



TQUAL Accreditation Fact Sheet

2011

What is TQUAL Accreditation?

TQUAL Accreditation is the new National Tourism Accreditation Framework developed by government and industry to promote quality experiences for tourism consumers by recognising sustainable and capable tourism operators nationally.

This framework provides the opportunity for existing quality and accreditation programs to come together under one umbrella and apply for TQUAL Accreditation. TQUAL Accreditation provides a promotional vehicle that will allow accredited operators to be easily identified and recognised by consumers and other businesses through a common national symbol, the TQUAL mark.

Participating programs will continue to operate independently but will, under licence, be able to take advantage of the increased exposure generated through a supporting publicity program for TQUAL Accreditation. The Australian Government has committed \$5.5 million in funding over four years to implement and operate TQUAL Accreditation. The funding will be used to:

- ✓ Develop an integrated consumer marketing campaign increasing awareness of TQUAL operators
- ✓ Meet running costs for the Tourism Quality Council of Australia (TQCA);
- ✓ Fund the engagement of independent assessors to provide the TQCA with advice on applications from programs seeking to become TQUAL accredited;
- ✓ Facilitate changes to the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse to support the collection and distribution of information on accredited businesses and operators; and
- ✓ Provide an enhanced online complaints management system.

This funding will be administered by the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism. A Breakdown of Funding over the next four years is as follows:

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
\$2.2 million	\$1.2 million	\$1.3 million	\$0.8 million

Why was TQUAL Accreditation introduced?

There are currently over 20 programs within the industry that are involved in accrediting, rating or certifying tourism products, services and/or providers.

These programs go a long way towards encouraging quality, however the diverse number of programs reduces their ability to build consumer recognition and fully maximise their potential.

A national brand of quality will enable consumers to recognise, engage with, and have continued confidence in quality tourism products and services. This will raise standards in quality across all types of tourism operators in Australia.

What are the benefits for Consumers?

TQUAL Accreditation will benefit consumers by providing them with a recognisable symbol of quality, the TQUAL mark, allowing them to make better informed choices when selecting tourism products and services. The TQUAL mark will give consumers comfort that their expectations of the tourism experience will be met. TQUAL is about delivering on the customer quality promise.

What are the benefits for Business?

Accredited quality businesses will benefit through:

- ✓ An Australian Government funded marketing campaign designed to encourage travellers to choose products with the TQUAL tick of approval
- ✓ The opportunity to differentiate themselves in the market with a higher level of credibility
- ✓ Access to better insight into consumer preferences
- ✓ A marketing advantage by being associated with a symbol with increased brand recognition
- ✓ Increased exposure through preferential listing on the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse distribution network, such as Australia.com.



How does TQUAL Accreditation work?

Accreditation programs who meet the necessary criteria, may apply for TQUAL Accreditation.

The application is considered by independent assessors who provide a recommendation to the TQCA who will then make the final decision on whether to approve a program.

If an accreditation program is approved by the TQCA, they will be offered a Master Licence. Programs with a Master Licence may then issue Sub-licenses to their operators. A Master Licence and Sub-license permits the program and operators to utilise the TQUAL mark.

The TQUAL mark does not take the place of the logos or marks already issued by the accreditation program. Instead it offers the program and its operators the opportunity to co-brand with the TQUAL mark. The TQUAL mark will start to be marketed to consumers in the second half of 2011.

How will TQUAL Accreditation be administered?

TQUAL Accreditation is administered by the TQCA, who is responsible for overseeing the operation of, and, the decision making for TQUAL Accreditation.

The TQCA is supported by the Australian Government which will provide marketing through Tourism Australia (TA) and administrative and policy support through the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism (RET).

For a list of TQCA members please visit www.ret.gov.au/tqual.

How to get involved?

If you belong to a TQUAL Accreditation program, then sign your sub-licence and get the TQUAL mark today.

The following two programs are the first to be receive TQUAL Accreditation:

- ✓ Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (Tourism Accreditation Board of Victoria)
- ✓ Eco Certification and Respecting Our Culture Programs (Ecotourism Australia Ltd)
- ✓ STAR Rating Scheme (AAA Tourism)

If you aren't currently part of an accreditation program visit www.ret.gov.au/tqual to find out how you can become accredited.

If you are an existing accreditation program wishing to become TQUAL accredited. Visit www.ret.gov.au/tqual to download the application forms.

Application Dates

Applications opened on 2 April 2011. Accreditation programs wishing to apply for TQUAL Accreditation should complete the necessary application form available on the RET website and provide the necessary supporting documents to the TQCA.

More Information

Further information about TQUAL Accreditation and application process, is available from: www.ret.gov.au/tqual, ntaf@ret.gov.au or call 02 6243 7024.