

Site Inspection Suggestions

The details below give you an indication of what site inspection judges look for. This is by no means an exhaustive list but it is meant to help the site inspections judges to focus on the various areas they need to score when visiting an entrant.

We wish you good luck with the site inspection and please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

General Comments

To be scored as 'Excellent' in a particular area it needs to be an absolute standout. For example, parking facilities are pretty much all the same – however Excellent would be having a staff member standing there directing you to a space, opening your door etc.

When the judge is inspecting a property/entrant they will focus on activities/updates/ innovations in the last 12 months, this includes keeping training manuals, policies and procedures up to date.

The following are guides given to judges of what they look for in each section:

First Impressions

Initial impact and appeal:

This is your first impression only so it's subjective. This includes the Festivals and Events categories. Does the entrant show passion for their entry/speciality? Are they knowledgeable? Do they promote a professional feeling?

Initial contact:

The site inspection begins with the first contact, so how was the phone manner of the person/people you spoke to? Were they helpful? Were staff knowledgeable? Did they provide clear directions?

Website:

We're not asking you score their website based on attributes and functionality but just overall did it give you a good impression of the entrant?

Product

Maintenance:

Does it look cared for? Is it clean? A maintenance register – do they have one, do they use it? Do they have a preventative maintenance program? Do they have a capital expenditure program?

Innovations:

Are they new for the area? Are they new for their marketplace?

Pricing/value for money:

In its class/category – don't just look at the pricing as a stand alone for this entrant to give your opinion of value for money.

Meet expectations:

Do they do surveys? Do they conduct market research? Do they ask their clients about their expectations?

Management and Staff

Appearance:

Are there nametags? Are the staff smiling? Communicative – “Good morning sir” etc as they go past customers. Do they reflect a good image and a good personal presentation?

Friendly, knowledgeable, helpful:

Are staff happy? Are they free to talk to you? Are all the staff people focussed? Are they engaging with their customers? Test staff’s knowledge – ask a staff member a question and see how they respond. Knowledge is very important.

Control/Structure:

Evidence of management structure – ask for an organisational chart. In regards to controls are there regular staff appraisals?

Awards:

Have they used them? What benefit did they reap from that? Winning lots of awards doesn’t guarantee them a high score in that section – they must show how they leveraged it and benefitted from up e.g. “We used it to justify price increase.” How did they measure the benefit?

Structured training:

Look for things such as AussieHost. Is there a training plan for each staff member? Is there an induction process? Is it followed up? Ask if staff have progressed through the organisation. How many?

Customer Service

Customer friendly atmosphere:

Do staff display a service attitude, courtesy, sincerity, consistency, friendliness and a positive attitude? Do they all smile?

Customer contact:

Do management and staff appear to be listening and communicating well? Can they provide an example of how staff/management are proactive in meeting customers needs e.g. do they offer to make bookings or simply provide the customer with a phone number.

Customer feedback:

What do they do with it? Ask to see the forms. How does it enhance customer service?

Complaints:

How do they deal with complaints? Ask them to give you a real-life example.

Service and Facilities

Special/extra features:

Hotels: do they provide business centres, games rooms, gyms, swimming pools etc?

Conferences: do they provide wireless broadband, natural lighting, upmarket coffee & tea, break out rooms?

Attractions: do they provide a baby’s room, first aid station?

Restaurants: do they provide handicap parking?

Heritage: do they offer Membership e.g. National Trust?

When scoring this as Excellent look for things far above and beyond standard services and facilities, which would exceed normal expectations.

Enhancing tourism experience:

Do they promote tourism experiences in the area e.g.

“Stay here and get 10% discount”.

“We’ll take you to the vineyard”.

“We have bicycles available if you want to ride.”

“We offer horse riding morning and night.”

Comfort:

Cushions on chairs, lifts supplied where it's hard to climb, air conditioning. Do they request clear feedback from guests and act upon it? Ask for examples.

OH&S, Risk, Sustainability

Emergency procedures and training:

How many staff have a first aid training certificate? How many staff have completed an OH&S certificate? Ask to view certificates – they should be on file. Incident reports – they need to be on file, ask to see them. Look for evidence of at least bi-annual fire safety training.

Management of safety and security:

Can the customer/consumer feel safe both personally and with their belongings? Is there a genuine concern for customer's safety and security e.g. lock boxes, safes, multiple keys? Who is overseeing the OH&S policy and implementation?

Management practices:

Is there a maintenance/risk management report? Risk management assessment should take place at least twice a year. Is it available for viewing? Sight Council food inspection reports, dangerous chemicals, signage and procedural handling, any other Council State legislative requirements.

Environmental policies:

Is there a carbon footprint done or do they measure their environmental impact in other ways? Do they have low energy lighting? What is the policy re staff travel? Do they source and use local products? Do they have timers on lighting and switches etc? Is there staff training in regards to environmental sustainability? Is there a culture of change practices? Try to discuss in detail.

Professionalism

Accurate reflection:

Look at their website prior to visit, ask to see brochures – was it an accurate reflection?

Tourism Organisations:

Please name them if you can on the site form.

Contribution:

Are they proactive in development of tourism in their area? Do they lobby with politicians? Are they investing in other tourism developments? Do they mentor other tourism developments? Do they belong to tourism organisations?

Accreditation and training:

Does the operator or staff participate in regards to tourism training programs?

As appendices are no longer to accompany your submission for judging site inspection judges will be required to sign the following statement and score accordingly. They will ask you to produce policies and procedures for OH&S, Risk Management and Environmental Sustainability.

Declaration

Judges will ask to sight relevant policy and procedure manuals and will then sign the following declaration on their site inspection form. Be aware that if you cannot provide the manuals that should typically be used in your particular business they may give you the lowest score of 1 in that section.

I, _____ hereby state that I visited the above entrant on the day specified and the scores given are a true and accurate representation of the visit. In particular relevant manuals, documents and policies were requested, those unavailable were given a score of 1 being Poor