

ADVENTURE TRAVEL

Guide Qualifications & Performance Standard



ADVENTURE TRAVEL

TRADE ASSOCIATION

www.adventuretravel.biz

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Pichincha, Ecuador © ATTA

[Introduction]

The adventure travel industry has grown rapidly over the last few decades, expanding from an estimated \$89 billion in 2010 to \$263 billion in 2013, with an estimated four out of ten international travelers incorporating adventure activities into their travel plans.¹ With such rapid growth, increasing numbers of businesses and guests are entering the marketplace, and the industry needs clear guidance with respect to adventure travel guide qualifications and performance.

1 ADVENTURE TRAVEL TRADE ASSOCIATION & GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY Adventure Tourism Market Study [Online] August 2013 Available from: <http://files.adventuretravel.biz/docs/research/adventure-tourism-market-study-2013-web.pdf> [Accessed 18/12/15]

Adventure travel guides and tour leaders are at the crux of the adventure travel experience. They provide for the safety of adventure travelers, ensure the overall quality of the guests' experience, and ultimately deliver and safeguard an adventure travel company's reputation. An excellent guide in one destination can raise the bar for the industry, while a less competent guide in another can just as easily set the industry back.

Despite the importance of quality adventure travel guiding, recent research confirms the absence of a global standard specifically for

adventure travel guides. Although numerous types of standards and quality assurance systems with relevance to adventure tourism exist, none directly address the range of qualifications necessary for excellent adventure travel guiding. For example, many people in the industry may be familiar with standards and quality assurance systems such as these:

Standard Quality Assurance Systems

- Technical standards for specific activities such as white water rafting, rock climbing or mountaineering
- Hospitality and guest service standards
- Quality systems to regulate attractions and venues
- Quality guidelines for interpretation provided by guides
- State and national training requirements for guides
- ISO Safety Standards for Adventure Tourism

From this list, only the ISO safety standard for adventure tourism (ISO 21101 and TR 21102)² addresses adventure travel specifically, and none of these standards or quality assurance systems cover all the aspects necessary for excellent adventure travel guiding.

In the absence of a global qualification and performance standard, a variety of approaches to managing adventure travel guiding can be found around the world. While in some countries there are no active standards at all, in other countries one can find detailed government regulations specifying training requirements to receive a national adventure guide certification. Many destinations also have guide associations, which may establish their own training and operating standards. In addition, over time the commercial sector has established its own codes of operating, requiring that guides at a minimum receive specialized certifications for technical activities such as rafting, kayaking, and climbing. However, these certifications are not well publicized or understood by travelers and not enforced, except by companies through their individual hiring practices.

In an effort to support the industry as it continues to expand and professionalize, the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) initiated this Adventure Travel Guide Qualification and Performance Standard. The standard was developed between the months of November 2014 and December 2015, by a group of 22 industry professionals organized by the ATTA. The working group was open to all and attracted volunteers from 16 countries, including guides, business owners, and industry partners. The full list of participants can be found [here](#).

² ISO (2014) ISO 21101: Adventure Tourism, Safety Management Systems Requirements [Online] January 2014. Available from: <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:std:iso:21101:ed-1:v1:en> [Accessed: 18/12/15]



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[How to Apply and Use This Standard]

This standard is not enforced or regulated in any way by the ATTA or any other organization. Governments, destination managers, and company owners may refer to this standard when evaluating the quality and performance of their own guides and determining appropriate training programs. Governments may choose to create their own regulations based upon this standard, but this document is not intended, nor should be used, to supersede local or

national laws. Both new and experienced guides may refer to the standard as a benchmark for evaluating their own performance and determining the course of their training. This standard has been written to specifically apply to adventure travel guides. It may prove applicable to adventure activity providers, or instructors, but has a greater focus on the needs and requirements of a guide within the adventure travel sector (see definitions).

Adventure Travel Guiding Core Competencies

Adventure travel is an extremely diverse industry. Diverse in terms of geography, with adventure travel businesses located all around the world, and diverse in terms of activities, with a constantly evolving list of new activities and products for adventure travel guides to introduce to guests. This diversity has resulted in a multitude of approaches to measuring adventure travel guide performance as well as numerous approaches for incorporating standards into training schemes. Government involvement, through laws and regulations, also impacts the enactment of standards.

