

MINISTRY OF TOURISM, CIVIL AVIATION,  
PORTS & MARINE  
Tourism Department

**SEYCHELLES HOTEL CLASSIFICATION  
PROGRAMME**

Explanatory Notes

July 2017

## Introduction

The aim of the hotel classification programme, is to achieve a greater degree of standardization and professionalism within the tourism industry. An established grading system allows discerning visitors to know any hotel's standard in advance and what to expect of the product offering before making a purchase. It is important to understand that one of the major factors that influence a visitor's choice of a destination is the standard of facilities and services on offer.

Governments as well as private sectors in the neighbouring comparable destinations are devoting increased attention and resources on raising the overall standard of accommodation facilities and sharpening the skills of resorts employees. If the Seychelles is to compete effectively with these destinations, it is imperative that due attention is given to this important aspect of the hospitality operation and management.

The setting up of this Classification System is necessary to better showcase our product diversity, allow establishments to better sell their products and manage clients' expectations. For this programme, a set of criteria has been developed consisting of physical, service, universal accessibility and sustainability assessment areas.

## Objective of the classification programme

Implementation of the Classification Programme assists the Tourism Department in achieving greater standardisation and professionalism within the industry, as information regarding the quality and standards of tourism facilities and services is provided in a more structured and transparent manner.

- Potential visitors and travel operators alike are able to make informed decisions and choices and get the assurance that they/their clients will receive value for money.
- Sharpen the destination's image, as the programme acts as a primary marketing tool for the industry creating better awareness of the product offering.
- Works as a development tool to raise standards by providing operators with information on shortcomings and necessary improvements needed to maintain a grade or improve on it.
- Provide a control instrument to measure quality and sustainability.
- Acts as a benchmarking instrument which enhances fair competition.

## THE GRADING PROCESS

### *Qualification for Hotel Grading System*

The classification system based on the star-rating i.e. one to five stars, shall be compulsory for all hotels of 16 rooms and above and all island resorts.

### *Statutory Obligations*

The hotel should be in compliance with all relevant statutory requirements including that of the Public Health Section, Fire & Rescue Services Agency, Seychelles Licensing Authority and Planning Authority.

### *First Assessment*

Two assessors from the Tourism Department shall conduct an assessment of each establishment to determine its classification. The assessors will require the presence and assistance of the General Manager for an initial briefing before the start of the assessment. The assistance of the Human Resources, Maintenance managers as well as other line managers and team members will be required on site during the day. Photographic evidence will be taken and documents will need to be sighted as they conduct the assessment in support of the final grading that the hotel will achieve.

In order to assess service quality in the food and beverage area, hotels will be required to host lunch for the assessors.

### *Classification Committee*

The Tourism Department shall establish a Classification Committee appointed by the Minister responsible for tourism with the functions of endorsing the grading for an accommodation enterprise and attending to any other matters referred to it by the Department. Every member shall hold office for not more than 2 years and may be eligible for re-appointment. The Committee shall meet every two months and at such times as may be decided by its Chairperson.

### *Appeals*

The Tourism Department shall establish an Appeals Committee appointed by the Minister responsible for tourism with the functions of reviewing all appeals made by hotels. The Minister shall also appoint a Chairperson from the members of the committee. An establishment aggrieved by any decision of the Department and of the Classification Board may within fourteen days of the notification of the decision make an appeal to the Appeals Committee. The Committee shall have twenty one days from the date of receipt of the appeal to review and give a decision to affirm or amend the decision of the Board.

### *Validity of Grading*

The grading shall be valid for a period of 2 years from the date of issue, unless revoked by the Department.

### *Award*

A plaque will be awarded to hotels displaying their grade from 1 to 5 stars and it shall be displayed in a conspicuous place of the hotel. This will be at the cost of the Tourism Department. The rating will also feature on the Seychelles Tourism Board website and other promotional materials.

