

Nature Observation on Land

Specific Quality Criteria no. 208- Checklist

4th edition 2018

Self assessment

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**In 4th edition the specific quality criteria is based on self-assessment checklists that applicants/participants complete themselves. The applicable criteria must be completely fulfilled. A clear explanation of how each 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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| ***208-1*** | ***Safety*** | ***Yes*** | ***N/A*** | ***How fulfilled/explanation*** |
| *208-1.1* | The company has written safety plans covering all tours and services offered to customers. |  |  |  |
| *208-1.2* | Safety plans are reviewed at least once a year. |  |  |  |
| *208-1.3* | Guides are briefed on safety plans every year. The briefing is done according to a written procedure. |  |  |  |
| *208-1.4* | The company ensures that guides operate according to safety plans. This is for example stated in employment contracts and  subcontracting agreements. |  |  |  |
| *208-1.5* | The company ensures that contingency plans are at hand on every  tour. |  |  |  |
| *208-1.6* | *T*he company maintains a list of all guides, working on its behalf, employees and contractors alike, stating their education, training and experience*.* |  |  |  |
| *208-1.7* | A checklist has been compiled for safety equipment on tours and excursions e.g.:   1. First aid kit/equipment. 2. Communication devices. 3. Tracking devices. 4. Extra clothing. 5. Other equipment according to conditions on each tour. |  |  |  |
| *208-1.8* | A written plan for renewal and maintenance of safety equipment, based on inspection/testing, accepted criteria, age and operational lifetime among other things, is in place. |  |  |  |
| *208-1.9* | Guides have appropriate equipment and knowledge to provide accurate location and information on access routes to the area they are travelling through, in the event they have to call for assistance or rescue. The following are essential:   1. Knowledge in navigation using compass and map. 2. Knowledge in the use of GPS. 3. Knowledge of appropriate means of telecommunication in different terrains (e.g. satellite phone, mobile, two way radio-transceiver, Tetra transceiver for use in mountain regions). |  |  |  |
| *208-1.10* | Guides instruct customers regarding safety matters such as:   1. Local conditions and weather. 2. Appropriate clothing. 3. Proper use of safety equipment 4. Safety precautions when traversing rivers, tackling steep gradients and arduous terrain 5. 112 emergency phone number in Iceland. |  |  |  |
| *208-1.11* | Written rules apply to customer/guide ratio according to conditions and potential risks on each tour. |  |  |  |
| *208-1.12* | 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. Aspects relating to customers’ abilities and experience. 3. Weather forecast (guides check on this prior to all departures). |  |  |  |
| *208-1.13* | The company ensures that when customers are transported by vehicles (cars, bikes, ATVs, snow mobiles etc.), all regulations concerning licences are adhered to and appropriate safety measures are taken; e.g. use of safety belts, helmets and other safety equipment. |  |  |  |
| *208-1.14* | The company informs employees and customers of the necessity of being in good physical condition and that the use of alcohol or drugs can make them unfit to take part in a tour. |  |  |  |
| *208-1.15* | The company has written guidelines on when to cancel tours due to weather. |  |  |  |
| ***208-2*** | ***Environment*** | ***Yes*** | ***N/A*** | ***How fulfilled/explanation*** |
| *208-2.1* | Marked roads or recognised vehicle tracks are always used. Where this is not possible, e.g. in winter, driving across areas with delicate eco-systems must be avoided, cf. the current Nature Conservation Act. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.2* | The company ensures that streams and rivers are only crossed in designated places and vehicles are only driven into rivers and out of them at an angle that prevents damage to riverbanks. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.3* | The company complies with laws and regulations on environmental protection. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.4* | The company observes current laws and regulations on animal protection, such as laws on protection of specific species during nesting or breeding season. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.5* | The company has compiled and published a Code of Conduct regarding the observation of wild animals in order not to disturb wildlife. This applies for example to proximity to birds during nesting season, to reindeer, seals and foxes during breeding season. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.6* | When promoting and marketing its services the company strives to emphasise environmentally friendly tourism and sustainability. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.7* | Guides inform customers about the culture, nature and history of the area they travel through. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.8* | The training and instruction materials used by the company ensure that training and education of new employees is based on principles of sustainable tourism. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.9* | The company seeks to use buildings, equipment and facilities appropriate to location and natural conditions. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.10* | In areas, where natural lighting is insufficient, lighting is only used to ensure the legibility of signs and for the safety of customers. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.11* | The company ensures that visible signs of its operations in nature are kept to a minimum. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.12* | All non-biodegradable refuse is removed. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.13* | The company ensures that the feeding of wild animals is not a part of its daily operations. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.14* | The company consults with organisations in charge of conservation in the areas, in which the company operates, at least once a year. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.15* | The company consults with landowners when operating on their land, for example on where, when and how often tours take place. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.16* | Customers are informed about toilet arrangements and measures are taken to ensure that they follow instructions where conventional facilities are not available. |  |  |  |
| *208-2.17* | Customers are reminded of responsible behaviour towards the environment. |  |  |  |

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| ***208-3*** | ***Education and Training*** | ***Yes*** | ***N/A*** | ***How fulfilled/explanation*** |
| *208-3.1* | Guides have completed specialized training/education, e.g. are certified guides and/or have substantial experience appropriate for the tour in question. |  |  |  |
| *208-3.2* | Guides have completed the course *Wilderness First Aid* (Fyrsta hjálp 1, 20 hours) from ICE-SAR or a comparable course from another organisation and attend a refresher course (4 hours) every two years. |  |  |  |
| *208-3.3* | At least one employee on tours through the wilderness\*, e. g. guide, has completed the course *Wilderness First Responder* *(WFR)* from ICE-SAR or a comparable course from another organisation and attends a refresher course every three years. |  |  |  |
| *208-3.4* | At least one employee on each tour through the wilderness\*\*, e.g. guide, has completed the course *Wilderness Survival* from ICE-SAR or a comparable course from another organisation.  *Not applicable when manned service hut/reception is located close to the cave.* |  |  |  |
| *208-3.5* | All guides on tours through the wilderness\* have completed the course *Navigation* from ICE-SAR or a comparable course from another organisation. |  |  |  |

*\*Wilderness is a place or area where it takes a minimum of two hours to get third party assistance. Please note; during summer mountain roads classified as F-roads are exempt from criteria 208-3.4.*