



星級旅遊服務認可計劃

Programa de Avaliação de Serviços Turísticos de Qualidade
Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme

Application Manual Travel Agency



澳門特別行政區政府旅遊局
DIRECÇÃO DOS SERVIÇOS DE TURISMO
MACAO GOVERNMENT TOURISM OFFICE

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1 Introduction

Macao is developing into a World Centre of Tourism and Leisure and progresses towards diversified development. In order to become an internationally-acclaimed tourist destination, quality service should be regarded as a significant factor. To cope with the industry's steady development, enhance the service quality of tourism and related sectors as well as promote the commitment to quality, the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) launched the "Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme" (QTSAS) in 2014 to define the standard of service quality for the tourism industry, encourage and support the industry to continuously enhance the overall service, and also recognize the merchants who provide outstanding service and implement good quality service management.

QTSAS is a service accreditation programme and has been made reference to similar programmes in other countries and regions, comments from industry associations and tourist surveys. The assessment criteria and accreditation procedures have been properly formulated after consolidating and balancing the points of view of different parties. Merchants providing quality tourism and related services in Macao will be presented with awards when they fulfil a prescribed set of criteria.

The food and beverage sector was chosen to kick off the scheme in 2014. After two years of successful implementation of the scheme, MGTO has decided to extend the scheme to promote quality services among travel agencies and a new category has been developed in 2016. All licensed travel agencies in Macao are eligible to apply for QTSAS from 2016.

Applicants will receive assessment on service performance and management system based on the two major assessments methods as required in the assessment criteria, "Mystery Shopping Assessment" and "Service Management System Audit", in order to evaluate their frontline service and management standard in a holistic approach. "Traveller Satisfaction Survey" is added to cope with the business nature of travel agencies that provide inbound services in Macao. Merchants attaining the award criteria will be presented with certificates of accreditation and become Star Merchants, so that their commitments and capabilities to providing quality tourism services can be well demonstrated to customers.

2 Awards

Two types of award will be granted under QTSAS, namely “Star Merchant Award” and “Service Star Award”. Merchants fulfilling the award criteria in this category will be presented with the following awards:

2.1 Star Merchant Award

This award signifies quality tourism services and aims to recognize merchants who provide high standard of service quality. Participating merchants will receive the “Star Merchant Award” accreditation certificate, along with a set of official promotional items including window stickers and badges if their overall assessment results meet the prescribed standard. Awarded merchants then are entitled to promote themselves as “Star Merchant Award” winners.

2.2 Service Star Award

Among the “Star Merchant Award” winners, the winner with the highest “Inbound Service” total score and meets the prescribed standard will receive “Service Star Award – Inbound Service”. Similarly, The “Star Merchant Award” winner with the highest “Outbound Service” total score and meets the prescribed standard will receive “Service Star Award – Outbound Service” and please refer to Section 5.3 for the details of the prescribed standards, “Inbound Service” refers to tourism services that are consumed within Macao only, services that are consumed across the border or overseas are regarded as “Outbound Service”. The two total scores are calculated by adding up scores of services grouped by physical location of consumption, details of scoring should be referred to Assessment Criteria of Travel Agencies.

“Service Star Award – Inbound Service” and “Service Star Award – Outbound Service” winners will be presented with “Service Star Award” trophies, pins and a cash prize of MOP10,000 as recognition. The winners are also entitled to use the “Service Star Award” designation to promote their services. Besides, priority will be given to winners in participating promotions and events organized by MGTO.

A directory of awarded merchants will be publicized. Award-winning merchants can promote their businesses in accordance with the terms and conditions depicted in Chapter 7 of this Manual and that of “Logo Usage Guideline”.

3 Organizer

Macao Government Tourism Office is the organizer of QTSAS. It is pleased to have the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau, Macao SAR Government Consumer Council, Institute for Tourism Studies, Macao Hotel Association, The United Association of Food and Beverage Merchants of Macao, Association of Macau Small and Medium Enterprises of Catering, Association of Macao Tourist Agents, Macau Travel Agency Association, and Travel Industry Council of Macau as supporting entities.