Despite this diversity, universal qualifications have emerged for adventure travel guides, regardless of the activity or destination. The following five competencies have been determined essential for adventure travel guides, regardless of geography or activities:

- 1 TECHNICAL COMPETENCY
- 2 WILDERNESS MEDICINE & FIRST AID
- 3 CUSTOMER SERVICE & GROUP MANAGEMENT SKILLS
- 4 NATURAL & CULTURAL HISTORY INTERPRETATION (CONTENT DELIVERY)
- 5 SUSTAINABILITY

The following pages describe and provide examples to illustrate each of these core competencies.

These competencies align with and expand on ISO 21101 and TR 21102, which define the role of an adventure travel guide as follows:

The role of the leader, regardless of the adventure tourism activity being undertaken, usually includes:

1. Participant assistance;
2. Safety management and care of participants and the leadership team in accordance with the operator's safety management system, including the provision of appropriate information, instruction, supervision, and training;
3. Application of emergency procedures;
4. Information sharing.

1 TECHNICAL COMPETENCY

Where standards and protocols currently exist for adventure travel guides, most pertain to sport-specific skills, such as whitewater rafting, rock climbing, or mountaineering, for example. Numerous certifications and certifying bodies exist, as do training resources for many activities. The technical competency portion of the Adventure Travel Guide Qualification and Performance Standard is directed to the technical skills and abilities guides must possess regardless of what activity they are leading. ISO 21101 has been referenced for alignment.

Guides must possess the technical ability, including current, available sport-specific certifications, to safely carry out activities offered in the commercial trip

When no certification is required/available, the activity protocol must be determined and documented.

- a. Example: A coast walking provider references the existing protocol for hiking or hill walking.
- b. The protocol must incorporate relevant existing standards.
 - i. Example: Snowshoe hiking incorporates an avalanche protocol.

Some technical skills apply, regardless of geography and activity, and must always be present:

- a. Orientation and navigation;
- b. Managing emergency situations, risks, and hazards.

For example, in cases in which an activity is regulated by a local or national governing body, all rules must be observed.

- a. Example: British Canoeing (BC)³ certifications would be required throughout the UK for canoe and kayak guides.
- b. Example: The International Rafting Federation (IRF)⁴ provides certifications for whitewater rafting in different crafts.

³ BRITISH CANOEING [Online] Available from: <http://www.bcu.org.uk/tests-and-awards/> [Accessed: 18/12/15]

⁴ INTERNATIONAL RAFTING FEDERATION [Online] Available from: <http://www.internationalrafting.com/gte/gte-scheme/> [Accessed: 18/12/15]

Guides must observe relevant safety protocols specific to the company, location, and activities

Safety protocols include, but are not limited to:

- a. Emergency response;
- b. Required certifications;
- c. Duty to act (administering care to participants);
- d. Guide-to-guest ratio;
- e. Appropriate operating procedures and risk assessments.

Guides must adhere to the protocol or standard that is more strict or specific to the activity or location, especially when dictated by law.

- a. Example: A company may have a maximum group size protocol that is greater than regulations for the land they will guide in. The smaller group size dictated by the local regulation supersedes the company protocol.

Guides must have received current training and licenses (if applicable) specific to the equipment and vehicles used

Certifications and licenses may be determined by the local laws, industry standards, or company protocol

2 WILDERNESS MEDICINE AND FIRST AID

The often remote nature of adventure travel trips, combined with the presence of various degrees of physical activity, means the likelihood is high that an adventure travel guide will need to respond to some form of first aid or medical emergency at various times throughout his/her career.

Guides must possess a first aid certification based on the recognized protocol for the amount of time required to reach definitive care

Examples of certification include: Standard First Aid, Wilderness First Aid, Wilderness First Responder, and Wilderness EMT.

- a. The exact training requirement will vary by region and activity.
- b. Training should include hands-on CPR and scenario-based training in the outdoors.

