

Criteria for hotel operators quality grading



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1.0 General Overview

1.1 Introduction

In Northern Ireland, all Hotels must be certified by Tourism Northern Ireland (Tourism NI) i.e. they are inspected by an officer of Tourism NI to ensure they comply with minimum standards set by the Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992 and can only trade when issued with a certificate. Details of minimum criteria are available to view on www.tourismni.com/accommodation.

In addition to the requirements to meet minimum standards set by legislation, accommodation in Northern Ireland can choose to be graded by Tourism NI according to pre-set quality standards. This document describes the requirements for the Quality Standards for Hotel Accommodation in Northern Ireland.

We have based the requirements for the star grades on the existing criteria of all the partner organisations plus extensive research into the needs and expectations of visitors. There has also been wide consultation with the hospitality industry.

Feedback received from industry shows strong support for a common quality standard for serviced accommodation throughout the countries where the schemes operate. Our aim for quality standards is to work continually with the Northern Ireland industry and partner organisations which operate the scheme and to strive together to raise quality standards in line with the ever evolving expectations of consumers.

Any establishment certified as a Hotel by Tourism NI who wishes to be awarded a star rating will be assessed using the hotel requirements we list in this document. There is strong evidence to support this from research into consumers' expectations and understanding of what services and facilities should be provided in a hotel.

1.2 Designator

We have developed a number of designators to help consumers understand the different types of accommodation available.

The range of designators for hotel accommodation is as follows:

Hotel, Country House Hotel, Town House Hotel

Hotels in each of these designators need to fulfil all hotel requirements detailed in this document.

Designator	General Description
Hotel	Formal accommodation with 15 double en suite bedrooms, full service.
Country House Hotel	A country house hotel with ample grounds or gardens, in a rural or semi-rural situation with an emphasis on peace and quiet.
Town House Hotel	High quality town/city centre property of individual and distinctive style with a maximum of 50 rooms. High staff-to-guest ratio. Public areas may be limited.

1.0 General Overview

1.3 Hotel Standard 2011

Sustainability: Doing Business Even Better

Green tourism and sustainable practices in your business are one and the same thing; it's all about taking small steps that enable you to do business even better, not differently. Small changes will not only save money, improve employee relations, enhance profitability and provide a richer experience for customers but over time you will also improve your business's impact on the local community, environment and economy. Going Green does not have to be a chore and is just as applicable to properties in a city centre as a rural location.

Throughout this document, items are included on how you can improve the sustainable performance of your business. They are not compulsory but are recommended if you wish to make a positive impact on the environment and potentially save resources and therefore money.

Improving your Accessibility

Many people have access needs including disabled people such as those with hearing and visual impairments, wheelchair users, older and less mobile people and people with pushchairs.

By making some small adjustments to your facilities, providing information on your accessibility and understanding the needs of disabled people, your business will appeal to a wider range of visitors and attract more business.

Accessibility good practice is included throughout this document to help you consider and improve your accessibility.

Legal Obligations

Tourism businesses have obligations under discrimination legislation. Tourism providers should treat everyone accessing their goods, facilities or services fairly, regardless of their gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religion or belief, and guard against making assumptions about the characteristics of individuals.

Discrimination legislation requires that service providers must think ahead and take steps to address barriers that impede disabled people. Providers should not wait until a disabled person experiences difficulties using a service, as this may make it too late to make the necessary adjustment.

1. Make 'reasonable' changes to the way things are done – such as changing practices, policies or procedures where disabled people would be at a 'substantial disadvantage' e.g. amend a 'no dogs' policy.
2. Make 'reasonable' changes to the built environment – such as making changes to the structure of a building to improve access e.g. altering or removing a physical feature.
3. Provide auxiliary aids and services – such as providing information in an accessible format, an induction loop for customers with hearing aids.

A service provider can not legally justify failing to provide a reasonable adjustment. The only question is whether the adjustment is a 'reasonable' one to make. What is 'reasonable' will depend on a number of circumstances, including the cost of an adjustment, potential benefit it may bring to other customers, the resources an organisation has and how practical the changes are.

1.0 General Overview

1.4 Grading - Determining the Star Rating

An establishment will need to satisfy three elements to reach a particular star rating:

1. All relevant requirements must be met.
2. The overall percentage score for quality must reach the appropriate band.
3. The relevant standard for the star rating.

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

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

1.5 Quality Bands

One Star	30 – 46%
Two Star	47 – 54%
Three Star	55 – 69%
Four Star	70 – 84%
Five Star	85 – 100%

1.0 General Overview

1.6 Key requirements at each rating level

1 Star 30-46%

- Resident guests, once registered, have access to the hotel at all times. Proprietor and/or staff on site all day and as a minimum on call to resident guests at night.
- A bar or sitting area with a Liquor Licence.
- Hotel generally open seven days a week during its operating season providing, on every day open, the level of service and facilities appropriate to its star rating.
- Proprietor and/or staff available during the day and evening to receive guests and provide information/services such as hot drinks and light refreshments.
- A clearly designated reception facility.
- Meeting all the current statutory obligations and providing Public Liability insurance cover.
- Internal or direct dial telephone system required (minimum is ability to phone from bedroom to reception and vice versa).

2 Star 47-54% (In addition to the requirements for One Star)

- All areas of operation should meet the Two Star level of quality for cleanliness, maintenance and hospitality, and for the quality of physical facilities and delivery of services.
- Internal or direct dial telephone system required (minimum is ability to phone from bedroom to reception and vice versa).

3 Star 55-69% (In addition to the requirements for Two Star)

- All areas of operation should meet the Three Star level of quality for cleanliness, maintenance and hospitality, and for the quality of physical facilities and delivery of services.
- Once registered, residents have access at all times during the day and evening (e.g. from 7 am until 11 pm) without use of a key.
- Access available outside these times.
- A dining room/restaurant or similar eating area serving evening meals and midday refreshments at least seven days a week.
- Room service as a minimum of hot and cold drinks and light snacks (e.g. sandwiches) during daytime and evening. Guests should be made aware of this service provision via room information and made aware of prices before ordering.
- All bedrooms with en suite bathrooms.
- Internal or direct dial telephone system required (minimum is ability to phone from bedroom to reception and vice versa).
- Wi-Fi available in public areas.
- Internal or direct dial telephone system required (minimum is ability to phone from bedroom to reception and vice versa).

1.0 General Overview

4 Star 70-84% (In addition to the requirements for Three Star)

Expectation is for higher quality of service levels in all departments and in general higher staffing levels; as well as a serious approach and clear focus to the food and beverage offering.

- All areas of operation should meet the Four Star level of quality for cleanliness, maintenance and hospitality, and for the quality of physical facilities and delivery of services.
- Once registered, residents should have 24 hour access, facilitated by on-duty staff.
- 24 hour room service, including cooked breakfast and full dinner during restaurant opening hours
- Enhanced services offered, e.g. afternoon tea, offer of luggage assistance, meals at lunchtime, table service on request at breakfast.
- At least one restaurant, open to residents and non-residents, for breakfast and dinner seven days a week.
- All bedrooms with en suite bathrooms and all with WC and thermostatically controlled showers.
- Wi-Fi or internet connection provided in bedrooms.
- Internal or direct dial telephone system required (minimum is ability to phone from bedroom to reception and vice versa).

5 Star 85-100% (In addition to the requirements for Four Star)

Excellent staffing levels with well-structured and dedicated teams with depth in management levels.

Exceptional levels of proactive service and customer care.

- All areas of operation should meet the Five Star level of quality for cleanliness, maintenance, hospitality, and for the quality of physical facilities and delivery of services.
- Hotel opens seven days a week.
- Enhanced services offered e.g. valet parking, escort to bedrooms, proactive table service in bars and lounges and at breakfast, 'concierge' service, 24-hour reception, 24-hour room service, full afternoon tea.
- At least one restaurant, open to residents and non-residents for all meals seven days a week.
- Minimum 80% bedrooms with en suite bathroom with WC, bath and thermostatically controlled shower. 20% may be shower only.
- A choice of environments in public areas of sufficient relevant size to provide generous personal space.
- Additional facilities e.g. secondary dining, leisure, business centre, spa, etc.
- A number of permanent luxury suites available.
- Internal or direct dial telephone system required (minimum is ability to phone from bedroom to reception and vice versa).

2.0 General Requirements

2.1 Overall Standards

2.1.1 Statutory Obligations

1 Star

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

Comply with all relevant statutory requirements including:

- Fire Risk Assessment: to comply with The Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010; supply evidence that a Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out annually, for guidance refer to: www.nifrs.org.
- Food Safety/Hygiene: register with the local Environmental Health department.
- Guest Register: provide a register of all guests; record passport numbers of all overseas guests.
- Health & Safety: operate safely with due regard to health and safety legislation and with evidence of consideration for the safety of guests and security of guests' property; supply clear information on how to contact proprietor/manager in case of emergency. Supply multilingual instructions or diagram for fire evacuation procedure.
- Planning: comply with all local planning and building control regulations.
- Licensing: comply with all local licensing regulations.
- Hotel Proprietors Act (Northern Ireland) 1958: comply with this Act.
- Data Protection Act 1998: comply with this Act.
- Prices & Payment: make clear to guests exactly what is included in all prices quoted for accommodation including taxes and any other surcharges; adhere to and not exceed prices quoted at the time of booking.
- Cancellation Policy: communicate clearly the cancellation policy to guests at the time of booking i.e. by telephone, fax or email.
- Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008: comply with these Regulations by describing accurately in any advertisement, brochure, or other printed or electronic media, the facilities and services provided.
- Advise visitors at the time of booking and subsequently, of any change, if the accommodation offered is in an unconnected annexe or similar, and indicate the location of such accommodation and any difference in comfort and/or amenities from accommodation in the main property.
- Discrimination: Comply with all applicable legislation. Welcome all guests courteously and without discrimination in relation to gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief. Make 'reasonable' adjustments to improve service for disabled customers.
- Provide guests with clean, hygienic, safe and well-maintained accommodation at all times.