In order to obtain high recognition and wide acceptance of QTSAS by relevant stakeholders, including tourists and tourism industry incumbents, and also ensure the fairness and impartiality of assessment, the QTSAS Assessment Committee has been established by MGTO to oversee the implementation of policies of the Scheme as well as review and approve awards. The Director and Deputy Director of MGTO are the chairperson and vice-chairperson of the QTSAS Assessment Committee respectively. The members include representatives from government departments, industry associations, consumer rights protection organization and academic institution, standing for the diverse interests of the tourism industry, consumers and general public. In addition, an Industry Committee has been established for this category with Deputy Director of MGTO and Head of Training and Quality Management Department of MGTO appointed as the coordinator and deputy coordinator of the Industry Committee respectively, selected members of QTSAS Assessment Committee are appointed to take part in the Industry Committee (including representatives from Institute for Tourism Studies, Association of Macao Tourist Agents, Macau Travel Agency Association and Travel Industry Council of Macau). The key function of the Industry Committee is to discuss sector specific topics and review listing of recommended merchants for receiving awards of this category, as well as to submit proposal and recommendation to QTSAS Assessment Committee for approval.

4 Eligibility

The Scheme is open for application to all licensed travel agencies in Macao. Merchants satisfying the criteria can submit applications to MGTO for participation in the Scheme without any fee. MGTO will then process application screening according to the criteria mentioned below. All applicants shall:

- i. Hold a valid travel agency licence issued by MGTO;
- ii. Operate its business in Macao for at least one year (i.e. obtained licence and opened for business one year before the commencement of application period);
- iii. Offer services to the travellers with regular and fixed operating hours, without requiring membership as a pre-requisite for service;
- iv. Continually comply with all applicable regulations for operating its business and make correction to the situation caused by infringement within a fixed period of time and did not convicted of any one of the following infringements in the last one year counting from the commencement of application period:
 - a. Involved in exercising forbidden activities;
 - b. Allowed a collective touristic trip to take place in Macao without escort by a licensed tour guide;
 - c. Purposely induce tourists to make purchases in pre-arranged or designated establishments;
 - d. Provide seriously distorted facts in the attempt of obtaining illegitimate benefits for the travel agency, its staff or third party with intention;
 - e. In case of complaints or requests from its clients, travel agency did not act with diligence to find an adequate solution and provide help to the client;
- v. Have no negative media coverage in regard to intentional business malpractice that has not been properly handled and closed;
- vi. Have no other acts of infringement of legal and regulatory requirements that considered by MGTO as inappropriate to participate in the scheme.

5 Accreditation Process

The accreditation process of QTSAS is completed in the following four phases:



5.1 Application

MGTO will announce the application method and period each year through its official website and other appropriate media channels. Merchants interested in participating in the Scheme may contact MGTO, or access the application documents through the specific media channels. Interested merchants are required to study the documents prior to submitting their applications. The assessment criteria depict the basic elements that merchants should possess such as being able to effectively manage the service delivery in order to add value to visitors' travel experience in Macao. Merchants may also utilize the supplementary practical guidelines included in the assessment criteria to improve their service standard.

To ensure the quality of assessment, MGTO accepts a designated number of applications each year. New applicant may designate one or more business locations including headquarter and branches listed in its valid licence to compete for the award, the designated business location for the award competition shall offer enquiry or booking service to general public without prior reservation. Each business location (headquarter or branches) is counted as one application, e.g. maximum of three applications can be submitted while there are one headquarter and two branches listed in the merchant's valid licence. When there are significant and effective changes that will affect the validity of the licence of the merchant, change of business address or replacement of division head. Under such circumstances, awarded merchant will be assessed as described in Chapter 7. Should the number of applications received exceeds the limit, MGTO will select applications by an open drawing of lots. All applicants will receive notification of the results one month after the closure of application period through electronic messages or emails. Applications received after the application deadline will not be considered.

