through use of gestures or simple words in the other person's language.
- Assistance from colleagues, reference books or outside organisations is obtained when required.

2 Deal with cross cultural misunderstandings

- Issues which may cause conflict or misunderstanding in the workplace are identified.
- Difficulties are addressed with the appropriate people and assistance is sought from team leaders.
- When difficulties or misunderstandings occur, possible cultural differences are considered.
- Efforts are made to resolve the misunderstanding, taking account of cultural considerations.
- Issues and problems are referred to the appropriate team leader/supervisor for follow up.

Unit THHCOR03A

Follow Health, Safety and Security Procedures

Unit Descriptor This unit deals with the skills and knowledge required to follow health, safety and security procedures. This unit applies to all individuals working in the tourism and hospitality industries. It does not cover hygiene or first aid which are found in separate units.

Element Performance Criteria

- | | | |
|----------|---|---|
| 1 | Follow workplace procedures on health, safety and security | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health, safety and security procedures are correctly followed in accordance with enterprise policy and relevant legislation and insurance requirements.• Breaches of health, safety and security procedures are identified and promptly reported.• Any suspicious behaviour or occurrences are promptly reported to the designated person. |
| 2 | Deal with emergency situations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emergency and potential emergency situations are promptly recognised and required action is determined and taken within scope of individual responsibility.• Emergency procedures are correctly followed in accordance with enterprise procedures.• Assistance is promptly sought from colleagues and/or other authorities where appropriate.• Details of emergency situations are accurately reported in accordance with enterprise policy. |
| 3 | Maintain safe personal presentation standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal presentation takes account of the workplace environment and health and safety issues including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• appropriate personal grooming and hygiene• appropriate clothing and footwear |
| 4 | Provide feedback on health, safety and security | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Issues requiring attention are promptly identified.• Issues are raised with the designated person in accordance with enterprise and legislative requirements. |

Unit THTTCO01A

Develop and Update Tourism Industry Knowledge

Unit Descriptor This unit deals with the skills and knowledge required to access, increase and update knowledge of the tourism industry, including the role of different industry sectors and key legislation. This knowledge underpins effective performance in all sectors and applies to all people working in the tourism industry. In-depth knowledge is therefore not required.

Element Performance Criteria

- | | | |
|----------|---|---|
| 1 | Seek information on the tourism industry | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sources of information on the tourism industry are correctly identified and accessed.• Information to assist effective work performance within the industry is obtained, including information on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• economic and social significance of the tourism industry and the role of local communities• different tourism markets and their relevance to industry sectors• relationships between tourism and other industries• different sectors of the industry, their inter-relationships and the services available in each sector• major tourism industry bodies• environmental issues for tourism• industrial relations• specific features of the local/regional industry• career opportunities within the industry• the roles and responsibilities of individual staff members in a successful tourism business• work organisation and time management• quality assurance.• Specific information on the sector of work is accessed.• Industry information is correctly applied in day-to-day work activities. |
| 2 | Update tourism industry knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informal and/or formal research is used to update general knowledge of the tourism industry.• Updated knowledge is shared with customers and colleagues as appropriate, and incorporated into day-to-day work activities. |

Unit THFTG01A

Work as a Guide

Unit Descriptor This unit deals with the skills and knowledge required to ensure effective performance as a guide.

Element Performance Criteria

- | | | |
|----------|--|--|
| 1 | Work as a guide | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Day to day work activities take account of the roles of different types of guides and their relationships with different industry sectors.• Information sources and contacts within the sector are identified and accessed when required.• Industry knowledge is used to enhance the quality of guiding services provided.• Industry and guide networks are used as required. |
| 2 | Guide tours according to legal, ethical and safety requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Day to day guiding activities are conducted in accordance with the legal requirements governing the industry.• Tours are guided according to the general ethics of guiding and the specific ethical considerations for particular tours.• Tours are guided according to safety requirements and in a manner which minimises risk to customers and colleagues. |
| 3 | Develop guiding skills and knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A range of opportunities is used to update the knowledge and skills required by guides.• Sources of assistance and support for guides are identified and accessed when required. |

Unit THFTG03A

Develop and Maintain the General Knowledge Required by Guides

Unit Descriptor This unit deals with the skills and knowledge required to research information – a skill needed by all guides. It highlights the need for on-going research to update and expand the guide’s knowledge.

Element	Performance Criteria
1 Research information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information sources frequently used by guides are accurately identified and accessed.• The credibility and reliability of information sources is evaluated.• Information is obtained in a culturally and environmentally-appropriate way.• Information is assessed and selected according to the needs of existing and potential customers.• Where appropriate, personal reference materials are created and updated in a filing system which allows quick, efficient access.
2 Develop and maintain general knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informal and formal research is used to update general knowledge of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Australia• the local region• current events of interest to visitors• local facilities.• New knowledge is incorporated into guiding activities in a culturally-appropriate way.

Unit THTFTG06A

Prepare and Present Tour Commentaries

Unit Descriptor This unit deals with the skills and knowledge required to prepare and present a commentary to customers. There is a very strong link between this unit and THTFTG09A Present Interpretive Activities.