2 Star

- As One Star

3 Star

- As One Star

4 Star

- As One Star

5 Star

- As One Star

2.0 General Requirements

2.1.2 Safety and Security

- 1 Star**
 - Proprietor and/or staff to be on site or on call to resident guests 24 hours a day.
 - Printed instructions, provided in the bedrooms, for summoning assistance during an emergency at night. If the proprietor lives away from the hotel, it is expected that a member of management or staff sleep on site and that their night-time contact details are clearly advertised in every bedroom.
 - A high degree of general safety and security, including information on evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency, to be advertised in every bedroom. Multi-lingual emergency procedure notices or use of symbols/diagrams clearly displayed in every bedroom.
 - Adequate measures for the security of guests and their property.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star.
- 3 Star**
 - Proprietor and/or staff to be on duty from 7am to 11pm, and on site 24 hours.
- 4 Star**
 - Proprietor and/or staff to be on duty 24 hours a day.
- 5 Star**
 - As Four Star.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Ensure the fire evacuation strategy details emergency exit procedures for disabled people. Remember guests with hearing impairment may not hear knocking at the door. Record room location and any specific requirements and pass to staff at change of shift.

2.1.3 Maintenance

- 1 Star**
 - Buildings, their fixtures, furnishings, fittings and exterior and interior décor maintained in a sound, clean condition and fit for the purpose intended.
 - All electrical and gas equipment in good working order and regularly serviced to ensure guests' safety.
 - Monitoring procedure in place for reporting of broken/damaged items in guests' bedrooms.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star.
- 3 Star**
 - As One Star.
- 4 Star**
 - Buildings, their fixtures, furnishings, fittings and exterior and interior décor maintained in a superior condition.
- 5 Star**
 - Buildings, their fixtures, furnishings, fittings and exterior and interior décor maintained in an excellent, immaculate condition.

2.1.4 Cleanliness

- 1 Star**
 - As the cleanliness of hotels at every star rating is of paramount importance to the consumer, consistent standards of cleanliness are essential at every hotel. Particular attention should be given to bathrooms, shower rooms and toilets especially items involving direct contact for guests, including:
 - Bedding, linen and towels
 - Baths, showers, washbasins and WCs
 - Flooring and seating
 - Crockery, cutlery and glassware
 - All bathrooms and shower rooms cleaned daily and checked to ensure appropriate standards of cleanliness.
 - Bathrooms and shower rooms clean and fresh smelling. Particular attention paid to WCs, plugholes, shower curtains, mirrors and extractor fans.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - As One Star
- 4 Star**
 - As One Star
- 5 Star**
 - Exceptional standards of housekeeping.

2.0 General Requirements

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Consider using environmentally friendly and chlorine-free cleaning products, such as microfibre cloths that reduce the amount of cleaning liquid required.

2.1.5 Physical Quality

- 1 Star** • Hotels providing accommodation of acceptable quality and comfort.
- 2 Star** • Hotels providing accommodation of acceptable quality and comfort.
- 3 Star** • Hotels providing good quality, comfortable and more spacious accommodation.
- 4 Star** • Hotels setting high standards for the hospitality industry.
 - All aspects of the hotel offering a very good level of quality, spaciousness and comfort.
- 5 Star** • Hotels setting the highest international standards for the hospitality industry.
 - All aspects of the hotel offering an excellent level of quality, spaciousness and comfort, providing an overall luxurious standard.

2.1.6 Hospitality

- 1 Star** • Guests will be greeted and acknowledged in a friendly, efficient and courteous manner throughout their stay.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • As One Star
- 4 Star** • Proactive interaction and anticipation of guests' needs.
- 5 Star** • Excellent levels of hospitality and customer care offering a personalised approach to every individual guest.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Ensure staff ask if the guest has any access needs.
- Welcome assistance dogs (legal obligation). Many disabled people rely on assistance dogs to provide independence. See the dog as being part of the person.

2.1.7 Services

- 1 Star** • A relatively straightforward range of services offered – often provided by the proprietor and family/staff.
 - All enquiries, requests and reservations, correspondence and complaints from visitors dealt with promptly and politely.
 - Service and efficiency skills of a competent standard.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Good guest service with appropriate staffing levels to provide a prompt and efficient service without detriment to other service areas at the same time.
 - Good social skills and anticipation of individual guests' needs evident in dealings with all guests.
 - All staff demonstrate a positive attitude and a willingness to help.
 - Service, efficiency and technical skills of a good standard.

2.0 General Requirements

- 4 Star**
 - Very good guest service, giving guests the impression of being well cared for by trained, professional and attentive staff.
 - Very good social skills and anticipation of individual guests' needs evident in dealings with all guests.
 - Service, efficiency and technical skills of a very good standard and without detriment to other service areas at any time.
- 5 Star**
 - Flawless and unobtrusive guest service, giving guests the impression of being very well cared for by highly trained, professional, proactive and well managed staff.
 - Excellent social skills and anticipation of individual guests' needs evident in dealings with all guests.
 - Service and efficiency of an excellent standard without detriment to other service areas at any time. Delivered by a structured team of staff with a management and supervisory hierarchy.
 - Some multi-lingual staff in hotels with an international market.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Specific training is available for staff on how to welcome all types of guests e.g. Welcome All and WorldHost Customers with Disabilities.
- Consider learning to communicate in basic British Sign Language (BSL).

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Include public transport options in promotional and booking information.
- Ensure all staff are fully briefed and updated on the hotel's sustainable tourism policy, particularly reception, concierge and dining room staff.

2.1.8 Opening

- 1 Star**
 - Hotel generally open seven days a week during its operating season providing, on every day open, a consistent level of service and facilities appropriate to its star rating.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - As One Star
- 4 Star**
 - As One Star
- 5 Star**
 - Open seven days a week, providing a consistent level of service and facilities.

2.1.9 Guest access

- 1 Star**
 - Once registered, resident guests have access to the hotel at all times. Proprietor and/or staff to be on site or on call to resident guests 24 hours a day.
 - It is acceptable for a front door key or security code to be issued.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Once registered, residents must have access at all times during the day and evening without needing to use a key. Best practice suggests between 7 am and 11 pm.
 - There must be access available outside these times possibly using a door key or security code.
- 4 Star**
 - 24-hour access, facilitated by on-duty staff.
- 5 Star**
 - Both prior to and after registration, guests should have access without having to ring a bell. During the night a bell is acceptable.

2.0 General Requirements

2.2 Services

2.2.1 Staff appearance

- 1 Star**
 - Staff tidily dressed and well groomed
 - Staff clothing fresh and well ironed.
 - Particular attention given to personal hygiene.
 - The style of hotel may dictate how staff dress – from formal uniforms to informal and casual outfits.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Staff smartly attired
 - Staff dressed in such a way that guests can easily distinguish between staff and guests.
- 4 Star**
 - As Three Star
- 5 Star**
 - Staff impeccably presented and in a uniform way.

2.2.2 Reservations, prices and billing

All Star Levels

There should be an easy and efficient booking service that includes the following:

- Prospective visitors told clearly what is included in the prices quoted for accommodation, meals and refreshments, including service charges, taxes and other surcharges.
- Other information which may impact on the guests' stay e.g. smoking policy, refurbishment work in progress, planned functions/events etc. provided. Where house policy dictates that certain facilities need to be pre-booked e.g. spa treatments, dinner etc., these should also be mentioned at the time of booking.
- Advance warning if the restaurant is to be closed or likely to become fully booked.
- Full details of the hotel's cancellation policy. This especially includes information about charging credit cards for cancellation or changes to the booking.
- Information about deposits if required, including details of how the deposit is taken and whether or not it is refundable on cancellation.
- Clear explanation of charges for additional services or available facilities including cancellation terms.
- Information about any unacceptable types of payment, e.g. credit cards, travellers' cheques etc.
- Information and full details about any fees charged for the acceptance of credit cards.
- Bookings may be confirmed in writing by email/letter, verbally by phone or via text message.

Communication with prospective guests, whether verbal or written, should be prompt, efficient, professional and helpful. A good first impression is critical at all levels. Therefore:

- The price agreed at the time of booking must not be exceeded.
- All agreed prices must include service charges, taxes and other surcharges where applicable.
- Every endeavour should be made to advise guests in advance about the hotel location and any car parking restrictions.
- Visitors advised when they are booking, and subsequently in the case of any change, if the accommodation offered is in an unconnected annexe or has separate external access.
- Unless notified in writing in advance, price confirmation is to be at least indicated on a key card or similar.
- Prospective guests should be left confident that their booking was recorded accurately. As a minimum, name, address and/or contact telephone number recorded at the time of booking.
- All bookings handled in a friendly and courteous manner, even when there is no dedicated reservations department.
- Provide each guest with printed or clearly written details of payment due and a receipt on request.

2.0 General Requirements

- Presentation of accounts ensuring that purchases are clearly detailed.
- Particular attention should be paid to accuracy.
- The VAT element of the account (where applicable) should be clearly identified.