The accepted protocol comes from the Wilderness Medical Society⁵ and International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation (ILCOR).⁶

- a. Other standards exist but must align with these protocols.
 - i. For Remote care, refer to the WMS protocols.
 - ii. For “Standard” first aid, refer to ILCOR standards for your region.

⁵ WILDERNESS MEDICAL SOCIETY (2015) Wilderness Medical Society [Online] Available from: <http://www.wms.org/> [Accessed: 18/12/15]

⁶ INTERNATIONAL LIAISON COMMITTEE ON RESUSCITATION. (2015) [Online] Available from: <http://www.ilcor.org/home/> [Accessed: 09/01/16]

3 CUSTOMER SERVICE & GROUP MANAGEMENT SKILLS

A greater focus on customer service differentiates adventure travel guides from adventure educators and adventure recreation providers. Customer service techniques for an adventure travel guide balance service with a safety protocol required for adventure activities and/or remote locations.

Additionally, a guide is responsible for relationship management with both guests and local people, must be able to communicate in the relevant local language(s) or through interpreters, and must be capable of intercultural communication and interpersonal skills.

Guides must be trained with an emphasis on customer service

Specific standards depend on the company protocol but must include the following:

- a. The guide shows interest in the ideas, views and principles of participants and others concerned, in a respectful and tolerant manner.
- b. During the tour and execution of the itinerary, the guide takes into account varying ability levels, physical limitations, and expectations of the group and assesses them in relation to the possibilities within the itinerary.
- c. The guide must be able to identify complaints and handle conflicts, either in a solving, mediating, or compromising way, providing aftercare and creating opportunities for feedback.
- d. The guide establishes contacts and maintains relationships with local parties as tour guides, drivers, and suppliers. During problems such as disputes or conflicts of interest, the guide acts as an intermediary and works toward achieving a solution that is acceptable for all concerned.
- e. In the case of illness, accidents, or other emergencies, the guide must be able to deal with the situation and act as trained for, according to accepted protocols, safety regulations, and company instructions.

Additional customer service considerations exist in adventure travel settings and must be incorporated into guide practices.

- a. Monitoring the health and well being of the guest:
 - i. Hydration and food;
 - ii. Body temperature and overall comfort;
 - iii. Mood and spirit.
- b. Managing for varying ability levels.
- c. Understanding participant expectations of the experience.
- d. Group management/dynamics.

Guides must possess strong abilities in verbal and non-verbal communication

Communication includes the ability to give clear direction and is an integral component of conducting a safe activity.

Expectations for experience must be clearly communicated with guests at the onset.

- a. Questioning techniques must be employed to ascertain the specific expectations of guests.
- b. Guides must strive to exceed guests' expectations, both physical and emotional.

Guides must be perceptive to non-verbal communication methods in an attempt to read guests' needs and desires prior to being told.

4 NATURAL & CULTURAL HISTORY INTERPRETATION (CONTENT DELIVERY)

An adventure travel guide is expected to be an expert in the subject matter presented on outings or tours including, but not limited to, natural history, current events, and cultural heritage. Knowing facts and statistics is not enough; the ability to communicate effectively must also be present. Guides must look to develop both knowledge and skills in communicating to cover a potentially wide variety of contexts for both the culture and place, as well as the interests of the audience. Content delivery techniques are applied in both formal educational settings as well as in informal communications, such as during meals and casual conversation.

Guides share content in a manner that is approachable and digestible for guests. This technique is called “interpretation” or “thematic interpretation”.

Guides must be knowledgeable about relevant local history and cultures and present accurate information

Guides must be familiar with the local culture/s of the regions in which they operate.

- a. When incorporating local people, guides must do so in authentic and respectful ways.
- b. It is the guide’s responsibility to ensure that guests are informed of, and follow, respectful practices when interacting with local communities.
- c. Appropriate language must be used when interacting with and referring to local communities.

Guides must be knowledgeable and aware of relevant local history and current events and be prepared to present this information in an unbiased manner.