Element Performance Criteria

- | | | |
|----------|--|--|
| 1 | Prepare information for delivery to customers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information is selected and prepared to meet the needs of customers according to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• geographic origin• cultural background• age• educational level• special interests• requested coverage.• Information is selected and organised according to the tour route and itinerary.• Where commentary is to be presented during an extended tour, themes and information are consistent but not repetitive.• Commentary is constructed following established procedures to facilitate ease of delivery and appropriate timing for delivery of information. |
| 2 | Present commentary to customers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information presented is current, accurate and relevant.• The depth and breadth of the information presented is appropriate for specific customer needs.• Presentation shows appropriate cultural and social sensitivity.• Presentation combines entertainment and learning.• Language used is appropriate for the customer group.• Presentation techniques are used to enhance customer enjoyment including as appropriate:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• humour• body language• voice techniques• story telling and anecdotes.• Equipment is correctly used during presentation. |
| 3 | Interact with customers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer participation is encouraged.• Questions and feedback are invited from customers.• Questions are answered courteously and correctly and, if required, the whole group is involved by repetition of the question and delivery of answer audible to all.• Where the answer to a question is unknown, an offer is made to supply the answer at a future time or the customer is referred to another information sources. |

Unit THTFTG09A

Present Interpretive Activities

Unit Descriptor	<p>This unit deals with the skills and knowledge required to present a range of educational or interpretive activities for different customer groups in all sectors of the tourism industry. It has particular relevance for guides and reflects the importance of interpretation in all tourism activities.</p> <p>This unit is closely linked with THTPPD05A which focuses on the development of interpretive activities.</p>
------------------------	---

Element Performance Criteria

- | | | |
|----------|--|---|
| 1 | Make preparations for interpretive activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time is allocated for activity preparations.• Where appropriate, preparatory research is undertaken and interpretive themes are selected and developed.• All required resources and support materials are obtained, checked and assembled.• Where appropriate, location is checked for safety, cleanliness and customer comfort.• Operational details and timings are confirmed with appropriate colleagues.• Customers are welcomed to the activity in a friendly manner and opportunities are taken to interact with customers prior to commencement of the activity. |
| 2 | Present interpretive activity to customers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customers are welcomed and provided with information to prepare them for the activity.• Material presented is accurate, current, relevant and in a logical order.• Interpretive and presentation techniques are used to enhance the understanding and quality of the experience for the customer including as appropriate:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• interpretive themes• humour• body language• role playing• voice techniques• story telling• games and activities• sensory awareness exercises• use of visual aids and props.• Interpretation combines learning and entertainment• Audience participation and interaction is encouraged within safety guidelines.• Customer questions are correctly answered in a polite, friendly and welcoming manner.• Where the requested information falls outside the individual's area of knowledge, the answer is found from another source or the customer is referred to the other source of information.• Presentation of the activity takes account of environmental, cultural and social sensitivities.• Educational messages are included in the presentation• Interpretive style is adapted to meet the needs of different customer groups. |
| 3 | Liaise with team members | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication with colleagues is maintained on operational and technical aspects to ensure smooth running of the activity as appropriate to the location and circumstances. |

- 4 Deal with Unexpected Events**
- When unexpected events occur, contingency plans are implemented without delay.
 - The situation is quickly assessed and appropriate action is promptly taken.
 - Presentation format, order or structure is amended to minimise impact on customer enjoyment.
 - Unexpected events are used constructively and creatively to enhance the experience.
 - Where safety of customers or colleagues may be threatened, organisation procedures are strictly followed.
 - Sources of assistance are promptly identified and accessed.
- 5 Wind up the activity**
- The activity is brought to a close in a manner which takes account of the need to leave customers with positive impressions and feelings.
 - Colleagues are informed of completion of activity as required.
 - Resources are made ready for the next customer group or stored as appropriate.
 - Any defects in equipment and resources are recorded and/or reported according to organisation procedures.
 - Activity location and/or resources are prepared for next customer group or closed down according to organisation procedures.

Unit THTFTG10A

Develop Interpretive Content for Ecotourism Activities

Unit Descriptor This unit deals with the skills and knowledge required to research and prepare interpretive content for specialist ecotourism activities which focus on areas such as geology, geography, flora and fauna. It incorporates knowledge of biology and ecological principles.

In a tourism context this skill should always be combined with interpretive skills which are covered in THTFTG09A Present Interpretive Activities.

Element Performance Criteria

- | | | |
|----------|---|---|
| 1 | Research specialist ecological information | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research techniques are used to access current, accurate and relevant information on specialist ecological topics.• Subjects of potential customer interest are made the focus of research activities. |
| 2 | Prepare interpretive content | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educational and interpretive themes and messages are identified from research and incorporated into ecotourism activities.• Activities are developed to include focus on the relationship between key themes and other parts of the eco-system.• Content is prepared according to the principles of interpretation.• Activities incorporate biological knowledge and ecological principles.• Themes and activities are generated in accordance with ecotourism codes of practice. |

Unit THFTG07A

Research and Share General Information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture

Unit Descriptor	This unit deals with the skills and knowledge required to research and share information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies which is generally available, in a culturally appropriate way. The unit recognises that there is no single Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and emphasises the importance of culturally appropriate behaviour and local community consultation. This unit does not include in-depth interpretation of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.
------------------------	---

Element	Performance Criteria
1 Research general information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sources of information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies are correctly identified.• Where appropriate, written sources of information are accurately interpreted and the required information is extracted and checked with local communities prior to use.• Other information sources are accessed in a culturally appropriate way.• Appropriate community members are contacted and guidance is sought on how information should be used in a tourism context.• When seeking information, behaviour shows respect for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and customs and correct protocol is followed.• Knowledge gained is shared with work colleagues to increase cultural awareness and understanding in the organisation.
2 Share general information with customers on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All information shared with customers is accurate.• Information includes reference to the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies.• Information is shared in a manner which shows respect for local community values and customs.• Information is shared in a manner which enhances customer understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies.• Customer questions are answered in a polite and friendly manner and in accordance with community wishes about what information can be shared with customers.