### *Monitoring*

The Tourism Department, at its discretion, may conduct surprise visits during the two year period for monitoring purposes. Establishments whose standards have dropped will be advised accordingly and a grace period will be given to address shortcomings.

Establishment that no longer meet the criteria requirements of the grading system may have their award suspended or revoked by the Classification Board.

### ***Penalties***

A licensed accommodation who fails to display or market itself as per the grading awarded will be given a first warning in writing with a rectification period of 14 days. Failure to adhere to the notice will result in the temporary suspension of the classification and recommendation for the temporary suspension of the licence for a period not exceeding six months or revocation of classification.

### ***Re-Assessments***

A re-assessment will be carried out at least four months prior to the expiry of the two year validity of the achieved star grading.

A hotel can only have its star rating upgraded at the time of the next assessment.

## **THE CRITERIA EXPLAINED**

### ***Criteria Components***

The Star Rating criteria has been referenced from international standard, but its development has been applied to the local context of our tourism industry. Whether the property has earned a 1 Star or a 5 Star Rating, guests are assured that the rating has been awarded according to a national set of standards.

The criteria consist of the four below components which are essential to today's travellers:

- **Physical:** the maintainance, condition and appearance of the hotel's facilities. This includes cleanliness which is of paramount importance to all guests.
- **Service:** A smile, a warm and genuine welcome and a willingness to please and serve customers efficiently.
- **Sustainability:** Mainstreaming Sustainable practices in the the hotel operations.
- **Accessibility:** Caters to guests with special access needs including mobility, hearing and visual impairment.

### ***Assessment Form***

Hotels and Island Resorts will be assessed using two separate forms, as there are certain criteria which are specific and applicable to island resorts only and not to hotels located on the main islands (Mahe, Praslin & La Digue). These points include facilities and services at the jetty and/or airstrip and the pick up points containing lounge, bar, and toilet facilities for guest and staff.

Likewise, in view that there is a range of additional facilities offered by hotels that it is not viable for island resorts to invest in due to their size, location and specificities, consideration has been given to adress this in the forms so that these establishments are not at a disadvantage of losing out on points.

## Category Entry Requirements

All hotels will need to meet the below stated entry requirements.

	<b>CATEGORY ENTRY REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>1</b>	To be eligible for grading, premises must first have satisfied all statutory regulations, requirements for health, safety and security, fire, environmental services requirements for waste management, and have certified documentary evidence of compliance.		
<b>2</b>	The premises must have Public Liability Insurance and other statutory insurance policies.		
<b>3</b>	Servicing of rooms shall be 7 days in a week (this includes removal of rubbish and cleaning).		
<b>4</b>	All bedrooms must have a telephone system or other form of communication with at least internal communication facilities to enable guests to communicate with Reception in the event of an emergency – for example summoning medical assistance.		
<b>5</b>	Bathroom facilities must be en-suite.		
<b>6</b>	Formal reception area/desk must be available in all hotels unless personalised butler service is available and check in / check out is carried out in the rooms.		
<b>7</b>	On-site representative must be contactable 24 hours, 7 days a week.		
<b>8</b>	Security must be available 24 hours a day.		


Criteria indicator:  
Service, Physical,  
Universal Access  
or Sustainability

Description of  
the star rating  
Criteria

Minimum criteria  
(M); all hotels must  
comply with these;  
carries no points

These criteria link  
together; only one out of  
the possible points can be  
scored. Points can also be  
scored in between as  
applicable

