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

Application Manual Travel Agency



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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 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