2 Star • As One Star

- 3 Star**
- As All Star Ratings plus:
 - Ability to make a prompt and effective reservation during the day and evening.
 - Guests should be able to charge all account services to one main account, and pay on departure.
 - Guest accounts to be updated on an ongoing basis to minimise the delay at check-out.
 - Confirmation provided by email/fax/text or letter on request from hotel (not only from third party booking site).

- 4 Star**
- As All Star Ratings plus:
 - Ability to make a prompt and effective reservation during the day and up to 11 pm.
 - Confirmation provided by email/fax/text or letter from hotel (not only from third party booking site).

- 5 Star**
- As All Star Ratings plus:
 - Ability to make a prompt and effective reservation 24 hours a day. Every booking confirmed by letter, fax, email or text message.
 - The account well explained and well presented, perhaps in an envelope or folder.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Consider drafting and promoting an environmental management policy, setting out the environmental and sustainable management actions taken by you and your organisation.

2.2.3 Reception: staff availability for guest arrival and departure

- 1 Star** As reception is likely to be the guests' first and last point of contact with a hotel, special attention should be given to providing a good standard of customer care.
- Direct guest contact given priority over other reception duties. Proprietor or staff available to receive guests and provide information/services from just before breakfast to late evening at approximately 10 pm.
 - Receptionist's attention possibly summoned by a bell or telephone.
 - Guests clearly directed to their room and given a brief explanation of location of hotel facilities.
 - The issuing of a bedroom key to guests and the charging of items to account always done discreetly to ensure guests' security.
 - In the interests of safety, guests to be escorted to bedrooms if requested.
 - Guests informed of meal times, bar opening times etc.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Reception service provided from just before breakfast until late evening. Best practice suggests 7am to 11 pm.

2.0 General Requirements

- Receptionist on duty during busy check-in/out times when it is essential to provide full cover.
- However, at other times, possibly summoned by bell or telephone for minimal delay.
- Additional reception services such as express check-out, 24 hour check-in/out, provided in hotels where the need exists, e.g. in hotels in city centres and hotels by airports.
- 4 Star**
 - Reception staffed at all times between 7 am and 11 pm. Staffing levels sufficient to ensure a minimal delay.
 - A member of staff – possibly the night porter – available and able to perform reception duties between 11 pm and 7 am.
- 5 Star**
 - Night Porter can be on call and does not necessarily have to be on duty all night.
 - 24 hour reception with sufficient highly skilled staff to ensure no delay for guests.
 - Arriving guests greeted without delay outside the hotel entrance.
 - Valet parking offered. A seamless transition on arrival from outside the hotel entrance to the reception area.
 - All guests offered an escort to the bedroom by a member of staff with excellent skills.
 - Guests informed of important hotel and bedroom facilities by the escort.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Ensure guests identifying themselves as being disabled e.g. visual impairment are offered a familiarisation tour.

2.2.4 Luggage handling

- 1 Star**
 - Assistance with luggage available on request throughout the day and evening.
- 2 Star**
 - Secure short-term luggage storage.
- 3 Star**
 - As Two Star
- 4 Star**
 - Assistance with luggage readily available.
- 5 Star**
 - Hotel staff taking control of luggage from guests' arrival outside to prompt delivery in bedroom. The same quality of service repeated on departure.
 - Secure short-term luggage storage with receipt provided.

2.2.5 Other – Reception/Concierge/Housekeeping services

- 1 Star**
 - Iron and ironing board available.
 - Early morning call on request or an alarm using a clock, telephone or television available in the room.
 - Appropriate tourist, travel and/or local information available, suitable to market needs. Should be well presented e.g. in a folder, rack or electronic.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Laundry service may be provided and advertised with prices.
 - Incoming telephone calls to resident guests handled in a professional and discreet manner.
 - Messages written down and every effort made to inform guests a message is waiting for them. Interactive TV and voicemail systems are acceptable.
 - A selection of daily newspapers available for purchase or complimentary paper provided.
 - Well presented travel and/or local information such as details of visitor attractions, taxi firms, banks, churches, railway stations, florists etc. available in bedrooms.
- 4 Star**
 - Laundry and possibly dry cleaning service provided and advertised with prices.
 - Early morning call. Guests not expected to set their own alarm call.
 - Messages delivered promptly to the bedrooms or to the guest in the public areas.
 - Newspapers can be ordered and delivered to guests' bedrooms.
- 5 Star**
 - Pressing service (minimum same day), dry cleaning and 24 hour return laundry service.

2.0 General Requirements

- Cloakroom service (coat storage) with a receipt provided.
- An advertised shoe cleaning service which can include a conveniently positioned machine or shoe cleaning materials available.
- All messages discreetly handled and written messages presented in an envelope.
- A full concierge service provided.
- This may vary depending on location and style of the hotel but may include some or all of the following: theatre bookings, sightseeing trips, taxi bookings, valet parking and other requests.

BEST PRACTICE

As One Star

- Provide a vibrating alarm clock for hearing impaired guests.
- Provide hotel information in a range of formats e.g. large print, Braille, photographs, MP3 downloads and audio description on websites.

Sustainable

- Make best use of local tourist information in both the hotel's promotional literature and visitor information folders located in the bedrooms.

2.0 General Requirements

2.3 All Meals - Dining Quality and Information

2.3.1 Dining provision

- 1 Star**
 - Designated eating areas can include restaurant, dining room, brasserie, bistro or bar.
 - A designated eating area, open to residents for breakfast, seven days a week.
 - Evening meals provided at least five days a week, snack alternative when dining room closed.
 - Residents' guests may take dinner by prior arrangement.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - At least one restaurant, open for dinner six days a week, to residents and their guests.
 - On the day the restaurant is not open a bar meal option or similar must be available.
 - A bar is not acceptable as the only eating area.
 - Opening hours of restaurant/dining room to suit market
 - It is acceptable that non-residents are required to book dinner in advance.
- 4 Star**
 - At least one restaurant, open to residents and non-residents, for breakfast and dinner seven days a week.
 - A superior brasserie/bistro/bar is acceptable for lunches, providing that guests are able to eat in comfort and order and be served at the table.
- 5 Star**
 - At least one restaurant, open to residents and non-residents, for all meals seven days a week.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Try to be flexible with meal times to help diabetic people regulate their blood sugar.

2.3.2 Restaurant ownership

- 1 Star** Where dinner is served in a restaurant, which is a separate entity or contracted out, it will nevertheless be assessed as part of the overall operation. Such a restaurant is acceptable as long as:
 - The hotel accepts full responsibility over the quality of surrounding, food and service provided in the restaurant.
 - Guests are informed when they book a bedroom that dinner is served in a separate restaurant which is available onsite.
 - There is a facility for guests to charge meals and drinks to their hotel account.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - As One Star
- 4 Star**
 - As One Star
- 5 Star**
 - As One Star

2.0 General Requirements

2.3.3 Tables/table appointment

- 1 Star**
 - Individual tables available for each guest or party.
 - Table appointments of acceptable quality and appropriate to the type of meal served.
 - Tables of an appropriate height for comfortable dining, even if set close together.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Table appointments of good quality, in many cases using propriety brands.
- 4 Star**
 - Table appointments of very good quality.
 - Tables to be a good size and well spaced.
- 5 Star**
 - Table appointments of excellent quality.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Ensure tables are stable and provide support for people rising from their chairs.
- Ensure crockery contrasts with table linen or surface to assist visually impaired guests.

2.3.4 Meal service: staff

- 1 Star**
 - Sufficient staff to ensure prompt service at all meals served.
 - Polite and courteous staff providing an acceptable standard of customer care and demonstrating acceptable levels of knowledge about the dishes being served.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - A supervisor on duty in the dining area to ensure a more efficient service.
 - Polite and courteous staff providing a good standard of customer care and demonstrating good levels of food, beverage and wine product knowledge and service skills.
- 4 Star**
 - A manager on duty in the restaurant to ensure a highly efficient service.
 - Unobtrusive, polite and courteous staff providing a very good standard of customer care and demonstrating very good levels of food, beverage and wine product knowledge and service skills.
- 5 Star**
 - A well-structured team of staff with management presence.
 - The restaurant always staffed.
 - Unobtrusive, polite and courteous staff providing an excellent standard of customer care. Highly trained, professional and proactive staff.
 - Guests welcomed and escorted to their table at all meals and in all areas where food and drinks are served.
 - Prompt table service in public areas where guests seat themselves.
 - Staff demonstrating excellent levels of food, beverage and wine product knowledge and service skills.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

2.0 General Requirements

2.4 Breakfast

2.4.1 Breakfast times

- 1 Star** • Breakfast served at an appropriate time for the market of the hotel.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Breakfast served for at least one and a half hours.
- 4 Star** • Breakfast served for at least two hours.
- 5 Star** • Breakfast served for at least three hours.

2.4.2 Pricing

- 1 Star** • Breakfast price on display when a room-only rate option is available.
 - The price of any breakfast items carrying an additional charge clearly advertised.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • If breakfast available to non-residents, the price should be clearly displayed.
- 4 Star** • As Three Star
- 5 Star** • As Three Star

2.4.3 Menu

- 1 Star** • A verbal explanation of dishes available is acceptable.
- 2 Star** • A clean and well-presented menu provided for breakfasts served from the kitchen.
 - Where there is a buffet, any items available but not included on the buffet should be detailed on a menu.
- 3 Star** • As Two Star
- 4 Star** • A menu detailing the full breakfast range provided.
- 5 Star** • A menu, presented to the highest standard, detailing the full breakfast range provided.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Provide a large print menu (minimum font size 14pt) in a clear font such as Arial.