Unit THFTG05A

Lead Tour Groups

Unit Descriptor This unit deals with the skills and knowledge required to undertake the group co-ordination role played by the guide.

Element Performance Criteria

- | | | |
|----------|---|---|
| 1 | Co-ordinate group movements | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The importance of keeping the tour on schedule is fully conveyed to the tour group.• The schedule is maintained by the entire group wherever possible.• Techniques are used promptly to attract group attention when required.• The group is fully advised of procedures which assist in causing minimum disruption and disturbance to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• other tour members• host communities• the environment.• Physical movement of the groups is completed in an orderly manner.• Customers are advised of appropriate procedures if they become separated from the group.• Group instructions are given in a manner and pace appropriate to the particular group.• Customers are encouraged to seek clarification of instructions where necessary. |
| 2 | Encourage group morale and goodwill | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Techniques are used to build group cohesion during the tour.• Balance between the needs of individuals and the group is taken into consideration. |
| 3 | Deal with conflicts and difficulties | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential for conflict is quickly assessed and appropriate action is taken to prevent and/or resolve the conflict.• Appropriate action is taken to deal with difficult tour members.• Action is taken in a manner likely to optimise the goodwill and morale of the group.• Procedures for controlling drug or alcohol-affected customers are accurately followed according to company guidelines and legal requirements. |

Unit THTPPD05A

Plan and Develop Interpretive Activities

Unit Descriptor

This unit deals with the skills and knowledge required to plan and develop interpretive activities for different customer groups. It is particularly relevant for those developing activities within tour operations and attractions/theme parks.

The actual presentation of activities is covered in Unit THFTG09A Present Interpretive Activities.

Element Performance Criteria

- | | | |
|----------|------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Establish need for activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need for activity is identified, based on customer requests, customer feedback, product development initiatives and wider community needs.• Educational, interpretive and commercial objectives of the activity are established.• If required, approval for the activity is obtained from the appropriate source. |
| 2 | Develop the activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possible themes and messages for the activity are identified and developed.• A range of potential information and resources are identified and accessed in a manner which is culturally and environmentally appropriate, including other specialists as required.• Risk audit is undertaken and incorporated into activity development.• Breadth and depth of messages and supporting information selected is appropriate to the customer.• Resources to support the activity are developed within designated timelines.• Activity is developed within budget.• Activity is developed to meet objectives.• Activity is developed according to the principles of interpretation.• Colleagues are consulted and kept informed during the development of the activity.• Activity is promoted in conjunction with relevant colleagues and according to organisation marketing objectives. |
| 3 | Evaluate activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formal and informal feedback is obtained from customers and colleagues.• Activity is modified according to feedback received.• Ongoing review mechanisms are established and implemented to ensure continuous improvement of activity according to its objectives. |

Unit THTPPD04A

Plan and Implement Minimal Impact Operations

Unit Descriptor This unit deals with the skills and knowledge required to create and operate tourism activities which minimise negative environmental and social impacts. It is particularly relevant to ecotourism operations but should apply to all tourism operations.

Element Performance Criteria

- | | | |
|----------|--|---|
| 1 | Plan environmentally responsible activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experiences and activities are developed according to ecotourism codes of practice including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• combination of education and interpretation on the natural environment• environmental sustainability• return to the local environment/community• cultural sensitivity• meeting of realistic client expectations.• Tour procedures are developed to limit potential negative impacts and maximise positive impacts on the natural environment.• Tour procedures are developed to limit potential negative impacts and maximise positive impacts on the local community. |
| 2 | Conduct activities with minimal impact | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimal impact procedures are selected and used as appropriate to the area, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• waste disposal• use of tracks• energy use• noise• souveniring• setting of camps• interactions with wildlife• group size• activity specific guidelines• local customs/courtesies.• Customers are advised about acceptable behaviours in:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• environments• communities.• Individual behaviour provides a role model for customers and colleagues in relation to minimal impact. |
| 3 | Monitor impacts and changes | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changes in the environment are accurately monitored and recorded.• Where appropriate, environmental information is collected on behalf of environmental/social agencies and authorities.• Appropriate authorities are advised of environmental and social change. |

Unit THHGHS03A

Provide First Aid

Unit Descriptor This unit deals with the skills and knowledge required to provide first aid. It complies with standards, practices and procedures of St John Ambulance Association and equivalent first aid bodies.

Element	Performance Criteria
1 Assess and respond to emergency first aid situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emergency situations are quickly and correctly recognised.• The situation is assessed and a decision promptly made regarding action required.• Assistance from emergency services/colleagues/customers is organised where appropriate.
2 Provide appropriate treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Patient's physical condition is assessed from visible vital signs.• First Aid is provided to stabilise the patient's physical and mental condition in accordance with organisation policy on provision of first aid and recognised first aid procedures.
3 Monitor the situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Back up services appropriate to the situation are identified and notified.• Information on the victim's condition is accurately and clearly conveyed to emergency services personnel.
4 Prepare an incident report	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emergency situations are documented according to company procedures.• Reports provided are clear, accurate and timely.