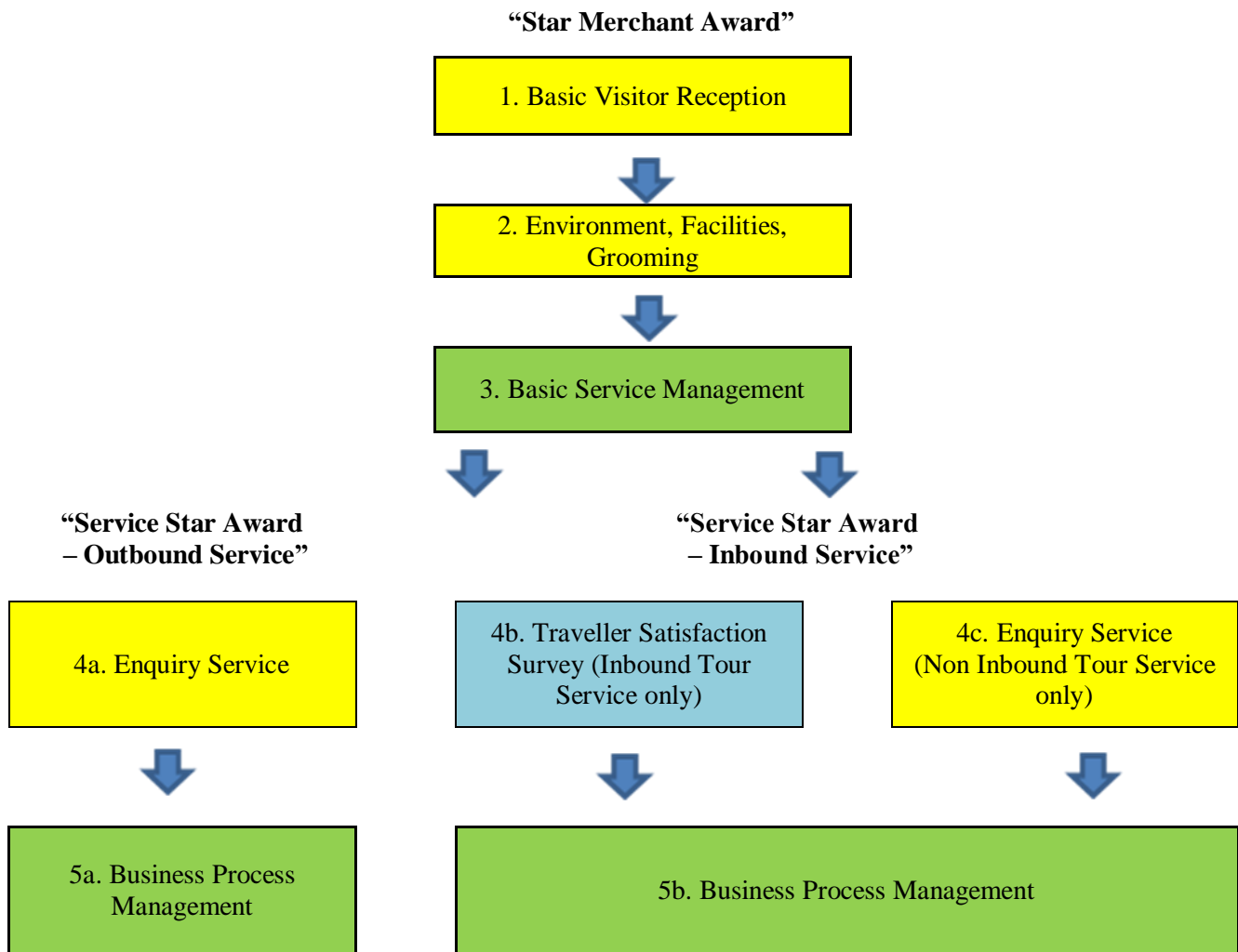
MGTO reserves the right to accept or decline applications and its decisions shall be final. Appeal will not be accepted.

5.2 Assessment

MGTO will arrange comprehensive assessment, including "Mystery Shopping Assessment", "Traveller Satisfaction Survey" (applicable to "Inbound Service" only) and "Service Management System Audit", for successful applications to evaluate their service and

management performance based on the assessment criteria of different categories. The details of assessment criteria can be downloaded from the MGTO Industry Net <http://industry.macaotourism.gov.mo>, or obtained from MGTO Training and Quality Management Department.

ASSESSMENT FLOW



Remark 1: The above assessment flow is conducted in 5 steps, step 1, 2, 4a and 4c are "Mystery Shopping Assessment"; Step 3, 5a and 5b are "Service Management System Audit"; and step 4b is "Traveller Satisfaction Survey"

Remark 2: For travel agencies provide both inbound and outbound service, assessments of step 4a, 4b, 4c, 5a and 5b are applicable.