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Menus highlighting local specialities can really help differentiate your offering from that of your competitors. So highlight the connection with local producers wherever possible, and incorporate a little description of where ingredients are sourced, who the producer is and why you have chosen them.

2.0 General Requirements

2.4.4 Range of dishes

- 1 Star**
 - A set menu is acceptable.
 - Continental offering to include as a minimum: fruit juice, cereal, yogurt, coffee, tea and toast. Cooked breakfast to include at least three hot items e.g. bacon, egg, sausage, mushroom, baked beans, plus coffee, tea and toast.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - A good range of hot and cold items, together with a choice of good quality accompaniments. Examples include preserves, ground and decaffeinated coffee, teas, butters and spreads.
 - Guests offered a choice of how their eggs are cooked to include fried, poached, boiled and scrambled.
- 4 Star**
 - A superior range of hot and cold items.
- 5 Star**
 - A comprehensive range of excellent quality hot and cold dishes. Examples might include freshly squeezed juices, a variety of fresh fruits in season and ripe, cold meats and cheeses, free range eggs, local specialities, fresh fish, range of bakery items and pastries, special dietary produce and a comprehensive range of appetising hot items.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Provide for different dietary requirements e.g. dairy free, wheat free, lactose free, nut free.

2.4.5 Food quality

- 1 Star**
 - All hot foods well presented and served at the correct temperature on hot plates.
 - Care taken to ensure that juices are chilled, toast is crisp and coffee/tea is freshly made.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Good quality ingredients cooked and presented to a good standard.
 - Consideration given to providing healthy eating options.
- 4 Star**
 - All food cooked correctly and prepared with a very good level of skill, care and presentation and served at the correct temperature.
- 5 Star**
 - High quality ingredients cooked and presented to an excellent standard.

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Where possible, source food and drink products locally. Build up relationships with local producers and traders.
- Staff dealing with food and drink service should be fully briefed on the source, characteristics and significance

o2.4.6 Style of Service
All Star Ratings

2.0 General Requirements

- 1 Star** Table appointment appropriate to the style of service.
- Self-service buffet-style is acceptable. However, buffets should be replenished on a regular basis. Where provided, buffets laid out and operated in a practical and customer-friendly manner.
 - Self-service hot beverages are acceptable.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Breakfast tables laid with a table setting for each guest of main knife, side knife, fork, cereal spoon, cup, saucer, teaspoon, side plate and napkin. The table laid with salt, pepper, sugar, milk, butter and preserves.
- Hot beverages are served at the table but the additional option of high quality vending machines is acceptable.
- 4 Star** • There is a heightened level of service with extra attention to detail.
- Table service advertised and available on request.
- 5 Star** • Table service proactively offered.
- Where there is a buffet, a higher level of assistance available.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Offer guests assistance with self-service buffet where appropriate.

2.0 General Requirements

2.5 Other Meals

2.5.1 Dinner: hours of service

- 1 Star**
 - Dinner served for minimum of one hour, specific times according to market need and clearly advertised.
 - Some snacks or cold meal provision for late arrivals, by prior arrangement.
 - It is acceptable for resident guests to be asked to choose dishes for dinner at an earlier time of the day. However, guests who prefer to choose later, including up to the meal time, must be able to do so without being put under any pressure to choose earlier. New arrivals should not be asked to choose dishes for dinner in advance of arrival.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - The restaurant should be open for a minimum of two hours. Specific opening times to suit market need.
 - Guests not expected to choose dishes for dinner at an earlier time of day.
 - Mealtimes should be clearly advertised and explained to guests in advance, to avoid disappointment.
- 4 Star**
 - As Three Star
- 5 Star**
 - As Three Star

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Try to be flexible with meal times to help diabetic people regulate their blood sugar.

2.5.2 Range of dishes

- 1 Star**
 - Two courses available. The main course should be a substantial hot dish.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Three courses available.
 - A choice of substantial hot and cold dishes.
- 4 Star**
 - As Three Star.
- 5 Star**
 - An extensive choice of food.
 - A broad range of dishes of outstanding quality.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Provide for different dietary requirements e.g. dairy free, wheat free, lactose free, nut free.

2.0 General Requirements

2.5.3 Menu and pricing

- 1 Star**
 - Acceptable, clean and well presented written menus, with accurate descriptions. However, it is acceptable instead to offer a verbal description of the dishes available.
 - The price of dinner should be displayed if the accommodation tariff does not include dinner.
 - Clearly advertised price for any surcharge made for a particular dish.
 - Additional charges, such as VAT, service, and cover charge, clearly identified on the menus.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Quality written menus with prices clearly displayed.
- 4 Star**
 - As Three Star
- 5 Star**
 - Immaculately presented menus.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Provide a large print menu (minimum font size 14pt) in a clear font such as Arial.

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Menus highlighting local specialities can really help differentiate your offering from that of your competitors. So highlight the connection with local producers wherever possible and incorporate a little description of where ingredients are sourced, who the producer is and why you have chosen them.

2.5.4 Food quality

- 1 Star**
 - All meals freshly cooked/prepared on the premises with an acceptable level of skill and presentation, and served at the correct temperature. Evidence of some fresh produce.
 - At least one vegetarian option available (at least on request) at each course.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - All meals, including any room service, prepared with a good level of skill, care and presentation and served at the correct temperature.
 - Particular attention given to food quality rather than extensive menus.
- 4 Star**
 - All meals, including any room service, prepared with a very good level of skill, care and presentation and served at the correct temperature.
 - Provision made for a variety of dietary requirements.
- 5 Star**
 - All meals, including any room service, prepared with an excellent level of skill using fresh produce.
 - Cuisine quality meeting a high international standard.

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Where possible, source food and drink products locally. Build up relationships with local producers and traders.
- Staff dealing with food and drink service should be fully briefed on the source, characteristics and significance of local food and drink products.

2.0 General Requirements

2.5.5 Style of service

- 1 Star** • A self-service operation e.g. carvery or buffet-style, is acceptable.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • The main course, served to the guest at their table on request.
 - Full table service but a carvery is acceptable.
- 4 Star** • As Three Star
- 5 Star** • All courses served to the guest at their table.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- If a self-service operation, offer guests assistance where appropriate.

2.5.6 Wine and wine service

- 1 Star** • Red and white wine provided.
 - Wine prices and measures clearly displayed.
 - Staff demonstrating basic knowledge about the wines available e.g. country of origin.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • A choice of good quality wines offered.
 - Clean and well presented wine list, clearly and accurately listing the choice of wines and measure available, should be provided.
 - Staff demonstrating good knowledge of the wines available.
- 4 Star** • Superior range and quality of wines offered.
 - An informative and detailed wine list.
- 5 Star** • Excellent range and quality of wines offered.
 - Staff demonstrating excellent wine knowledge and wine service skills. Likely to involve dedicated wine team (sommelier).

2.5.7 Alcoholic drink services/licences (as applicable under the licensing laws in each country)

- 1 Star** • Alcoholic drinks served at meal times to residents.
 - A range of drinks available in a bar or lounge.
 - A price list displayed wherever drinks are served.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Alcoholic drinks served throughout the day and evening to residents and their guests.
 - A wide range of drinks provided in a bar or lounge.
 - Table service should be provided in the lounge if there is no bar counter.
- 4 Star** • Alcoholic drinks served 24 hours to residents.
 - Table service on request.
- 5 Star** • A comprehensive range of drinks, including wines and cocktails.
 - Table service provided.

2.0 General Requirements

2.5.8 Lunch service

- 1 Star** • Midday refreshments are required.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • As One Star
- 4 Star** • A superior brasserie/bistro/bar is acceptable for lunches, providing that guests are able to eat in comfort and order and be served at the table.
 - A choice of hot and cold dishes at each course of starters, main courses and desserts.
- 5 Star** • Lunch served in a formal restaurant.
 - Extensive choice at each course.

2.5.9 Light refreshments, snacks and afternoon teas

- 1 Star** • Hot and cold drinks available to residents and their guests in the public areas during the day and evening. Guests may be required to order at reception or at the bar.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Light refreshments of at least hot and cold drinks and sandwiches available to residents and their guests in the public areas throughout the day and evening. This service is to be clearly advertised.
- 4 Star** • Light refreshments and hot and cold snacks available to residents and their guests in the public areas throughout the day and evening.
 - Guests able to order and be served at their table.
- 5 Star** • Light refreshments and hot and cold snacks available to residents in the public areas 24 hours.
 - Full afternoon tea available.