Appendix 6

Examples of potential indirect evidence and supporting documentation

Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-house training records • Visitor book comments or letters of appreciation • Interpretive activity plans • Advertising brochures • Supervisors reports/ progress reviews • Critical incident reports • Maintenance logs • Logbook of hours • Awards & Prizes • Attendance at conferences, seminars, training courses • Resume • Other
Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-guide brochures • Interpretive displays (photos of) • Touch table (photos of) • Video or other a.v. presentations • Video or other evidence of theatrical performances • Photos of interpretive signage • Other
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal qualifications in tour guiding or tourism/ ecotourism related courses • Industry-based qualification such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Commercial bus/boat/plane licence/accreditation ◆ Radio license ◆ Aussie host ◆ Activity-related instructional tickets ◆ First Aid tickets ◆ Other
Testimonials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers letter of reference • Referee reports • Peer or client reviews • Others
Presentations/ Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skits, slideshow or other a.v. presentation • Specified projects (assessors discretion) • Other
Questioning/ interviews (this may be combined with presentations and case studies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written or oral short answer questions • Essay questions • Verbal reports on how to plan schedules, interpretive activities, understanding of procedures for critical incidences etc
Case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses to specified case studies • Responses to selected scenes from guide training video

Appendix 7

 **Activity plan**

Appendix 8

Sample workplace assessment observation checklist

Assessors:

1. Please attach a brochure or advertising material for the tour to this assessment form.
2. Refer to applicants planning document before finalising assessment

Applicant's Name	Assessment type: simulated, on-the-job, video
Assessor's Name	Type and length of tour
Date	Location
Pertinent additional comments: weather, season (high/low), school holidays etc.	Type of audience (numbers, genders, ages, nationality etc)

Competent	Not yet Competent	Comments: (Including any Best Practice, suggestions for improvements, identified training gaps...)
Signature of Assessor	Date:	

Assessors:

As a check we suggest monitoring the response of the audience:

Audience response	Comments
Positive: smiles, laughter, applause, questions, compliments attentiveness	
Negative: fidgeting, lack of attention, leaving, complaints etc.	

AV's / props etc	Competency	Competent	Not yet competent	Comments Necessary/ superfluous
List AV's / Props, microphone used				
Appropriate for environment	THTFTG09A			
Appropriate for audience	THTFTG09A			
Equipment operated	THTFTG06A			

Assessors:

In the following tables tick the appropriate category ie competent/not yet competent and provide detailed comments on performance and potential training needs/additional experience. Add details of Best Practice to comments section. If elements are not observed you may need to get additional evidence through oral questioning.

Staging	Competency	Competent	Not yet competent	Comments
Welcomed in friendly manner	THTFTG09A			
Interact with customers prior to tour	THTFTG09A			
Appropriate information given (tour requirements, length, difficulty, safety issues)	THTFTG09A THHCOR01 A			

Introduction	Competency	Competent	Not yet competent	Comments
Stimulating & provocative	THTFTG09A			
Appropriate expectations established	THTFTG09A			
Identified theme/intent of tour	THTFTG09A			

Communication	Competency	Competent	Not yet competent	Comments
Professional personal presentation	THHCOR01 A THHCOR03 A			
Encourages visitors to use other senses	THTFTG06A THTFTG09A			
Audible	THTFTG06A			
Appropriate speed	THTFTG06A			
Used effective voice inflection/articulation	THTFTG06A THTFTG09A			
Effective use of pauses	THTFTG06A			
Eye contact	THTFTG06A			
Effective gestures (body language)	THTFTG06A THTFTG09A			
Use of story telling/ games/activities/ anecdotes	THTFTG06A THTFTG09A			
Appropriate use of humour	THTFTG06A THTFTG09A			
Appropriate language and vocabulary: use of analogies, metaphors	THTFTG06A THHCOR01 A			

EcoGuide
PROGRAM

Appropriate technical level	THFTG06A			
-----------------------------	----------	--	--	--

EcoGuide
PROGRAM

Tour Content / Structure	Competency	Competent	Not yet competent	Comments
Content / information tailored to specific audience	THTFTG06A			
Clear theme that ties content together	THTFTG09A THTFTG10A			
Current, accurate & relevant information	THTFTG06A THTFTG09A THTFTG10A			
Logical order of and sequence of information	THTFTG09A			
Involved the audience	THTFTG06A THTFTG09A THHCOR01 A			

Client Management / Group leadership	Competency	Competent	Not yet competent	Comments
Respond to clients needs/considerate	THHCOR01 A THTFTG05A			
Group control	THTFTG05A			
Offer to supply information if unknown	THTFTG06A THTFTG09A			
Encouragement of group interaction	THTFTG06A THTFTG05A			
Prevention and resolution of group conflict	THTFTG05A THHCOR01 A			
Provides answers in polite, friendly manner	THTFTG09A THTFTG06A			
Safety issues considered	THTFTG09A THHCOR03 A THTFTG01A			
Reaction to unexpected situations	THTFTG09A			

Minimal impact	Competency	Competent	Not yet competent	Comments
Monitor & direct group behaviour	THTPPD04A			
Role model minimal impact	THTPPD04A			
Inform audience of appropriate minimal impact behaviour	THTPPD04A			
Promotion of longer-term conservation	THTPPD04A THTFTG05A			

Cultural sensitivity & awareness	Competency	Competent	Not yet competent	Comments
Treats all cultural groups with respect and sensitivity	THHCOR02 A			

EcoGuide
PROGRAM

culturally & socially sensitive				
---------------------------------	--	--	--	--

Conclusion	Competency	Competent	Not yet competent	Comments
clear & positive conclusion	THFTG09 A			
theme/message reinforced				

Appendix 9

Video tip sheet

Your certification video will not be compared to the work of Steven Spielberg, but the production quality should not detract from the assessor's ability to judge your good work. These tips have been produced to help you and the camera person produce a video that will allow you to present your work in the best possible way.