Guides must be knowledgeable about relevant natural history in the environments that they visit

Educational techniques must be used to share this information in an engaging manner with guests

- a. Basic flora and fauna, ecosystems, and general ecology are important for all guides, at a minimum.
 - b. Guides' knowledge level must match the specializations declared by company and guides.
- a. Delivery must be provocative, engaging, and inspiring.
 - b. Content must be relevant to the audience:
 - i. An effort must be made to learn the interests, objectives, and knowledge level of participants and to match the content to these interests.
 - ii. The guide is responsible for ensuring that the information presented is being understood by participants.
 - c. Content must be organized in a thematic manner:
 - i. The guide must have a clear "topic" and "theme" in which the majority of material presented fits.
 - ii. The purpose and how it fits into the overarching story must be clear to the audience.

5 SUSTAINABILITY

A core value of the adventure travel sector is a focus on sustainability, including environmental and social sustainability. How guides interact with local partners, and share local cultures and history, is central to ensuring the positive impact adventure travel can have in communities. Guides operate sustainably by minimizing environmental impacts and modeling sustainable practices to clients/guests.

Principles of Low Impact Adventure Travel Guiding

Guides must be trained in the principles and application of Leave No Trace, appropriate to the location.

- a. As determined by The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics⁷:
 - i. Plan Ahead and Prepare;
 - ii. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces (USA, Canada, Australia) OR Travel and Camp on Durable Ground (Ireland, New Zealand, UK);
 - iii. Dispose of Waste Properly;
 - iv. Leave What You Find;
 - v. Minimize Campfire Impacts;
 - vi. Respect Wildlife (USA, Canada, Australia) OR Respect Farm Animals & Wildlife (New Zealand, Ireland, UK);

vii. Be Considerate of Other Visitors (USA, Canada) OR Be Considerate of Your Hosts & Other Visitors (Australia) OR Be Considerate of Others (Ireland, New Zealand, UK).

- b. Training must be geographically appropriate to the location in which the guide is leading.
- c. Emphasis on this application of principals must include efforts to stop poaching and trading of illegal wildlife products.

Additional principals exist, and must be adhered to, as designated “Beyond Leave No Trace” by Simon and Alagona (2009)⁸:

- a. Educate yourself and others about the places you visit;
- b. Purchase only the equipment and clothing you need;
- c. Take care of the equipment and clothing you have;
- d. Make conscientious food, equipment, and clothing consumption choices;

⁷ LEAVE NO TRACE CENTER FOR OUTDOOR ETHICS (2015) Leave No Trace Center For Outdoor Ethics [Online] Available from: <https://lnt.org/> [Accessed: 18/12/15]

⁸ SIMON, G. & ALAGONA, P. (2009) Beyond Leave No Trace. Ethics, Place & Environment: A Journal of Philosophy & Geography. 12 (1). p. 17-34.

- e. Minimize waste production;
- f. Reduce energy consumption;
- g. Get involved by conserving and restoring the places you visit.

Guides must be aware of and, where applicable, incorporate into their guiding the following principles outlined by The International Ecotourism Society⁹:

- a. Minimize physical, social, behavioral, and psychological impacts;
- b. Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect;
- c. Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts;
- d. Provide direct financial benefits for conservation;
- e. Deliver memorable interpretative experiences to visitors that help raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climates;
- f. Recognize the rights and spiritual beliefs of the Indigenous People in your community and work in partnership with them to create empowerment.

Guides must be aware of and, where applicable, incorporate into their guiding the following principles outlined by The Adventure Travel Trade Association's "Values Statement"¹⁰ including:

- a. Maximizing social and economic benefits to the local community and minimizing negative impacts;

- b. Maximizing benefits to cultural heritage and minimizing negative impacts;
- c. Maximizing benefits to the environment and minimizing negative impacts;
- d. Protection of children from harmful effects of tourism as represented by the organization: TheCode.org¹¹.

Human rights and anti-trafficking

- a. An adventure travel guide must abide by international and local standards in regard to human rights.
 - i. Example: International Porter Protection Group (IPPG)¹².
- b. They must document and report the use of illegal and unethical activity in the areas that they are guiding in, including vendors and partners engaging in such acts. This includes child and human trafficking, illegal prostitution, and uncompensated/under-compensated labor.
 - i. Who the guide reports such behavior to depends on the company protocol and the specific jurisdiction in which he/she is guiding.