2.5.10 Room service provision

- 1 Star** • Optional except in the case of illness.
 - Any room service provided may be limited in choice.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Hotel should be able to offer as minimum room service of hot and cold drinks and light snacks e.g. sandwiches during daytime and evening, on request. If no room service menu provided in bedrooms, then room service availability should be promoted in room information.
- 4 Star** • Room service menu should be clearly advertised in bedrooms with prices.
 - 24 hour room service of light snacks such as sandwiches and hot and cold drinks including alcoholic drinks.
 - Provision of room service breakfast and a range of substantial hot and cold dishes during lunchtime and evening restaurant hours.
- 5 Star** • 24 hour room service of hot and cold snacks and drinks including alcoholic drinks.
 - Guests able to choose from a full dinner menu during restaurant hours, from either the hotel restaurant or brasserie, or both.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

2.0 General Requirements

2.5.11 Room service: service and presentation

- 1 Star** • No requirement.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Can be simply choice of hot and cold drinks and snacks, or full menu. Whatever level of room service is provided, guests should be made aware of prices before ordering.
 - Room service items well presented and served on a tray large enough to easily accommodate its contents. Appropriate cutlery, crockery and condiments provided.
 - Prompt and efficient service.
 - Procedure in place to arrange for the collection of trays.
- 4 Star** • Full room service menu, clearly promoted with prices.
 - Must include provision of continental and cooked breakfast and a substantial dinner menu during restaurant hours.
 - Hot and cold snacks should be available 24 hours, when restaurant is closed.
- 5 Star** • Room service ordered, delivered and cleared in a highly professional and efficient manner and without impacting on other services.
 - Full room service of lunch and dinner during restaurant hours, even if hotel has no restaurant. Service delivery allows each course to be eaten at the correct temperature. All meals served on a dining table or heated trolley, or each hot course delivered separately. Presentation of the highest standard.

2.5.12 Room service: breakfast

- 1 Star** • No requirement
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Hot drinks should be freshly served with any room service breakfast offered.
 - Guests able to order their morning breakfast by phone or breakfast order card without leaving their room either in the morning or the night before.
- 4 Star** • Room service of both continental and full cooked breakfast advertised and provided.
- 5 Star** • A wide choice of substantial hot and cold dishes. A la carte items are often the norm at this level.

2.0 General Requirements

2.6 Bedrooms

2.6.1 Provision

- 1 Star** • Minimum of fifteen double en suite bedrooms.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • As One Star
- 4 Star** • As One Star
- 5 Star** • As One Star

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Try to provide a ground floor bedroom.

2.6.2 General quality

- 1 Star**
 - Means of securing bedroom doors from inside and out, and a key or keycard provided.
 - Acceptable quality and condition in the standard of furniture, furnishings, flooring, fittings and décor.
 - Every effort made to minimise noise levels from adjacent rooms and corridors e.g. creaking floorboards, noisy extractor fans, mechanical toilets, noisy plumbing etc.
 - Hotels situated in a particularly noisy environment – in a city centre or by an airport – need to have tried to minimise noise, possibly by using double/triple glazing.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Good quality and condition with a matched and well co-ordinated standard of furniture, furnishings, flooring, fittings and décor.
- 4 Star** • Better levels of sound insulation provided by more substantial doors and walls.
- 5 Star**
 - Excellent intrinsic quality and condition, with a luxurious standard of furniture, furnishings, flooring, fittings and décor.
 - Internal and external noise levels absolutely minimal. Possibly achieved by use of double-glazing, excellent structural insulation and a spacious bedroom lobby area.

2.6.3 Housekeeping

- 1 Star**
 - All bedrooms cleaned daily, and checked to ensure a good standard of cleanliness. Rooms looking clean and smelling fresh. Particular attention given to rooms used by smokers.
 - All walls, ceilings, pipes, ledges, equipment and fittings, which are beyond reach from floor level, cleaned on a regular basis. All flat surfaces, equipment and furniture free from dust, dirt, grease and marks.
 - All beds made daily. Bed linen, including duvet covers (even if top sheet provided) changed at least once in every week and for each new guest.
 - Rooms prepared with the right temperature and ventilation ready for the guests' arrival.
 - Good practice procedure followed so that clean bedding is kept off floors and in-room crockery and glassware are hygienically washed.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Bed linen including duvet covers (even if top sheet provided) changed at least every three to four days depending on the length of stay and for each new guest. (Exception made when, as part of a hotel's clearly advertised environmental policy, guests are invited to agree to a less frequent change of linen during their stay).
- 4 Star** • As Three Star

2.0 General Requirements

- 5 Star**
- Bed linen, including duvet covers (even if top sheet provided) changed frequently in accordance with the hotel's own policy and for each new guest.
 - Rooms prepared in advance of the guests' arrival – possibly including setting an appropriate ambient temperature for the time of year, airing the room well, closing curtains and putting on a light during the hours of darkness.
 - An evening housekeeping service provided and advertised - possibly including some of the following services: bed turned down, bins emptied, curtains drawn, towels tidied, room service trays removed.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- If it is policy to prepare guests' rooms in anticipation of their arrival by leaving lights on, consider completing this activity much later in the day or not at all.
- Use could be made of towel and laundry agreement notices, whereby guests are asked to indicate if they wish their laundry and towels to be laundered less frequently. Signs could be made in-house or sourced externally.

2.6.4 Size and spaciousness

- 1 Star**
- All bedrooms with sufficient space to allow guests freedom of movement around all furniture and fittings including sofa beds. Rooms may be small but careful planning ensures best use of space.
 - The ceiling height for the major part of the room sufficient for a person of 6 ft. to move around without stooping. Sloping eaves and roofs acceptable provided they do not impinge on a major part of the room.
 - When we assess the acceptability of bedroom size, we will take into account the useable space available. There should be no restriction of free movement.
 - Family rooms should be more spacious.
 - Doors and drawers fully openable without having to move furniture.
 - Easy and convenient use of facilities e.g. use of surfaces without moving tea tray or TV, access to power points etc.
- 2 Star**
- As One Star
- 3 Star**
- All bedrooms with good free space to allow the appropriate level of room service.
 - Area available for luggage storage without cluttering the room or obstructing access.
 - Consideration given to location of bedroom facilities, including power sockets for ease of use. This also includes televisions being placed at a convenient viewing height and visible from the bed and from easy seating.
 - Family rooms to be substantially more spacious.
- 4 Star**
- All bedrooms with a higher degree of spaciousness, allowing ample ease of use for guests and considerably exceeding the minimum entry requirements.
 - Provision made for room service meals to be eaten in comfort in the majority of rooms.
 - Where the hotel has a substantial leisure market, the dining comfort of both guests in a double/twin room taken into account.

2.0 General Requirements

- 5 Star**
 - The significant majority of bedrooms very spacious, allowing generous ease of use for movement, comfort, dining and relaxation.
 - All bedrooms with a well-planned layout relative to the needs of the guest i.e. business or leisure use.
 - Room size, layout and delivery method ensures the highest guest dining experience for room service.

2.6.5 Suites

- 1 Star**
 - Not required.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - As One Star
- 4 Star**
 - Whilst there is no expectation to have a suite at this level, many hotels will offer suites or larger bedrooms with sitting area. May also include bedrooms that are particularly large and spacious that clearly have a lounge area whilst in an open-plan arrangement (e.g. minimum 40 square feet).
- 5 Star**
 - At least one permanent luxury suite available (comprising three separate rooms – bedroom, lounge and bathroom).

2.6.6 Bed size: quality

- 1 Star**
 - Minimum bed sizes, including sofa beds and bunks, as follows:
 - Single: 190 cm x 90 cm (6 ft. 3 ins x 3 ft.)
 - Double: 190 cm x 137 cm (6 ft. 3 ins x 4 ft. 6 ins); 122 cm (4 ft.) beds to be designated as singles.
 - 76 cm (2 ft. 6 ins) beds are unacceptable, except in family rooms where they are clearly designated for children only.
 - Sofa beds are not acceptable as permanent bed spaces.
 - Bunk beds (permanent bed spaces) are acceptable for child use only. When bunk beds are used, guests told when they make the booking.
 - All beds, including supplementary beds, such as z-beds, sofa beds etc. to be of acceptable quality and in good condition. They should have a sound base and sprung interior, foam or similar quality, modern, comfortable mattress.
 - Secure headboard or equivalent on all permanent beds.
 - NB – Bunk beds should have a minimum 75 cm (30 ins) clear space between the mattress of the bottom bed and the underside of the top bed. Reference: Bunk Bed (Entrapment Hazards) (Safety) Regulations 1987.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Beds and headboards of good quality and condition.
- 4 Star**
 - A choice of larger-sized beds. Very good quality beds e.g. pocket sprung mattress and base, in very good condition with superior headboards or similar.
- 5 Star**
 - Beds for single occupancy to exceed 90 cm (3 ft.) width.
 - Beds for double occupancy to be at least 153 cm (5 ft.) in width.
 - Several beds to exceed this size. Bunk beds are not acceptable.
 - Beds and headboards of excellent quality and condition.

2.6.7 Bed access

- 1 Star**
 - There should be access to both sides of beds for double occupancy, but dispensation may be given at one-star only if restrictions are clearly advertised to all guests.
- 2 Star**
 - Easy access to both sides of beds for double occupancy.
- 3 Star**
 - Good access to both sides of beds for double occupancy.
- 4 Star**
 - As Three Star
- 5 Star**
 - Generous access to both sides of beds for double occupancy.

2.0 General Requirements

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

2.6.8 Bedding requirements

All Star Ratings

- Two sheets, two blankets and a bedspread OR one/two sheets and duvet with cover per bed.
- Where feather duvets or pillows are used, a non-allergenic alternative available on request.
- Two pillows in individual pillowcases, per person. (One pillow per person acceptable at One Star)
- Spare pillows and blankets available on request.
- Any additional bedding kept in bedrooms to be clean, fresh and wrapped.
- A mattress protector provided for each bed. Plastic or rubber mattress protectors are not acceptable except for children's beds.

4 Star • More likely to be choice of type of pillows.

5 Star • As Four Star

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Provide hypoallergenic bedding.

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Spare bedding does not need to be wrapped in plastic bags, it can be placed in a REUSEABLE cotton or fabric bag.