5.2.1 “Mystery Shopping Assessment”

“Mystery Shopping Assessment” is performed by mystery shoppers who pay a maximum of four unannounced visits and calls to each designated business location for the award competition, and up to four additional visits will be made when the merchants also apply to compete for the “Service Star Award – Inbound Service” and their business including non inbound tour service. The assessments include mainly on the following assessment focuses:

<u>Step</u>	<u>Assessment Item</u>	<u>Assessment Focus</u>	<u>Assessment Location</u>
1.	Basic Visitor Reception	Availability of staff at the registered business address during office hours to receive visitors	Designated business location for the award competition
2.	Environment, Facilities, Grooming	Provision of suitable environment and facility to receive visitors	Designated business location for the award competition
4a.	Enquiry Service (applicable for “Outbound Services”)	Details of outbound services (including cross border)	Designated business location for the award competition
4c.	Enquiry Service (applicable for “Non Inbound Tour Service”)	Details of non inbound tour service	Designated business location for the award competition

Mystery shopping assessment may not be conducted effectively to determine scores for enquiry service of travel agencies when the service is related to inbound tour service. For example, travel agencies which render inbound tour, in general, do not receive enquiries directly from individual traveller. As a result, “Traveller Satisfaction Survey” is added to assess the service performance of those travel agencies.

<u>Step</u>	<u>Assessment Item</u>	<u>Assessment Focus</u>	<u>Survey Sample Quantity</u>
4b.	Inbound Tour Traveller Satisfaction Survey	Randomly select travellers of inbound tours to conduct the survey at an appropriate gathering point of itinerary within the assessment period 10 tour groups at most, maximum 5 travellers per tour group until sufficient valid samples are obtained	30 valid samples

Remark 3: The surveys mentioned above are not compulsory, voluntary participation will earn extra scores for Inbound Services assessments.

The “Traveller Satisfaction Survey” score shall be calculated from at least 30 valid samples. In case insufficient valid samples are obtained at the end of the assessment period, the score of “Traveller Satisfaction Survey” will be determined based on the ratio of valid samples, details can be referred to “Travel Agency Assessment Criteria”. All participating merchants of “Service

Star Award – Inbound Service” shall provide necessary information required for the survey. Last gathering point of itinerary before leaving Macao as well as name and contact number of the responsible tour guide of each tour shall be sent through designated email mailbox or facsimile number at least 2 working days prior to the arrival of each tour.

5.2.2 “Service Management System Audit”

There must be certain key drivers in place to enable quality services, the key success factor is the standard of service management. “Service Management System Audit” is an announced on-site visit to the designated business location for the award competition, performed by professional management system auditors. The audit is focused mainly on the following management elements:

<u>Step</u>	<u>Assessment Item</u>	<u>Assessment Focus</u>	<u>Assessment Location</u>
3.	Basic Service Management	Fostering of teamwork and service culture as well as handling of traveller complaint and emergencies.	Designated business location for the award competition
5a.	Business Process Management (Outbound)	Business process planning, resources allocation, daily operations and monitoring as well as maintenance of critical facilities.	Designated business location for the award competition
5b.	Business Process Management (Inbound)	Business process planning, resources allocation, daily operations and monitoring as well as maintenance of critical facilities.	Designated business location for the award competition

5.3 Award presentation

MGTO will consolidate the results of assessments described in Chapter 5.2 by using the following method of combination of scores to calculate the scores for the awards and determine the eligibility of each participating merchant for being recommended for awards.

<u>Award</u>	<u>Combination of scores</u>	<u>Award criteria</u>
“Star Merchant Award”	Step 1, 2, 3	Total score is 75 points or above
“Service Star Award – Outbound Service”	Step 1, 2, 3, 4a, 5a	“Star Merchant Award” winner with highest score and the score is not less than 85 points (Remark 4).
“Service Star Award – Inbound Service”	Step 1, 2, 3, 4b, 4c, 5b	“Star Merchant Award” winner with highest score and the score is not less than 85 points (Remark 4).

Remark 4: Total score is 100 points, “Team Spirit” of “Mystery Shopping Assessment Criteria” as well as “Coordination and division of work” and “Internal communication” of “Service Management System Audit Criteria” shall be over 65 points for “Service Star Award”, and assessment method can be referred to assessment criteria of the respective category.

Recommendation for awards will be submitted to the independent Industry Committee for review and then to the Assessment Committee for making award approval. All participating merchants will receive notification of award decisions in due course.