Demarcates Required  
criteria (R) for each  
star category

1		Location, Access and Exterior	Indicative Score	Actual Score	Remarks	*	**	***	****	*****
1.5		<b>Building Exterior</b>								
1.5.1	P	All buildings, their fixtures, fittings and exterior must be maintained in a sound and clean condition	M	✓						
1.5.2	P	Assembly point in the event of an emergency must be clearly marked	M	✓						
1.5.3	P	Excellent visual appeal, elegant design and appearance. High quality level of lighting and visible, indicative, clear and attractive signage directing guests around the entire property. Unique and striking architectural features.	20						R	R
1.5.4	P	New buildings: absence of weathering, and an overall clean and new look. Older buildings: paintwork shall be consistently harmonized in form and colour. Visible outbuildings or annexes to be of a similar form. Quality external lighting. Visible, indicative, clear signage. Attractive architectural features	16		Building in good state of repair. However, in view that Guestrooms 12-20 are a distance from the reception, additional directional signs needs to be provided.					
1.5.5	P	Building with good quality materials. No obvious maintenance issues. A certain natural weathering could be acceptable. Some additional external features to enhance appearance.	12	14						
1.5.6	P	External features such as windows, drains, etc. are functional. No obvious structural defects or damage. "Plain" architectural features shall be acceptable.	8							
1.5.7	P	Paintwork shall be well applied and clean. Signage still easily readable.	5							
1.5.8	P	Neglected shabby appearance, peeling paintwork.	0							
1.5.9		Handrails are provided on all stairs for safety	5	3	Not available at all areas, missing at the Main Restaurant & at the Spa					
		<b>Max Points</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>						

Achieved Score

### *How is the Star Rating Determined*

There are five levels of classification ratings ranging from one to five stars applicable to hotels above 16 rooms and all island resorts.

To obtain higher stars, progressively higher service and quality, state of maintenance and quality of furnishings and improved business practices like environmental management, should be provided across all areas.

The star rating criteria is divided into ten areas that are common in a hotel grading scheme. The percentage weighting that these areas contribute to the total score is shown in the table below:

Each area consists of a number of indicators which describe either the existence or availability, quality and condition of the facility as well as the service offered.

<b>Section</b>	<b>Weighting %</b>
Location, Access & Exterior	3%
Reception & Affiliated Services	12%
Guest Bedroom	18%
Guest Bathroom	12%
Public Areas	8%
Restaurant & Bars	15%
Kitchen	3%
General Services	7%
Business Practices	12%
Activities, Entertainment, Facilities	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

**TABLE 1**

### *The Scoring System*

The grading of a hotel is determined by a points system calculated as a percentage weighting of total points scored.

The criteria is divided into Mandatory Requirements, marked M which carry no points and other criteria which carry points each.

The Mandatory requirements refer to those requirements that are prescribed in the Minimum Criteria for Hotels which the establishment must meet in order to be licensed. Should a hotel fail to meet the Mandatory Requirements, no star rating shall be issued to the establishment until such time that it complies with it.

In addition, the criteria makes provision for a number of required criteria marked R for each star grading band. These are based on customer expectation and a hotel will need to meet 85% of these required criteria of the grading band to achieve that particular rating.

In summary, the establishment must fulfill the following to be graded 1 to 5 Star;

- ✓ Meet all Entry Requirements
- ✓ Meet all Mandatory Requirements (M)
- ✓ Achieve 30 to 100 % of the Total Weighted Score
- ✓ Meet 85% of all Required Criteria (R) of a star category

### ***Grading Band***

The grading will be awarded based on the final percentage as determined in the table below. Hotels scoring less than 30% will be termed 'Not Graded'.

<i>STAR RATING</i>	<i>Total Score</i>	<i>Star Grading Indicator</i>
<b>Not Graded</b>	0% to 29%	<i>Not meeting minimum requirement</i>
<b>1 star</b>	30% to 44%	<i>Simple, comfortable, no frills</i>
<b>2 star</b>	45% to 54%	<i>Comfortable and well-presented</i>
<b>3 star</b>	55% to 69%	<i>Good level of quality and comfort</i>
<b>4 star</b>	70% to 84%	<i>Excellent standards throughout</i>
<b>5 star</b>	85% to 100%	<i>Exceptional with a degree of luxury</i>

**TABLE 2**