9 THE INTERNATIONAL ECOTOURISM SOCIETY (2015) The International Ecotourism Society [Online] Available from: <http://www.ecotourism.org/> [Accessed: 18/12/15]

10 ADVENTURE TRAVEL TRADE ASSOCIATION. (2013) ATTA Values Statement [Online] February 2013 Available from: <http://cdn.adventuretravel.biz/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Values-Statement-Trade-English.pdf> [Accessed: 18/12/15]

11 THE CODE.ORG (2015) Protect Children from Sex Tourism [Online] August 2015 Available from: http://www.thecode.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/The-Code-Brochure_Protect-Children_LR.pdf [Accessed: 18/12/15]

12 INTERNATIONAL PORTER PROTECTION GROUP (IPPG). (2015) Trekking Ethics: the 5 Guidelines. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.ippg.net/trekking-ethics/> [Accessed: 28/12/15]

Animal Welfare

- a. Adventure travel guides have a crucial role to play in safeguarding the welfare of animals working in, or affected by, the tourism industry.
- b. Guides have a duty to not engage in and to report any instances of animal cruelty and exploitation, such as but not limited to:
 - i. Animals being traded illegally;
 - ii. Animals being beaten, goaded, frightened, or treated in a similarly abusive manner;
 - iii. Animals deprived of food and water;
 - iv. Animals being overloaded, dragged around by, and ridden in traditional bits;
 - v. Animals forced to work when sick, injured, pregnant, or otherwise unfit for work.
- c. It is essential that policies and strategies are developed, implemented, reviewed, and updated periodically in concert with communities and animal welfare experts.
 - i. Guides should advise guests before buying or consuming something made out of an exotic tree, plant, or wild animal which may be contributing to their extinction or exploitation.
 - ii. Guides should be familiar with local exotic dishes, which may contain illegal products.
 - iii. Be aware of international and local country legislation and penalties for trafficking protected wild animals and plant and wood products.
 - iv. Guides should prevent guests from taking plants or seeds found on trails and visited sites.
 - v. Guides should instruct guests not to take pottery and/or lithic elements or flakes from archaeological sites.
- b. Cultural objects such as traditional carvings, pottery, and antiques make attractive gifts, but may be stolen, illegally excavated, or looted artifacts. The impact that this can have is irreversible with countries and local people being denied their heritage and cultural identities.
 - i. Guides should ensure that the souvenirs guests would like to purchase have a documented and legal history, aren't stolen, and can be exported.
 - ii. Guides should check and encourage guests to ask about the origin of what is being sold.

Wildlife & Cultural Artifact Consumption & Trafficking

- a. The illegal killing of protected wild animals and the illegal exploitation of plants and forests are crimes that have a devastating impact on the environment, local livelihoods, and biodiversity.



Brasil © Magdalena Paluchowska / Shutterstock

Recommendations For Implementing This Standard

Each destination and company will find its own way forward in bringing its adventure travel guides up to the level described by this standard. Not all companies will have the same access to training resources, and it is expected that there are numerous ways guides might reach this level of expert performance. This section includes suggestions for implementing specific aspects of this standard.

Suggestions for implementing the technical competency:

- a. Required certifications can vary by region and should be compared for parity and frequently evaluated.
- b. Other governing or certifying bodies can be sourced to create programs where a regional governing body does not exist.
 - i. Skills and requirements should be compared for compatibility before application.

[RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS STANDARD]

Suggestions for implementing the wilderness medicine and first aid competency:

- a. International standards have been created by the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation (ILCOR) for the administration of first aid and CPR.
 - i. If training resources exist within the destination, ensure they are aligned with the guidance for that region.*
 - ii. If no resources exist, or if they do not meet standard, work with ILCOR standards to develop a plan to either import certified trainers or build infrastructure to accommodate training needs locally.
 - b. International standards have been created by the Wilderness Medical Society (WMS) for situations that are further from definitive care.
 - i. If training resources exist within the destination, ensure they align with this standard.
 - ii. If no resources exist, or if they do not meet standards, work with the WMS standards to develop a plan to either import certified trainers or build infrastructure to accommodate training needs locally.
- Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada (HSFC)
 - Australian and New Zealand Committee on Resuscitation (ANZCOR)
 - Resuscitation Councils of Southern Africa (RCSA)
 - Inter American Heart Foundation (IAHF)
 - Resuscitation Council of Asia (RCA)
- c. International standards have been created by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) for the administration of first aid and CPR.
 - i. If training resources exist within the destination, ensure they are aligned with this standard.
 - ii. If no resources exist, or if they do not meet standard, work with the IFRC to create a pool of trainers to meet this standard for guides.
 - d. International standards have been created by the Wilderness Medical Society (WMS) for situations that are further from definitive care.
 - i. If training resources exist within the destination, ensure they align with this standard.
 - ii. If no resources exist, or if they do not meet standards, work with the WMS to develop a plan to either import certified trainers or build infrastructure to accommodate training needs locally.

***ILCOR Regional Resuscitation & First Aid Bodies**

- American Heart Association (AHA)
- European Resuscitation Council (ERC)

Suggestions for implementing the customer service and group management competency:

- a. Few industry-wide standards exist regarding customer service; however, many training protocols exist in the field of hospitality that can be referenced when developing training to meet this standard.
- b. Emphasis in training should be made to achieve equal attention among this competency and the other competencies.

Suggestions for implementing the natural & cultural history interpretation competency:

- a. When designing training for this competency, determine an educational protocol around which to build pedagogy.
 - i. Example: National Association for Interpretation's Certified Interpretive Guide training¹³.

Suggestions for implementing the sustainability competency:

- a. Identify applicable elements of this standard combined with international standards not identified here to create a binding regulation.

13 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR INTERPRETATION. (2015) The Certified Interpretive Guide Program. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.interpnet.com/nai/docs/CIG-Flyer.pdf> [Accessed: 28/12/15]



Baja Sur, Mexico © ATTA / Hassen Salum

[Governance]

The Adventure Travel Guide Qualifications & Performance Standard is governed by a volunteer group made up of guides and adventure travel industry professionals. Its purpose is to ensure and oversee the ongoing maintenance of the standard. The responsibilities of the governance board include:

- a. Conducting outreach throughout the world to inform businesses and governments about the standard;
- b. Assisting in efforts to implement the standard;
- c. Accepting, documenting, and incorporating relevant feedback and suggestions;
- d. Periodically updating the standard.
 - i. Annually, basic changes in formatting, language, and updating can be performed.
 - ii. Every term, a published update will be agreed upon.

GOVERNANCE BOARD STRUCTURE

In an effort to incorporate both geographic and industry sector diversity to the governing board, the following structure, positions, and terms have been decided by the founding Working Group:

Board Composition

- a. The board will be comprised of representatives from the adventure travel community.
- b. There should be at least one guide and one ground operator for each large geographic sector (as detailed below). Outbound tour operators that operate in a specific part of the world, even if they are not based in that location, can be accepted.
- c. Board membership is open to all industry participants. Members may nominate themselves or be nominated by another person and are accepted to the group by a simple majority of current board members and on a rolling basis until each position is filled. Once all the positions for a region are filled, new applicants will be considered on an annual basis.

Term

- a. Each representative agrees to serve an initial term of three years.
- b. Members of the existing working group, which drafted the first iteration of the standard, are automatically appointed to the first three-year term

if they so desire. The participation of these individuals as founding board members shall not be counted toward the regional member goal.

- c. After the inaugural three-year period, board terms will last for five years.

Leadership and Voting

- a. The board will contain an executive committee comprised of a minimum of one chair and one secretary.
 - i. During the inaugural three-year term, the chair will be determined by the final working group meeting, and the secretary position will be held by a representative of the Adventure Travel Trade Association.
 - ii. The Governance Board can evaluate additional executive committee positions.
 - iii. Decisions about the standard are made by consensus. Each member has one vote; all votes are equal.

Board Meetings

- a. In the first three years, the board will meet a minimum of two times each year.

[GOVERNANCE] GOVERNANCE BOARD STRUCTURE

- b. During the first three years, the Adventure Travel Trade Association will carry out administration needs for the board and take a leadership role in the coordination of the group. After the three years, the group will put into place self governance and financing.
- c. At the end of the first three years, and then every five years, the board will meet to consider revisions, additions, and changes to the standard.