What is required

You should submit one videotape of yourself presenting a tour, or part of a tour, clearly showing you with the audience. The tour must be performed in a 'real' setting with a 'real' audience of clients or visitors. The tour must be one that occurs on a regular basis and has not been produced specially for this assessment. Part of the tour must occur in a natural setting.

Please note:

- The video must be no longer than 60 minutes in length. In cases where your tour/ interpretive activity takes longer than 60 minutes, you must show the staging, introduction and conclusion, and then other selected parts of the tour.
- Special effects, titles and other editing is not required and will not add to your score. It is recommended that the guide wear a microphone.

The actual content/accuracy of information will only be assessed for appropriate level of technical explanation/vocabulary. How well the guide addresses the topic and the appropriateness for the audience will also be evaluated.

Tips for the camera person

The tour that you are filming will be an actual tour which will have a 'real' audience who will have paid for the tour. When you are filming the guide it is important to remember this and make sure the comfort and enjoyment of the audience is the priority, not the filming of the guide. If visitors feel that your presence and the camera are negatively effecting their experience there may be complaints to the company or agency. When using the camera please make sure that you try and minimize these impact on the audience by being discrete and as unobtrusive as possible.

Format

Your video should be VHS only.

Tape

Use a high quality videotape. Cheap tapes may break.

Video Camera

Make sure your camera's battery is fully charged before video taping. Read the manual's instructions on battery care and charging to be sure you have enough power to last for the entire presentation.

Test it

Test your camera to make sure it is working before the tour.

Sound

Good sound is essential to assessing your video. If the presentation can't be heard, the tape is useless.

A clip-on (lavaliere) microphone will provide the best quality sound. If you don't have a clip-on microphone available, use the microphone built into the camera. For best results, keep the camera within 2 to 4 metres of the guide. If you have control, try not to record on a windy day or when there is a lot of outside noise (for example, traffic, machinery, or people talking nearby). It is best to test the audio before you do the real thing.

Lighting

Outside light is best, but make sure that the sun is behind the camera, as this will prevent a "silhouette" effect. Also, early morning and early evening afford the softest and most flattering light. If you can, shoot during these times of "sweet light". If bright light is your only option, try and get the audience and guide to face one another so that one has sun on the left ear, the other on the right ear. In most cases, you want to avoid forcing the visitors to face into the sun.

The camera should have the sun behind it, so that it is shooting away from the light toward the subject.

Camera techniques

- Make sure your camera is kept steady at all times.
- Once you are ready you should "pan" or slowly turn the camera, across the horizon enough to give the assessor an idea of the setting. Note: record the audience during this segment.
- Next, aim the camera at the presenter. Try to avoid zooming in and out of the subject because this can be very hard to watch. Frame the person from the waist up unless they are moving around frequently – in which case, zoom all the way out for a "whole body" shot.

Nervousness

Many guides become intimidated by the presence of a video camera.

The camera should be kept around 2-4 meters away from the guide and slightly off to the side if possible. The guide should speak to his/her audience, not to the camera. A piece of tape over the red "record light" will help avoid additional pressure on the guide and audience.

Final notes:

Clearly LABEL your videotapes with your name, date, and identifying number (from the cover of your certification package) and send it to the EcoGuide Program Office.

If your presentation is exemplary, you may be asked whether you wish to have it used as an "anchor". If you agree, your presentation will be copied and shared with those who need assistance in attaining competency in this area. The tape will only be used with your written permission.

EcoGuide
PROGRAM

Appendix 10



Resources, bibliography and contact details

Interpretation

Reference books

Field, G. (2000) *Developing ecotours and other interpretive activity programs: A guidebook for planning, designing, promoting and conducting ecotourism activity programs*. Conservation and Land Management, WA.

Ham, S. (1992) *Environmental interpretation: A practical guide for people with big ideas and small budgets*, North America Press, Colorado

McArthur, S. (1998), Introducing the undercapitalised world of interpretation in ecotourism, in Lindberg, K., Epler-Wood, M., & Engeldrum, D. (eds.), *A guide for planners and managers*, Vol. 2, The Ecotourism Society, Vermont, US

Regnier, K., Gross, M., & Zimmerman, R. (1992) *The interpreter's guidebook: Techniques for programs and presentations*, Interpreter's Handbook series, University of Wisconsin Press, Wisconsin.

Tilden F, 1977, *Interpreting our heritage*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

Videos and workbooks:

Ballantyne, R., & Bennett, S. (1997) *Critiquing natural and cultural heritage interpretive practice* (video and workbook), Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane

Crabtree, A. (2000) *Plan and develop interpretive activities*, South West TAFE, Warrnambool. Web: [www:swtafe.vic.edu.au/trends/tourism/samples.htm](http://www.swtafe.vic.edu.au/trends/tourism/samples.htm).

Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage (1996) *The art of interpretation, The art of presenting and The art of guiding* (training videos and workbook series), Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage, Brisbane, Queensland

Department of Conservation and Land Management, WA (1998) *Best recipes for interpreting our heritage: Activities for ecotour guides and others*, CALM, Perth.