2.6.9 Bedding quality

1 Star • Bedding of good quality and condition.

2 Star • As One Star

3 Star • As One Star

4 Star • Bedding of superior quality and condition. The presentation of the bed enhances the overall impression of the room.

5 Star • Beds presented to an excellent standard. All bedding of the highest quality and immaculately laundered.

2.6.10 Décor: walls, ceiling and paintwork

1 Star • Décor in sound condition.

- A quite good standard of décor and paintwork.

2 Star • As One Star

3 Star • A good standard of décor and paintwork in good condition with some thought given to co-ordination of design.

- Some use of decorative enhancements where appropriate.

4 Star • Superior quality, professionally applied wall coverings with decorative enhancements where appropriate.

2.0 General Requirements

- Décor and paintwork in very good condition.
- 5 Star** • Décor showing attention to detail and co-ordination of design, as well as finished to a professional standard. Wall coverings and paintwork of an excellent intrinsic quality and condition. High quality paintings and prints in evidence.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Consider having the door frames a contrasting colour to the wall and avoid high gloss finishes, to assist visually impaired guests.

2.6.11 Heating and temperature control

- 1 Star** • Heating provided at no extra cost, and controllable (on/off) by the guest.
- Supplementary heating provided in rooms on request when temperature levels are not within the control of the guest e.g. some heating systems.
- Heating to come on automatically prior to breakfast and during main hours of guest occupancy e.g. check-in and early evening.
- Heating able to heat the entire bedroom safely, quietly, adequately and quickly whatever heating system is used.
- 2 Star** • Automatic fixed heating at no extra cost.
- 3 Star** • Fixed individually controlled thermostatic heating.
- 4 Star** • Best practice suggests an effort be made to provide fans on request for guests' use in hot weather.
- Individually controlled thermostatic heating operable 24 hours.
- 5 Star** • Air conditioning expected at this level.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Use of thermostatically controlled radiators helps to manage your energy consumption.

2.6.12 Lighting

- 1 Star** • Bedrooms well lit. A low energy light bulb is acceptable.
- A shade or cover provided for all bulbs, unless decorative.
- At least one light controlled from the door.
- Bedside reading light for each person, controllable from the bed, in addition to the light controlled from the door.
- However, twin beds may share a central bedside light.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Good lighting intensity with thought given to ambience and a range of lighting options.
- Lighting specifically provided to illuminate the writing desk.
- 4 Star** • Superior levels of lighting with good positioning and ease of use, including lighting specifically for the lobby area, wardrobe area, dining area and easy seating.
- Room lighting controllable from the bedside.
- 5 Star** • Excellent levels of lighting with a range of separately controllable options.

2.0 General Requirements

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Increased use should be made of energy saving light bulbs throughout the hotel. Greater use can also be made of natural light.
- Signs could be used to request guests to switch off lights when not in use.

2.6.13 Windows

All Star Ratings

- At least one window that can be opened safely and which provides good levels of direct natural light and ventilation. Windows well fitted, easy to shut and open and remain open. A pole provided to open any Velux-style windows or skylights.
- Rooms without windows are generally not acceptable (however dispensations may be available on specific rooms).
- Security fittings installed on all bedroom windows where, when open, access could be gained from outside e.g. patio doors and windows near fire escapes.
- It is acceptable for a bedroom to overlook a large internal atrium. The bedroom should be air-conditioned and naturally illuminated.
- Air conditioning provided where windows cannot be opened.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

2.6.14 Window coverings

- 1 Star**
 - Opaque curtains, blinds or shutters provided on all windows and ideally including glass panels to doors, fanlights and skylight windows so that guests have privacy and can exclude any light from outside the room. All window coverings to be properly fitted or hung.
 - Curtains large enough to draw easily and completely across the width and height of the window with or without linings.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Window coverings of good quality and condition. Curtains, where used, substantial, fully lined, with ample drape and width.
 - Window coverings providing full blackout in hotel rooms with a specific market need, such as hotels in city centres with high levels of outside illumination and airport hotels with guests on different time zones.
- 4 Star**
 - Window coverings of a superior quality and condition.
- 5 Star**
 - Excellent quality window dressing.

2.0 General Requirements

2.6.15 Flooring

- 1 Star** • All flooring, carpets, rugs, hard wood flooring etc. properly fitted and of an acceptable quality and condition.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Flooring of a good quality and condition throughout.
- 4 Star** • Flooring of superior quality and condition throughout.
- 5 Star** • Flooring of an excellent quality and condition throughout.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

2.6.16 Furniture, soft furnishings and fittings

- 1 Star** • All furniture, soft furnishings and fittings providing acceptable ease of use and of an acceptable quality and condition.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • All furniture, soft furnishings and fittings providing good ease of use and of a good quality and condition.
- 4 Star** • All furniture, soft furnishings and fittings providing very good ease of use and of a superior quality and condition.
- 5 Star** • All furniture, soft furnishings, and fittings providing excellent ease of use and of an excellent quality and condition.
- NB** • Furniture includes tables, luggage and clothes storage, seating etc.
- Soft furnishings includes curtains, cushions etc.
- Fittings include mirrors, light fittings, heating appliances, light shades etc.

2.6.17 Tables

- 1 Star** • Writing table or equivalent such as substantial flat surface or desk providing sufficient free space for practical use with mirror adjacent.
- Lighting adequate for use.
- Conveniently positioned spare 13 amp power socket.
- A bedside table or equivalent provided for each person. Twin beds may share a bedside table.
- NB – A chair instead of a bedside table is not acceptable.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Writing table or equivalent with clear under-space so guests can easily use it.
- Lighting provided specifically to illuminate the writing table.
- 4 Star** • Writing table or equivalent providing very good and ample free space.
- Occasional/dining tables of appropriate height for dining – unless trolleys are used.
- 5 Star** • A substantial writing table with excellent free space.
- Multiple power sockets often with international sockets/adaptors according to market need.

2.0 General Requirements

2.6.18 Clothes and luggage storage

- 1 Star**
 - Wardrobe or clothes hanging space.
NB - An alcove is an acceptable substitute but hooks on walls or behind doors are not.
 - Acceptable drawer or shelf space. Drawers running freely and lined or with an easily wiped interior surface.
 - The amount of clothes storage provided suitable for the style of hotel and the number of guests the room will accommodate.
 - Sufficient hangers (not wire).
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Dedicated area for unpacking luggage – possibly a moveable stand or raised flat surface.
- 4 Star**
 - Alcoves acceptable only when located in the entrance or lobby area.
 - A choice of good quality hangers.
- 5 Star**
 - A fully fitted or free-standing wardrobe.
NB – Open alcoves not acceptable. A generous amount of clothes storage.
 - A wide range of excellent quality hangers provided.
 - Illumination inside the wardrobe expected.

2.6.19 Seating

- 1 Star**
 - Single – one chair. Double/twin – two chairs or one chair plus one stool.
 - Seating provided appropriate to the style and size of the room.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Single – one easy chair. Where this is the only chair, consideration given for ease of use at the writing table, or an additional chair provided.
 - Double/twin – two easy chairs or one easy chair plus one upholstered stool.
 - NB – An easy chair offers a greater degree of comfort, either upholstered or of another quality material.
- 4 Star**
 - Double/Twin – Minimum of one easy chair in each bedroom plus an additional chair providing comfortable use of a writing table.
 - Where the hotel's market is predominantly business clientele, a substantial chair at the desk may replace the second easy chair.
 - Seating used for room service eating of an appropriate style and height.
- 5 Star**
 - Single – one substantial easy chair plus an additional chair providing comfortable use at the writing table.
 - Double/twin – two substantial easy chairs plus an additional chair providing comfortable use at the writing table.

2.6.20 Mirrors

- 1 Star**
 - At least one mirror in the bedroom.
 - If there is only one mirror it should be a full-length mirror and be placed next to the writing table surface or equivalent. A full-length mirror is a mirror of suitable size and in a convenient position for guests to see the majority of themselves from head to toe.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - At least two mirrors in the bedroom, one of which must be a full-length mirror and one at the table area.
- 4 Star**
 - As Three Star
- 5 Star**
 - As Three Star

2.0 General Requirements

2.6.21 Beverage-making facilities

- 1 Star**
 - Tea/coffee-making facilities available and accessible 24 hours either in bedrooms or in public areas (Self-service/vending option in public areas acceptable).
 - Self-service ingredients for making hot drinks kept wrapped or in lidded containers.
 - Bedroom kettles should not have to be operated at floor level.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - As one star, but a wider range of hot drinks likely to be provided e.g. choice of teas, biscuits, and other drinks such as hot chocolate.
 - Fresh milk available on request.
- 4 Star**
 - As well as 24 hour room service, the availability of a hospitality tray, if not provided, advertised to guests.
- 5 Star**
 - In-room facilities, where provided, of an excellent standard, e.g. china cups and teapot, choice of hot drinks including a range of speciality teas, fresh milk, and freshly ground coffee.
 - May feature bespoke coffee machines in room.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Items on hospitality trays, such as sugar and biscuits, do not need to be individually wrapped – use can be made of airtight containers for dried goods and wherever possible, locally produced goods or Fair Trade products could be sourced. Assessors will look at the quality of the contents and style of presentation.