GEOGRAPHIC MEMBERSHIP GOALS

North and Central America

Minimum 1 position / Maximum 3 positions per region

- Canada and United States
- Mexico, Central America, and Caribbean

South America

Minimum 1 position / Maximum 3 positions per region

- Northern South America (Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana)
- Western and Southern South America (Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay)

Europe

Minimum 1 position / Maximum 2 positions per region

- UK and Ireland
- Scandinavia and the Baltic (Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Greenland, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania)
- Western Europe (Portugal, Spain, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Andorra)
- Eastern Europe (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, the Balkans, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Hungary, Turkey, Moldavia, Belarus, Ukraine)

Africa

Minimum 1 position / Maximum 2 positions per region

- Northern Africa (Morocco, Western Sahara, Mauritania, Mali, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt)
- West and Central Africa (Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Congo, DR Congo, Central African Republic, Cape Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe).
- East Africa (Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti, Rwanda, Burundi)
- Southern Africa (South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, Namibia, Angola, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Madagascar, Seychelles, Comoros)

Asia

Minimum 1 position / Maximum 2 positions per region

- Middle East (Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Kurdistan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, UAE)
- Northern Asia (Russia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan)
- Central and Southern Asia (Iran, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan,

[GOVERNANCE] GEOGRAPHIC MEMBERSHIP GOALS

Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, India,
Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka)

- East Asia (North Korea, South Korea,
Japan, Taiwan, China)
- Southeast Asia (Myanmar, Laos, Thailand,
Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia,
Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia)

Oceania

Minimum 1 position / Maximum 2 positions per region

- Australia and Papua New Guinea
- New Zealand, Antarctica and Polynesia



Definitions

Adventure Travel

Adventure travel is a type of tourism, involving exploration or travel with perceived (and possibly actual) risk, and potentially requiring specialized skills and physical exertion. Adventure tourism has grown in recent decades, as tourists seek different kinds of vacations, but the measurement of the market size and growth is hampered by the lack of a clear operational definition. According to the U.S.-based Adventure Travel Trade Association, adventure travel may be any tourist activity, including at least

two of the following three components: a physical activity, a cultural exchange or interaction, and engagement with nature.

Adventure Travel Guide

A guide with general knowledge of a variety of skill competencies (i.e., interpretive, medical and sustainability) required to facilitate a group of clients through a medley of terrains, environments and locales in a safe, manageable, and respectable manner.

[DEFINITIONS]

Guides work for adventure tourism companies, resorts, parks, lodges, or campgrounds, or they operate their own small businesses. They facilitate the opportunity to experience a diverse range of activities, depending on the season and on their skills. An adventure travel guide must have a tolerance for adversity and uncertainty. He/she should possess a strong sense of self-awareness and be able to exercise sound judgment and decision-making. An adventure travel guide is highly flexible and has strong communication skills (sometimes involving multiple languages).

Key differences between an Adventure Travel Guide and an Adventure Activity Provider include the Guide's need to have equal attention to technical, medical, customer service, content delivery, and sustainability competencies, versus the activity provider's main requirement, which is the mastery of a technical competency.

Authentic (tourism)

A tourism experience, which provides a genuine perspective and interaction with natural and cultural locations and contexts. Clients may also derive a sense of personal authenticity through their experiences.

Competency

In this standard, the term "competency" is used to refer to the combination of knowledge, skill, behavior, personal traits, and motives of the individual. The ISO Adventure Travel Safety standard defines competency as follows: "The ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve expected results (results of performed activities in provision of service)."

CPR

CPR is the abbreviation for cardiopulmonary resuscitation. An emergency procedure consisting of external cardiac massage and artificial respiration; the first treatment for a person who has collapsed and has no pulse and has stopped breathing; attempts to restore circulation of the blood and prevent death or brain damage due to a lack of oxygen. This may happen after an electric shock, heart attack, or drowning. CPR combines rescue breathing and chest compressions.¹⁴

Cultural History

Cultural history combines the approaches of anthropology and history in examining popular cultural traditions and cultural interpretations of historical experience. It examines the records and narrative descriptions of past knowledge, customs, and arts of a group of people.