Operator workbooks and interpretive manuals can be obtained from:

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park operators' manual

Available from: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

PO Box 1379

TOWNSVILLE Qld 4810

Ph: 07 4750 0700

Fraser Island interpretation manual

Available from: Environmental Tourism Unit, Tourism Queensland

GPO Box 328

BRISBANE Qld 4001

Ph: 07 3406 5400

Kakadu National Park tour operators' handbook

Available from: Kakadu National Park

P.O. Box 71

JABIRU NT 0886

Ph: 08 8938 1120

Kimberley operators' manual

Available from: Department of Conservation and Land Management (WA)

Perth WA 6000

Outback interpretation manual

Available from: Environmental Tourism Unit, Tourism Queensland
GPO Box 328
BRISBANE Qld 4001
Ph: 07 3406 5400

Wet Tropics interpretation manual

Available from: Wet Tropics Management Authority
P.O. Box 205
CAIRNS Qld 4870
Ph: 07 4052 0555

Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park operators' workbook

Available from: Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park
P.O. Box 119
YULARA NT 0872
Ph: 08 8956 3138

Guide training

Department of Tourism (Cwth) (1995) *Directory of ecotourism education* (1995), DoT, Canberra.

Available from Commonwealth Office of National Tourism (see Appendix 3 for contact details) or on the web at: www.dist.gov.au/tourism/publications/ecotour/introduction. Elements of the directory relating to tour guiding and interpretation are being updated by Monash University's Department of Management at the time of writing, and are expected to be available by October 2000. For further information contact Rosemary.Black@BusEco.monash.edu.au

Environmental education course database: www.erin.gov.au/net/neid.html (check currency of these courses with the relevant institutions direct).

Tourism education directory: an annual publication listing Australian undergraduate tourism and hospitality courses for Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific. For further details contact your local library or the publishers, New Hobson Press on 02 310 2257.

Information on activity specific courses and outdoor recreation can be obtained through the Outdoor Recreation Council of Australia 02 9923 4275.

A video and workbook specifically targeted at nature and ecotour guides and relating to the national competency standards and NEGCP Program will be available from the Queensland University of Technology from October 2000. For further information contact Roy Ballantyne at r.ballantyne@qut.edu.au

Minimal impact information/guidelines

Basche, C. (1999) *Being green is your business*. Tourism Council Australia, Woolloomooloo.

Boele, N. (1996) *Tourism switched on*. Tourism Council Australia, Barton.

Commonwealth Department of Science, Industry and Tourism (1996) *Developing tourism: projects in profile*. DIST, Canberra.

Commonwealth Department of Tourism (1994) *A guide to innovative technology for sustainable tourism*. DoT, Canberra.

Commonwealth Department of Tourism (1995) *Best practice ecotourism: a guide to energy and waste minimisation*. DoT,

- Crabtree, A. & Newson, M. (2000) *Plan and implement minimal impact operations*. South West Institute of TAFE.
- Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development (Qld) (1998) *Protocols for consultation and negotiation with Aboriginal people*. Queensland Government, Brisbane.
- Office of National Tourism (1996) *Projecting Success*. ONT, Canberra.
- Lindenmayer, D., & Press, K. (1989) *Spotlighting manual*. ACT Parks and Conservation Service, Tuggeranong.
- MacKinnon, S. (1996) *Waterwise manual of best practices: Water conservation in large hotels and resorts*. Wet Paper, Ashmore.
- Newson, M. (2000) *Plan and develop ecologically sustainable tourism operations*. South West Institute of TAFE, Warrnambool.
- Talacko, J. & Andrews, G. (1998) *Being Green Keeps You Out of the Red*. Tourism Council Australia, Woolloomooloo.
- Tourism Queensland (1999) *Grow your ecotourism business volumes 1 and 2*. Tourism Queensland, Brisbane.

General reading

- Beeton, S. (1998) *Ecotourism: a guide for local communities*. Land Links, Collingwood.
- Commonwealth Department of Tourism (1994) *National ecotourism strategy*. DoT, Canberra.
- Department of Environment, Sport and Territories (1997) *Coastal tourism: a manual for sustainable development*. DEST, Canberra.
- Department of Tourism, Small Business and Industry (1997) *Queensland ecotourism plan*. DTSBI, Brisbane.
- Ecologically Sustainable Development Working Groups (1991) *Ecologically sustainable working groups final report: tourism*. Government of Australia, Canberra.
- Harris, R. & Leiper, N. (1995) *Sustainable tourism: an Australian perspective*. Butterworth-Heinemann, Chatswood.
- McKercher, B. (1998) *The business of nature-based tourism*. Hospitality Press, Elsternwick.
- Tourism Council Australia (1998) *Code of sustainable practice*. TCA, Woolloomooloo.