2.6.22 In-room entertainment

- 1 Star**
 - Digital TV available in all bedrooms.
 - All available channels properly tuned in.
 - Televisions may be safely mounted on a wall bracket. Ease of viewing and safety taken into account when positioning television.
 - Where clock radios are used, instructions for use provided and clock set accurately.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Guests able to watch TV in comfort from both a chair and the bed.
 - Radio provided in each bedroom – possibly part of television installation.
- 4 Star**
 - Televisions with generously-sized screens – greater than 61cm (24 ins).
 - Extensive range of television channels available.
 - A range of radio channels available.
 - Additional audio-visual options provided e.g. in-house channels, CD player, DVD library, satellite, cable, PlayStation, iPod etc.
- 5 Star**
 - Adoption of the latest innovation in entertainment technologies expected.

2.0 General Requirements

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Ensure TVs can provide subtitles (Teletext page 888, digital (DVB), Sky subtitles), to benefit hearing impaired and foreign language speaking guests.

2.6.23 Communication and business services

- 1 Star**
 - Bedroom telephone optional.
 - Where not provided, a means of communication with staff at night in the event of an emergency must be provided, and advertised in the bedroom.
 - Telephones, where provided, displaying the hotel telephone number together with the bedroom extension or telephone number.
 - Telephones, where provided, with instructions on how to use any additional services such as telephone message service, and room-to-room calls.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Internal telephone system provided.
 - Wi-Fi and/or internet connection recommended in public areas and in bedrooms, where service is available. If chargeable, this must be clearly advertised prior to booking.
- 4 Star**
 - Direct dial telephone system provided.
 - Wi-Fi and/or internet connection provided. If chargeable, this must be clearly advertised prior to booking.
 - Notepad with pen or pencil provided.
- 5 Star**
 - A minimum of two direct dial telephones if fixed – one at the bedside and one on the desk/writing table. Single cordless phone acceptable.
 - Guests able to call individual hotel departments directly.
 - Wi-Fi and/or internet connection provided. If chargeable, this must be clearly advertised prior to booking.
 - Excellent in-room communication technology with best available connectivity and good support to resolve any problems.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Provide a textphone eg minicom in at least one bedroom, to benefit profoundly deaf guests.

2.6.24 Telephone charges

- All Star Ratings**
 - Where telephones are provided, rate card displayed in bedrooms illustrating typical charges for local, long-distance, international, internet, use of phone card and connection to mobile phones. Sample call charges required, but not per unit.

2.0 General Requirements

2.6.25 Hairdryers

- 1 Star** • A hairdryer provided in every bedroom.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • As One Star
- 4 Star** • A superior quality hairdryer.
 - Provision of hair straighteners is sometimes seen.
- 5 Star** • An excellent quality hairdryer (non-fixed).

2.6.26 In-room information

- 1 Star** • Hotel services and facilities advertised in all bedrooms (possibly in a room information folder or via in-room technology). This should include the following where applicable:
 - How to summon assistance in a night-time emergency.
 - Meal times (and menus).
 - Iron and ironing board advertised as available, if not already provided in the bedroom.
 - Multi-lingual emergency procedure notices or use of symbols/diagrams clearly displayed in every bedroom.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Telephone information e.g. charges, internal directory, local services.
 - Room service menu.
 - Message-taking service.
 - Laundry service information, if offered.
 - 'Do not disturb' notices for guests to use.
- 4 Star** • As Three Star, plus a more comprehensive guest directory.
- 5 Star** • Laundry/pressing/dry cleaning service information.
 - Consideration given to multilingual and visually enhanced material.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

2.0 General Requirements

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Each room could contain, where possible, an up-to-date visitor information folder. Visitor information folders could include:
 - Details of nearby outlets supplying local food, drink and gift products.
 - Local visitor attractions.
 - Local heritage and culture information, including details of special events.
 - Options for car-free travel such as walking and cycling routes, public transport timetables and contact numbers.
 - Suggestions for a series of car-free days out.
 - The hotel's environmental policy if there is one, or details about any green scheme with which they are affiliated.
 - If the business is part of a visitor payback scheme, information regarding this scheme should also be included.
 - Notices could be used to request guests to completely turn off all electrical appliances when not in use, rather than leaving them on standby. Staff could also be trained to turn them off standby when cleaning the room if guests have left them on.

2.6.27 Miscellaneous

- 1 Star**
 - A waste paper container – non-flammable if smoking permitted.
 - A drinking tumbler per guest, in glass, scratchless plastic or wrapped disposable
 - An ashtray where smoking permitted
 - Sufficient and conveniently situated power sockets allowing for the safe use of all electrical equipment provided.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - As One Star
- 4 Star**
 - A high quality glass drinking tumbler per guest.
- 5 Star**
 - Valet tray/provision.
 - May feature an umbrella.

2.0 General Requirements

2.7 En Suite Bathroom and Shower Rooms and Private Facilities

2.7.1 Provision

- 1 Star**
- All bedrooms to have en suite bathroom or shower rooms or private facilities, which all have WC and bath or shower.
 - A private facility is one designated solely for the occupants of one bedroom, situated close to the bedroom on the same floor and lockable with a key provided (guests informed of this at the time of booking).
 - Access to private bathrooms or WCs, or extra public bathrooms, from bedrooms via public areas such as reception or lounge etc. is not acceptable.
 - A washbasin with hot and cold running water and a minimum internal measurement of 36 x 24 cm (14 x 9.5 ins). Basin provided in either the bedroom, en suite or private facility.

NB – An ensuite facility has the bath or shower and WC situated in room(s) with door(s) separate to the bedroom. In-bedroom showers are not generally acceptable.

- 2 Star**
- As One Star

- 3 Star**
- All bedrooms to have en suite bathrooms or shower rooms which all have WC and bath and/or shower.
 - A full-sized washbasin. Where sited in the bedroom area, likely to be in a vanity unit commensurate to Three Star quality.

- 4 Star**
- All bedrooms to have en suite bathrooms or shower rooms. All en suites with WC and thermostatically controlled showers.
 - Where there is no bath, the quality of the shower fittings, water pressure, space etc. must be of an excellent standard to compensate for the lack of the bath.

- 5 Star**
- 80% bedrooms with en suite facilities with WC, bath and thermostatically controlled shower.
 - Up to 20% of bedroom stock may have shower only rooms, if size and quality are exceptional.

2.7.2 General quality (applies to all bathroom and shower room types)

- 1 Star**
- All bathrooms of acceptable quality and condition with practical fittings, flooring and décor providing ease of use.
 - Practical, well-fitted and easily cleanable flooring.
 - Best practice suggests that washable flooring is more hygienic than carpeting.
 - Particular attention given to maintenance and lighting levels.

- 2 Star**
- As One Star

- 3 Star**
- All bathrooms of good quality and condition, and providing good ease of use with matched and well co-ordinated fittings, flooring and décor.

- 4 Star**
- All bathrooms of superior quality and condition, and providing very good ease of use with a superior standard of fittings, flooring and décor.

- 5 Star**
- All bathrooms of excellent quality and condition, and providing excellent ease of use with a luxurious standard of fittings, flooring and décor.

2.7.3 Room size

- 1 Star**
- Bathrooms of sufficient size for adequate guest comfort and ease of use.

- 2 Star**
- As One Star

- 3 Star**
- As One Star

- 4 Star**
- Bathrooms more spacious and with a good degree of free space.

- 5 Star**
- Spacious bathrooms with generously-sized bath, basin and shower.
 - Separate walk-in shower often seen at this level.

2.0 General Requirements

2.7.4 Water supply

- 1 Star** • Sufficient hot water provided at all reasonable times – usually 7 am until 10 pm.
- Baths and showers providing a strong and easily adjustable flow of water.
- 2 Star** • As One Star
- 3 Star** • Sufficient hot water available 24 hours.
- 4 Star** • As Three Star
- 5 Star** • As Three Star

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

2.7.5 Equipment in en suite and private facilities

All Star Ratings

- All bathrooms or shower rooms – private and en suite – equipped with:
 - Internal lock or bolt on all private bath or shower rooms (not necessary for en suites).
 - A mirror situated above or adjacent to the washbasin.
 - Bath or shower, washbasin and mirror.
 - Adequate storage with space for guests' own toiletries.
 - Hook for clothes.
 - Non-slip surface or mat for use in bath or showers.
 - Towel rail or equivalent sufficient for the number of guests in the room.
 - Conveniently located electric shaver point, with voltage indicated or adaptor.
 - Windows fitted with curtains, blinds or shutters to ensure privacy.
 - Window coverings (possibly not necessary for Velux-style windows) fitted in in the ceiling and in no way overlooked. All toilets equipped with:
 - A lidded WC.
 - Toilet paper and holder plus spare toilet paper.
 - A lidded sanitary disposal bin and sanitary bags.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

2.0 General Requirements

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Use could be made of water saving devices such as 'Hippos' in toilet cisterns.
- There is no need for soaps and other complimentary products to be individually wrapped – these can be presented in suitable attractive dispensers. Assessors will assess the quality of the products offered and the style of presentation.
- There is no need for the spare drinking cup/glass to be either plastic, or wrapped.
- Although providing shower facilities can help reduce water consumption, remember that power showers can use more water than a bath. Therefore consider using reduced flow shower heads or gravity fed showers where possible.