5.4 Surveillance

“Star Merchant Award” is valid for one year. Awarded merchants should maintain or further improve their services during this validity period. In the year after receiving the award, service performance will be monitored by surveillance assessments¹. The assessment criteria are the same as those described in Chapter 5.2, each awarded merchant will receive two mystery shopping assessment visits that cover “Basic Visitor Reception” and “Environment, Facilities, Grooming”. Awarded merchants are required to obtain 75 points or above in order to renew. In addition, the awarded merchants should not be found to have committed any non-compliance issues for renewal of the award. When there are significant and effective changes that will affect the validity of the licence of the merchant, change of business address or replacement of division head. Under such circumstances, awarded merchant will be assessed as described in Chapter 7.

Calculation of Surveillance Year Score

Total score of each surveillance year 100%	=	Average of “Mystery Shopping Assessment – Basic Visitor Reception” scores of prevailing year and previous year	x 25%
		+	
		=	Average of “Mystery Shopping Assessment – Environment, Facilities, Grooming ” scores of prevailing year and previous year
		+	
		The most recent “Service Management System Audit – Basic Service Management” score	x 50%

Awarded merchants are required to obtain 75 points or above in order to renew. Therefore, awarded merchants must observe the assessment criteria at all times. In addition, awarded merchants shall not be convicted of any one of the infringements specified in item 4 to 6 of “Eligibility” within one year from the date when the awards are approved by the Assessment Committee. Otherwise, “Star Merchant Award” status shall be suspended or terminated.

¹2017 awarded merchants can be exempted for the Service Management System Audit.

5.5 Attempts to compete “Service Star Award”

Awarded merchants can apply to compete “Service Star Award – Inbound Service / Outbound Service” during surveillance period together with new applicants at their own discretion. “Mystery Shopping Assessment” and “Service Management System Audit” described in Chapter 5.2 will be arranged for awarded merchants enrolled to compete “Service Star Award”, the award status will be reconsidered according to Chapter 5.3. Award merchants desire to compete “Service Star Award” are required to submit application as described in Chapter 6.

6 Application Method

Application form can be downloaded from MGTO Industry Net <http://www.macaoindustry.net.mo>, or obtained from MGTO Training and Quality Management Department. The application period is given in the above website, promotion posters and application form. Completed QTSAS application form together with the required enclosed documents shall be submitted before application deadline to:

**Macao Government Tourism Office
Training and Quality Management Department
Room 1821, 18th floor, Hot Line Building, Alameda Dr. Carlos d'Assumpção, nos. 335-341,
Macao**

Applicants will receive electronic messages or emails of the application results within one month after the closing date of application period. Assessment will then be arranged immediately and the award results will be announced by the end of each year.

For enquiry, please contact the below during office hours:

Training and Quality Management Department, Macao Government Tourism Office

Address: Room 1821, 18th floor, Hot Line Building, Alameda Dr. Carlos d'Assumpção,
nos. 335-341, Macao

Tel : (853) 8397 1225 / (853) 8397 1522

Fax : (853) 2872 3780

E-mail : DFCQ@macaotourism.gov.mo

7 Terms and Conditions

7.1 Liabilities

7.1.1 Liabilities of Participating Merchants

Participating merchants or awarded merchants shall be fully liable for their respective businesses and services, regardless of their involvement in the Scheme. Neither MGTO, the Assessment Committee, and their agents shall accept any responsibility or liability whatsoever in relation to any dealings between participating merchants and their customers, or otherwise arising as a result of any publication or announcement of their award status made by MGTO.

7.1.2 Liabilities of Awarded Merchants

Awarded merchants shall be fully liable for their respective businesses and services, regardless of their award status. Neither MGTO, the Assessment Committee, nor their agents shall accept any responsibility or liability whatsoever in relation to any dealings between awarded merchants and their customers, or any dispute related to awarded merchants, suspended or terminated. This provision shall cover the entire process, including the decline of applications from awarded merchants for renewal, and suspension, termination or withdrawal of the award status.

7.2 Confidentiality

QTSAS reserves the right to publish company information (e.g. name, address, contact details, etc.) of awarded merchants on official website or printed materials. In addition, MGTO reserves the right to withdraw merchants' qualification to participate the scheme or award, if the merchants are subjected to disciplinary procedures, or have been found to violate the agreements concerning their award status.

Participating or awarded merchants' confidential information, including financial details, costing and marketing strategies will not be required by MGTO. All information collected during the application, assessment and award decision stages, as well as during the subsequent surveillance and renewal stages, in the form of audio recordings, notes and photographs will be kept by MGTO, the Assessment Committee and their agents in strict confidentiality. The information and data, other than those already available in the public domain, will not be disclosed to outside parties without prior written consent from the merchant in question.