Customer Service

Customer service is the integration of a guide's technical and social skills in such a manner that each customer feels recognized and acknowledged in his/her personal needs.

Duty to Act

Duty to act refers to the duty of a party to take necessary action to prevent harm to another party or the general public.

14 INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS & RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES. (2011) International First Aid & Resuscitation Guidelines. [Online] February 2011. Available from: <http://www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/53459/IFRC%20-International%20first%20aid%20and%20resuscitation%20guideline%202011.pdf> [Accessed: 18/12/15]

Ecosystem

An ecosystem is a community of living organisms (plants, animals, and microbes) in conjunction with the nonliving components of their environment (things like air, water, and mineral soil), interacting as a system.

Ecology

Ecology is the interdisciplinary scientific study of the distribution and abundance of organisms and their interactions with their environment. It also deals with the growth of populations and species in an ecosystem and when/how resources in that ecosystem are used by organisms within it.

Ethnobotany

Ethnobotany is the scientific study of the relationships that exist between people and plants.

Folklore

Folklore is the traditional beliefs, customs, and stories of a community, passed through the generations by word of mouth. A body of popular myths or beliefs relating to a particular place, activity, or group of people.

Group Management

The process by which a guide provides a safe and high-quality experience, supporting a range of client motivations, interests, and skill levels. The art of providing individualized experience for all within a group.

Indigenous People

Indigenous people are genetically, historically, and culturally from or linked to the original or first nations of the land before colonization. They normally preserve a degree of cultural and political separation from the mainstream culture and political system of the nation state within the border of which the indigenous group is located.

Interpretation

“Interpretation is a mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource.”

—The National Association for Interpretation¹³

“Interpretation enriches our lives through engaging emotions, enhancing experiences and deepening understanding of people, places, events and objects from past and present.”

—The Association for Heritage Interpretation¹⁴

ISO

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is an independent, non-governmental membership organization and the world’s largest developer of voluntary International Standards.

¹³ NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR INTERPRETATION (2015) National Association For Interpretation [Online] Available from: <http://www.interpnet.com/>

¹⁴ ASSOCIATION FOR HERITAGE INTERPRETATION (2015) Association For Heritage Interpretation [Online] Available from: <http://www.ahi.org.uk/>

[DEFINITIONS]

Natural History

Natural history is the research and study of organisms, including plants or animals, in their environment. Natural history is the systematic study of any category of natural objects or organisms.

Standard

A document that provides requirements, specifications, guidelines, or characteristics that can be used consistently to ensure that materials, products, processes, and services are fit for their purpose. Standards can range in enforceability from something that is mandated by an authority or government, to an approved model within an industry or just something that is a “norm.” A standard is intended to carry the weight of industry approval, but is voluntary / market based.

Sustainability

Sustainability is the endurance of natural and cultural systems and processes. The organizing principle for sustainability is sustainable development, which includes the four interconnected domains: ecology, economics, politics, and culture. From a sustainable tourism business perspective, sustainability can be thought of as a balance of “people, planet, profit.”

Technical Abilities

Personal experience, training, and capabilities to execute technical skills.

Technical skills

A set of competencies necessary to guide

a group safely through varying areas and climates. These competencies must be trained and assessed by certified professionals.

Theme

A succinct, central message about a topic of interest that a guide uses to communicate to his/her audience. Themes help to narrow vast amounts of content into a digestible thread, easily followed by participants.

Thematic interpretation

In the thematic approach, a guide relies on a central theme (i.e., a major point or message) to guide the process of communication. The guide develops the theme in such a way that it will be highly relevant to an audience.

Topic

The subject matter discussed or interpreted. Topics are generally broad subjects that could be investigated with numerous approaches.

Tour Leader

Tour leaders ensure that a tour runs smoothly. Tour leaders are often chosen for their travel experience and interpersonal skills and should be thoroughly trained and eager to educate people on a variety of natural and cultural skills. Basic duties of a tour leader include providing comprehensive briefings at the start and throughout the tour and ensuring that health and safety principles are adhered to. A tour leader position can be filled by a professional guide; however, these roles are not interchangeable.