2.7.6 Lighting, heating and ventilation

- 1 Star**
 - Lighting: adequate covered lighting in all bathrooms, shower rooms and toilets. Lighting provided above or adjacent to the washbasin mirror.
 - Heating: adequate heating. Heater light bulbs are not acceptable. All bathrooms with an external window require dedicated heating. A heated towel rail is acceptable.
 - Ventilation: adequate ventilation and extraction (window or extractor fan). Where a Velux-style window or skylight acts as the only form of ventilation, a pole or other means of opening should be provided. Opaque window covering required (see above under 2.7.5).
 - Security fittings installed on any bathroom window which could be left open and access gained from outside, e.g. windows near fire escapes.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Good lighting, heating, ventilation and extraction.
- 4 Star**
 - A heated towel rail or equivalent (with on/off switch) operational throughout the year, or some means of providing guests with additional dry towels on request.
- 5 Star**
 - Excellent light intensity overall, especially at the mirror.
 - Excellent heating, ventilation and extraction.

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Use of thermostatically controlled radiators helps to manage your energy consumption.

2.0 General Requirements

2.7.7 Towels and toiletries

- 1 Star**
 - A clean, absorbent, cotton hand and bath towel provided for each new guest and changed every day except where, as part of an advertised environmental policy, guests agree to a less frequent change during their stay.
 - Bath mat (paper mats not acceptable).
 - Fresh soap provided for each new letting. Particular attention paid to the cleanliness and hygiene of liquid soap dispensers where provided.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Generously-sized, co-ordinated towels of good quality and condition.
 - Good quality soap, shampoo and bath/shower gel provided.
 - Emergency toiletries such as toothbrush, and disposable razor available, possibly for a charge.
- 4 Star**
 - A range of superior quality guest toiletries.
- 5 Star**
 - A range of towels which includes bath sheets, robes and face cloths of excellent quality and condition.
 - An excellent range of luxury guest toiletries.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Use could be made of towel agreement signs.

2.0 General Requirements

2.8 PUBLIC AREAS

2.8.1 General quality: all public areas (bars, lounges, reception, restaurants etc.)

- 1 Star**
 - Furnishings, fittings and décor of acceptable quality and condition.
 - Acceptable space and comfort for guests, relative to the number of bedrooms.
 - Wi-Fi is recommended in public areas.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Furnishings, fittings and décor of good quality and condition.
 - Good space and comfort for guests, and non-residents, possibly including separate sitting areas and a choice of seating styles.
 - Wi-Fi to be provided in public areas (dispensations available for rural properties where no internet service exists).
- 4 Star**
 - Furnishings, fittings and décor of superior quality and condition.
 - Very good space and comfort for guests, taking into account the needs of different markets (e.g. business or leisure).
- 5 Star**
 - Furnishings, fittings and décor of an excellent quality and condition, providing an overall luxurious standard.
 - A choice of environments of sufficient size to provide generous personal space.
 - Additional facilities such as secondary dining, leisure, business centre, spa.

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Décor – use could be made of local artists' work, prints and/or photographs of images depicting local scenes and historical and heritage related images – it all adds to a visitor's enhanced sense of place.

2.8.2 Lighting, heating and ventilation

- 1 Star**
 - Acceptable levels of lighting appropriately positioned for safety and comfort in all public areas, including sufficient light on stairways and landings at night.
 - Good levels of heating and ventilation, providing an ambient temperature and adequate air flow at all times of the year.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Good levels of lighting with thought given to both intensity and to positioning e.g. for reading menus.
- 4 Star**
 - Superior lighting, giving sufficient light for all practical purposes and also designed to good effect showing off features.
- 5 Star**
 - Excellent lighting.
 - Excellent temperature control, which may include air conditioning.

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- Lighting – increased use should be made of energy saving light bulbs throughout the hotel. Greater use can also be made of natural light.
- Heating – improved insulation and greater use of thermostatically controlled and zoned heating will save on energy use.

2.0 General Requirements

2.8.3 Reception areas/lobby

- 1 Star**
 - A clearly designated reception facility.
 - A clearly designated area at one end of a bar counter is acceptable.
 - A bell or internal telephone provided to summon attention when staff not present.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - Dedicated reception area with desk, counter or table, unless alternative, well-managed procedures in place to check in guests in lounge or in guest bedroom.
 - Sufficient space for guests arriving with luggage.
- 4 Star**
 - Greater amount of space and comfort (including seating) for arriving and departing guests.
- 5 Star**
 - Generally a clearly designated reception area within an impressive foyer or entrance hall, but in townhouse properties this may not be the case.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

2.8.4 Bars, lounges, sitting areas and restaurants

- 1 Star**
 - A bar or lounge with adequate comfortable seating for resident guests accessible throughout the day and evening – at least from breakfast time to 10 pm.
 - The bar and lounge possibly combined and providing the only sitting area in the hotel's public areas.
 - Guests should not be expected to share tables in the restaurant.
- 2 Star**
 - Provision of further seating where there is a market need e.g. in resort hotels, leisure and business hotels and where non-residents dine or visit the bar.
- 3 Star**
 - Suitable seating layout and range of furniture appropriate for meeting the market needs of certain hotels e.g. hotels where business meetings take place or where refreshments are offered in the lounge.
- 4 Star**
 - There should be sufficient full height dining tables, especially at breakfast, to prevent delays.
- 5 Star**
 - The environment of all sitting areas of excellent quality and condition, and of sufficient size and with well-designed layout to provide generous personal space and privacy for guests.
 - A variety of seating styles expected.
 - Sitting areas not necessarily all lounges but certainly offering a range of environments.
 - Restaurant tables should have sufficient space around them to allow a high degree of privacy and freedom of movement.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

2.0 General Requirements

2.8.5 Other public areas including corridors and staircases

- 1 Star**
 - Corridors and stairs in good repair and free from obstruction.
 - Adequately lit 24 hours.
 - Particular attention given to the maintenance of door handles, numbers, brassware and glass panels.
 - Clear, directional signage to bedrooms and reception (where needed).
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - As One Star
- 4 Star**
 - Corridors normally wide and spacious.
- 5 Star**
 - Corridors and staircases wide and spacious allowing freedom of movement for guests and service trolleys.
 - A serviced coat storage cloakroom provided. Receipts given.
 - Corridors and staircases permanently lit.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

2.8.6 Lifts

Dispensation is possible in older buildings and/or architecturally listed buildings where it can be shown that fitting a lift is impractical or unacceptable to planning authorities. In this instance, help with luggage must be offered on arrival and departure.

- 1 Star**
 - Optional
 - Assistance with luggage available on request when there is no lift.
- 2 Star**
 - A lift is required when there is a guest bedroom that is more than three floors higher or lower than the entrance level floor i.e. on the fourth floor.
 - Where there is no lift, this should be made clear at the time of booking.
- 3 Star**
 - A lift is required when there is a guest bedroom more than two floors higher or lower than the ground floor i.e. on the third floor.
- 4 Star**
 - At this level, it is not only the provision of a lift that is important, but also the size, comfort, quality and speed.
- 5 Star**
 - It is expected that a lift will be provided to all floors in the main building.
 - The expectation at Five Star is a separate lift for hotel services such as luggage, laundry and room service.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

2.0 General Requirements

2.8.7 Public telephone

- All star ratings**
- A guest should be able to make a telephone call via house phone, payphone or mobile phone from reception/public areas, on request.

2.8.8 Public area WCs

1 Star Where hotel is open to non-residents:

- All toilets well-maintained, regularly cleaned, checked and adequately ventilated. The following facilities provided as a minimum: washbasin with soap, hand drying facilities, seat with lid, covered light, mirror, hook on door, lidded sanitary bin and bags, toilet roll holder with toilet paper.

2 Star • As One Star

3 Star • More spacious, higher quality standards.

- Efficient hand drying and ample mirrors.

4 Star • Separate facilities for men and women.

5 Star • Spacious, luxurious and numerous toilet facilities and with refinements such as individual hand towels, high quality toiletries and accessories, serviced very regularly during the day.

BEST PRACTICE

Access

- Provide appropriate support rails at urinals, toilets and wash basins.

2.0 General Requirements

2.9 External Areas (as applicable)

- 1 Star**
 - External areas include the appearance of the building, grounds and gardens, pathways and drives and any car parking.
 - Particular attention given to the safety and security of guest and their belongings in car parks, ground floor and annexe bedrooms including external paths and walkways.
 - All aspects of these areas improve in quality and condition as the star rating increases.
 - The hotel entrance should be clearly identifiable and the doorway illuminated where it is dark. Adequate levels of lighting for safety and comfort in all public areas, including sufficient light on stairways and landings at night.
 - Grounds and gardens well-maintained and kept tidy.
 - Parking areas tidy, well-maintained, clearly defined, well lit and clearly signed.
 - Security issues taken into account.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - As One Star
- 4 Star**
 - Grounds and gardens a feature in their own right. Well-maintained and high-quality appearance all year round.
- 5 Star**
 - As Four Star

BEST PRACTICE

Access

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

BEST PRACTICE

Sustainable

- For grounds, gardens and frontages, establishments could consider the use of materials that are in keeping with the local environment and physical characteristics of the local geography, geology and age of the buildings.
- If possible and where available, provision should be made in the car park for a clearly marked public transport pick-up and drop-off point for taxis, buses and/or coaches.

2.10 Annexes

- 1 Star**
 - Where a hotel has an annexe, we will take into account the facilities provided in this annexe when determining the rating for the hotel as a whole.
 - Annexe accommodation may be situated in a separate unit or units within the hotel grounds or within easy walking distance of the main building – with good levels of external lighting.
- 2 Star**
 - As One Star
- 3 Star**
 - As One Star
- 4 Star**
 - As One Star
- 5 Star**
 - Access to any accommodation separate to the main building to be under cover. This could include chauffeured transport or escort with umbrella provided.



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