7.3 Change of licence

Participating or awarded merchants shall inform MGTO within one month when there are significant and effective changes that will affect the validity of the licence of the merchant, which may relate to but not be limited to legal status, ownership, services provision and delivery processes. Under such circumstances, awarded merchant will be assessed as described in Chapter 5.2 and the award status will be re-considered according to Chapter 5.3 after the new licence is issued.

7.4 Change of business address

Awarded merchants shall inform MGTO in writing before or within one month when there is a change of business address, the associated award status will be terminated and application to participate the Scheme shall be submitted again.

7.5 Suspension of business

Awarded merchants shall inform MGTO about the reason why its business is suspended and the anticipated suspension period in writing before or within one month when its business is suspended due to renovation or other situations. In case the business can be resumed within three months, the award status can be maintained after receiving assessment mentioned in Chapter 5.2. If the suspension lasts for more than three months, an application for extension of business suspension shall be filed to MGTO by the awarded merchant ten working days before the end of the three-month limit, MGTO will relate the case to Assessment Committee to decide whether to accept the extension application or not.

When an awarded merchant fails to take initiative to inform MGTO about suspension of its business and the suspension is spotted by MGTO, its award status will be suspended. Besides, award will be terminated immediately if the business cannot be resumed within three months from the date of the suspension being spotted. The merchant is refrained from applying the Scheme for a year, application will only be accepted according to Chapter 5.1 after the end of the one year period.

7.6 Access to information and premises

Participating or awarded merchants shall provide MGTO, the Assessment Committee and their agents with access to information necessary for the purpose of application review, assessment and award decision. They shall also allow personnel designated by MGTO to physically access the premises where services are rendered or supporting activities take place (e.g. business premises, office, locations that are involved in inbound tour itinerary, maintenance workshop of transportation for rental, etc.).

7.7 Complaints against awarded merchants

When MGTO receives a complaint against an awarded merchant, the merchant in question shall submit in accordance with the requirements given by MGTO. In case monetary claim is involved with a complaint, without prejudice to Chapter 7.2, awarded merchants shall not restrict MGTO from forwarding the complaint and the associated details to Consumer Council of Macao SAR Government for follow up. In order to provide legal ground for the aforesaid complaint referral, merchants shall commit to accept the arrangement when they submit their applications. In addition, upon receiving the award notification from MGTO, in the case that the licence holder of the awarded merchant is a company, its legal representative shall sign on and submit the “Declaration on Acceptance of Arbitration” together with the original copy of Company Registration issued by Commerce and Movable Property Registry within 3 months and the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

7.8 Suspension and Termination

Starting from the date of award decision, the Assessment Committee may, at its sole and absolute discretion, suspend or terminate the award status of an awarded merchant found to have committed any of the following acts:

- i. refusing or neglecting to comply with the prescribed criteria of QTSAS;
- ii. refusing or neglecting to comply with the judgment of the Assessment Committee;
- iii. failing to comply with the Terms and Conditions of QTSAS;
- iv. failing to comply with the guidelines given in QTSAS “Mark Usage Guideline” and failing to take timely corrective action;
- v. purposely providing any information or documentation in relation to or incidental to an application or renewal under QTSAS;
- vi. failing to obtain or maintain a valid licence;
- vii. period of business suspension exceeds time limit;
- viii. change of business address;
- ix. ceasing to carry on its business or operations;
- x. being adjudicated as bankrupt; or facing a winding-up order; or against whom bankruptcy or winding-up proceedings have been instituted; or facing action by creditors under the provisions of ordinances of the Macao SAR relating to bankruptcy or insolvency;
- xi. behaving in a manner that jeopardizes or damages, or in the opinion of MGTO (as the case may be) is likely to jeopardize or damage, the reputation or interests of QTSAS or MGTO;
- xii. undergoing change in its business, operations, financial condition, directorship or management which may, in the opinion of the Assessment Committee (as the case may be), materially and adversely affect the merchant’s ability to provide quality tourism services and perform its other obligations under QTSAS in general.

7.9 Appeal

The Scheme is operated in a manner to ensure that applications are processed and awards are made impartially with high standards of professionalism. In case of dispute, the decision from MGTO shall be final and appeal shall not be accepted.

This document contains a Chinese, Portuguese and English version. If there is any inconsistency or ambiguity among three versions, the Chinese version shall prevail.