Useful contacts

Protected Area Managers

Australian Antarctic Division

Channel Highway
KINGSTON Tas 7050
Ph 03 6232 3209

Department of Conservation and Land Management (WA)

Locked Bag 104
BENTLEY DELIVERY CENTRE WA 6983

Department of Environment, Conservation and Land Management (SA)

Archers House

ADELAIDE SA 5000

Department of Natural Resources (Qld)

P.O. Box 155
BRISBANE Qld 4002
Ph 07 3896 3111

Department of Natural Resources (Vic)

14th Floor
8 Nicholson Street
EAST MELBOURNE Vic 3002
Ph: 03 9637 8000

Environment ACT

P.O. Box 44

Ph: 02 6207 9777

Environment Australia

GPO Box 636
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Ph: 02 6274 1111

Environmental Protection Authority (Qld)

P.O. Box 155
BRISBANE Qld 4002
Ph: 07 3229 7111
Web: www.env.qld.gov.au

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

P.O. Box 1379
TOWNSVILLE Qld 4810
Ph: 07 4750 0700

National Parks and Wildlife (SA)

P.O. Box 1047
ADELAIDE SA 5001
Ph: 08 8204 9000

National Parks and Wildlife Service (Tas)

GPO Box 44A
HOBART Tas 7001
Ph: 1300 351 513

New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service

P.O. Box 1967
HURSTVILLE NSW 2220
Ph: 02 9585 6444

Parks Victoria

Private Bag 8
KEW Vic 3101
Ph: 131 963

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

P.O. Box 155
BRISBANE Qld 4002
Ph: 07 3227 7111

Wet Tropics Management Authority

P.O. Box 205
CAIRNS Qld 4870
Ph: 07 4052 0555

Government organisations

Office of National Tourism

GPO Box 1545
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Ph: 02 6213 6000
Web: <http://www.tourism.gov.au>
(NB: site contains *Directory of ecotourism education* that

Australian Heritage Commission

GPO Box 787
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Ph: 02 6274 1111
www.ahc.gov.au

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC)

P.O. Box 17
WODEN ACT 2606
Ph: 02 6289 8881

Statistical Data

Australian Bureau of Statistics

313 Adelaide Street
BRISBANE 4001
Ph: 02 6252 7922/ 07 3222 6351

Bureau of Tourism Research

GPO Box 1545
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Ph: 02 6213 7124
Web: www.btr.gov.au

See also ATC

Tourism Research

CRC for Sustainable Tourism

PMB 50
GOLD COAST MAIL CENTRE Qld 9726
Ph: 07 5594 8172
Web: www.crctourism.com.au

CSIRO Tourism Research Program

P.O. Box 84
LYNEHAM ACT 2602
Ph: 02 6242 1600

Industry Associations

Australian Farm and Country Tourism Inc

6th Floor
230 Collins Street
MELBOURNE Vic 3000
Ph: 03 9650 2922

Australian Bed and Breakfast Council

RMB 4110
BENALLA Vic 3672
Ph: 03 5762 2792

Australian Federation of Travel Agents

Level 3
309 Pitt Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Australian Tourism Operators Network

P.O. Box 510
Collins Street West
MELBOURNE Vic 8009
Ph: 03 9654 2248

Ecotourism Association of Australia

GPO Box 268
BRISBANE Qld 4001
Ph: 07 3229 5550
Fax: 07 3229 5255
Web: www.ecotourism.org.au

Inbound Tourism Organisation of Australia

P.O. Box 646
KINGS CROSS NSW 2011
Ph: 02 9360 5955

Outdoor Recreation Council of Australia

P.O. Box 422
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2059
Ph: 02 9931 1464

Pacific Asia Travel Association

P.O. Box 646
KINGS CROSS NSW 2011
Ph: 02 9332 3599

The Ecotourism Society

P.O. Box 755
NORTH BENNINGTON VT 05257-0755
USA
Ph: 0011 1 802 447 2121

Tourism Council Australia (National Office)

Level 17
100 William Street
WOOLMOOLOO NSW 2011
Ph: 02 9358 6055
Fax: 02 9358 6188

Tourism Training Australia

P.O. Box Q309
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Ph: 02 9290 1055
Interpretation/guiding

Ecotourism Association of Australia

GPO Box 268
BRISBANE Qld 4001
Ph: 07 3229 5550
Web: www.ecotourism.org.au

Inbound Tourism Organisation of Australia

P.O. Box 646
KINGS CROSS NSW 2011
Ph: 02 9360 5955

Interpretation Australia Association

PO Box 1231
COLLINGWOOD VIC 3066
Web: <http://www.vicnet.net.au/~interpoz>
www.vicnet.net.au/~interpoz

IATG

P.O. Box 1491
POTTS POINT NSW 2111
Ph: 02 9363 9870
Fax: 02 9327 8357

IATG President

PO Box 287
PARAP NT 0820
Ph: 08 8981 0939

Nature and Ecotour Guide Certification Program (NEGCP)

C/- NEAP Administrator
GPO Box 268
BRISBANE Qld 4001
Ph: 07 3229 5550
Or
NEGCP Project Manager
P.O. Box 438
PORT DOUGLAS Qld 4871
Ph: 074099 3862

Savannah Guides

PO Box 6268
CAIRNS Qld 4870
Ph: 07 4031 7933
Web: www.savannah-guides.com.au

National/state tourism bodies (marketing)

(Note: States also have a number of regional bodies known as Regional Tourism Associations/Organisations-RTAs/RTOs)

Australian Tourist Commission

P.O. Box 2721
SYDNEY NSW 2001
Ph: 02 6360 1111

Northern Territory Tourist Commission

GPO Box 1155
DARWIN NT 0801
Ph: 08 8999 3900

South Australian Tourism Commission

GPO Box 1972
ADELAIDE SA 5001
Ph: 1300 655 276

Tourism New South Wales

55 Harrington Street
THE ROCKS NSW 2000

Web: www.tourism.nsw.gov.au

Tourism Queensland

GPO Box 328
BRISBANE Qld 4001
Ph: 07 3406 5400
Web: www.tq.com.au

Tourism Tasmania

GPO Box 399
HOBART Tas 7001
Ph: 03 6230 8235

Tourism Victoria

GPO Box 2219T
MELBOURNE Vic 3001
Ph: 132 842

Western Australian Tourism Commission

GPO Box X2261
PERTH WA 6001
Ph: 1300 361 351
Web: www.westernaustralia.net

Sources of information on ecologically sustainable practices

Australian Gas Association

GPO Box 323
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Ph: 02 6247 3955
Web: www.gas.asn.au

