

Specific Quality Criteria no. 203

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**Hiking in Mountains in Winter Conditions, Rural Areas and Wilderness**

vakinn.is

 Quality and Environmental Certification

On the Way to Sustainable Tourism

**The following quality criteria are filled out by a company representative. A clear explanation of how each applicable criterion is fulfilled must be given with reference to appropriate documentation, e. g. employee handbook/quality manual, safety plans, photos etc. Random and/or selected criteria will be verified by the auditor.**

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| ***203-1*** | ***Safety*** | ***Yes*** | ***N/A*** | ***How fulfilled/explanations*** |
| *203-1.1* | For each type of tours there is an itinerary (written description) including a description of routes, schedule and other trip arrangements |  |  |  |
| *203-1.2* | A checklist has been compiled for safety equipment on tours and excursions, including f. ex.: 1. First aid kit/equipment.
2. Communication devices.
3. Tracking devices.
4. Extra clothing.
5. Avalanche tranceivers.
6. Crampons.
7. Shovels.
8. Lines/ropes.
9. Ice picks/axes.
10. Avalanche probes.
11. Thermal protective bags/emergency shelter.
12. Crevasse rescue equipment.
13. Other equipment according to conditions on each tour.
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| *203-1.3* | A written plan for renewal, cleaning and maintenance of safetyequipment is in place including procedures about i. a.:1. Inspection and testing of equipment.
2. Disinfection and cleaning of equipment.
3. Lifespan of equipment (see manufacturer's accepted standards).
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| *203-1.4* | All equipment is in a very good condition, i.e.:1. Belts and straps unbroken.
2. Crampons sufficiently sharp.
3. Helmets and fasteners unbroken and in order.
4. Clothing is clean and in a very good condition.
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| *203-1.5* | All equipment is well and neatly stored after usage. The storage is appropriate and does not reduce the safety and usability of the equipment. |  |  |  |
| *203-1.6* | To prepare guides for the tours/activities of each day they go through a checklist including the following items, among others: 1. Details of the itinerary and routes to be travelled.
2. Weather forecast.
3. Avalanche risk and other conditions in mountain regions.
4. Equipment.
5. Information about customers.
6. That contingency plans are always included / accessible on tours.
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| *203-1.7* | There is a checklist for guides on the safety matters that are covered with customers before and during the tour, e. g. regarding:1. Local conditions and weather.
2. Schedule.
3. Safety precautions in situations where special care must be exercised.
4. Appropriate clothing and equipment.
5. Food, drinks, and access to water during the tour.
6. 112 emergency number in Iceland.
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| *203-1.8* | Written rules apply to customer/guide ratio according to conditions on each tour or excursion.The number of customers per guide does not exceed: 1. 12:1 when guiding in mountain regions or on glaciers where safety ropes are not required.
2. 8:1 when guiding on glaciers without technical difficulties where customers are linked by rope.

The number of customers per guide on ice caps is based on the difficulties/risks of traversing the particular glacier and is determined by the head guide of the company. |  |  |

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| *203-1.9* | Guides regularly check customers’ well-being. If a customer shows signs of distress, reduced physical ability, hypothermia or any other signs that cause concern, the guide takes immediate action. |  |  |  |
| *203-1.10* | The company has written guidelines on when to cancel tours due to weather. It is clearly stated who decides on the cancellation of tours. |  |  |  |
| ***203-2*** | ***Environment*** | ***Yes*** | ***N/A*** | ***How fulfilled/explanation*** |
| *203-2.1* | Marked roads or recognised vehicle tracks are always used. Off-road driving in winter and on glaciers shall be in accordance with Article 4. of Regulation no. 528/2005 regarding restrictions on traffic in Iceland's nature. |  |  |  |
| *203-2.2* | Streams and rivers are only crossed in designated places and only where wading is considered safe. Where the riverbank is not maintained in terms of wading, damage to the environment shall be prevented as possible. |  |  |  |
| *203-2.3* | The company uses designated campgrounds where possible. If this is not feasible, special effort is made to ensure that no signs of the stay are left at the location. |  |  |  |
| *203-2.4* | If campfires are lit, all firewood is brought into the area, and special care taken to ensure that they are fully extinguished before departure. Existing fire pits are used wherever possible; cf. the current Nature Conservation Act. |  |  |  |
| *203-2.5* | Customers are informed about toilet arrangements where conventional facilities are not available. |  |  |  |
| *203-2.6* | All equipment and waste are removed. The company ensures that no permanent traces/damages are seen in the nature in connection with the company ‘s tours or activities. |  |  |  |
| *203-2.7* | At the beginning of the tour, the guide reminds the customer of responsible travel behaviour. |  |  |  |
| ***203-3*** | ***Education and Training*** | ***Yes*** | ***N/A*** | ***How fulfilled/explanations*** |
| *203-3.1* | Guides receive training in the use of equipment f. ex. to be able to provide a correct location and information on accessibility to areas visited if assistance is required. In the training the following shall be covered:1. Use of compass and map.
2. Use of GPS positioning device.
3. Use of appropriate means of communication for different areas, e. g. mobile phone, radio and Tetra.
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| *203-3.2* | Emergency drills are conducted every year. The training is based on types of excursions and covers the following aspects among others:1. Crevasse rescue and other types of rescues using ropes and

technical equipment.1. Methods of rescue from cliffs.
2. Avalanche search and other emergency searches; use of

transmitters and search probes1. Use of emergency transport equipment such as stretchers and preparation for transport of wounded or sick individuals.
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| *203-3.3* | Guides have completed the course *Wilderness First Responder (WFR*) from ICE-SAR or a comparable course from another organization and attend a refresher course every three years. |  |  |  |
| *203-3.4* | Guides have completed the course *Alpine Trekking 1* from AIMG. |  |  |  |
| *203-3.5* | The head guide has completed the course *Alpine Trekking 2* from AIMG. |  |  |  |
| *203-3.6* | The head guide has a minimum experience of two years or 100 working days as a mountain-guide. |  |  |  |