Department of Primary Industries and Energy

GPO Box 858
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Ph: 02 6272 3933
Web: www.dpie.gov.au

Environment Australia

Community Information Unit

GPO Box 787
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Ph: 1800 803 772
Web: www.erin.gov.au/net/environet.html

Environment Australia

Environment Technology and Best Practice Section

P.O. Box E305
KINGSTON ACT 2604
Ph: 02 6274 1032
Web: www.erin.gov.au/net/environet.html

Environment Australia

Waste Minimisation Section

GPO Box 787
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Ph: 1800 803 772

Environmental Management Industry Association of Australia

P.O. Box 237
CIVIC ACT 2608
Ph: 1800 500 299
Web: www.emiaa.org.au

Standards Australia

P.O. Box 1055
STRATHFIELD NSW 2135
Ph: 1300 654 646
Web: www.standards.com.au

Sustainable Energy Development Authority

P.O. Box N442
Grosvenor Place
SYDNEY NSW 1220
Ph: 02 9291 5260
Web: www.seda.nsw.gov.au

Sustainable Energy Industries Council of Australia

P.O. Box 411
DICKSON ACT 2602
Ph: 02 6241 9260

Waste Management Association of Australia

P.O. Box 146
CHATSWOOD NSW 2057
Ph: 02 9281 7655

Water Services Association of Australia

7/469 La Trobe Street
MELBOURNE Vic 3000
Ph: 03 9606 0678
Web: www.wsaa.asn.au

Other useful organisations

**The Australian Association for Environmental
Education**

PO Box 64
LINDFIELD NSW 2070

Gould League

PO Box 117
MOORABBIN VIC 3189
Ph: 09 9532 0909

Tread Lightly!

PO Box 220
Crows Nest Qld 4355
Ph: 1800 650 881

Appendix 11

Application

Name:
Company:
Postal Address:
.....State:.....Postcode:.....
Telephone: Fax: Mobile :
Email:

Payment details

Please nominate the amount payable based on the method of assessment. All fees are GST inclusive. A tax invoice will be issued on receipt of payment:

Application fee \$ Annual fee \$ TOTAL \$

I enclose a **cheque/money order** made payable to the **Ecotourism Association of Australia**

Credit card payment:

Please debit my: Bankcard/MasterCard/Visa (please circle)

Name on Card:

Card No: Expiry:

Signature: Date:

Referees

Name:
Company/Agency:
Postal Address:
.....State:.....Postcode:.....
Telephone: Fax: Mobile :
Email:

Referee has been contacted by applicant

Name:
Company/Agency:
Postal Address:
.....State:.....Postcode:.....
Telephone: Fax: Mobile :
Email:

Referee has been contacted by applicant

Declaration

To be signed by the applicant after working through the EcoGuide Program. All information must be current and complete.

I confirm that:

1. The information contained in this application or otherwise supplied is complete and accurate and constitutes an honest and reasonable assessment of adherence to criteria nominated.
2. I agree to and accept the terms and conditions of the EcoGuide Program set out in this document.
3. I agree to provide on request any additional information required by the EcoGuide Program Panel to support this application.
4. If granted certification, I acknowledge the responsibility to uphold the required code of ethics and to meet the expectations of consumers and the industry arising from the EcoGuide Program.

Conditions of Certification

- The applicant agrees by making this application to be bound by these terms and conditions.
- The EcoGuide Program is not bound to accept any application for accreditation and, at its absolute discretion, can decline to accept the application and refuse to grant or continue accreditation to the applicant. Written explanation will be given in this case.
- The applicant acknowledges that the EcoGuide Program relies absolutely upon the frank and full disclosure of all matters outlined in the application. Any incorrect/misleading description or failure to provide information as set out in this application may lead to the EcoGuide Program withdrawing accreditation.
- A fee will be levied on application for certification. This fee may be subject to change over time.
- The applicant agrees to immediately notify the EcoGuide Program Administrator of any change to information provided in the application and accepts and acknowledges that the certification may be varied accordingly at the absolute discretion of the EcoGuide Program Panel.

Name: Signature:.....Date:

Code of ethics

The applicant agrees to uphold the following code of ethics:

The certified nature or ecotour guide:

- Adopts best practice standards in relation to safety, interpretation, customer service, product promotion and their own leadership and presentation.
- Is committed to implementing minimal impact principles and practices.
- Endeavours to maximise the positive and minimise the negative economic, social, cultural and experiential impacts of the tours they conduct.
- Is committed to ecoefficient resource use.
- Respects and, where appropriate, seeks to build good relationships with local people, colleagues, customers and any other visitors to an area.
- Is committed to ongoing professional development.

Name: Signature:.....Date:

Checklist: stage 1

To be included with this application:

**EcoGuide
PROGRAM**

- brochure and guidelines given to two referees (who have been asked to send report direct to EcoGuide Program office)
- 2 alternate referees contact details
- proof of work experience
- signed code of ethics
- resume
- application fee

PROGRAM
