



ACTIVITIES

QUALITY CLASSIFICATION MANUAL FOR ACTIVITIES

ROYAL COMMISSION FOR ALULA

2024 -2025



QUALITY CLASSIFICATION MANUAL ACTIVITIES

ROYAL COMMISSION FOR ALULA
DMMO EXCELLENCE DEPARTMENT

V2.0
2024-2025

العلا
ALULA





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VERSION CONTROL

Version Date	Version No.	Responsible for Change	Changes
May 22, 2022	1.0		
August 7, 2024	2.0	Hussein Alsheikh	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Adding the Mystery shopper Standards- Rewording the following standard #C3- The following standards have been removed from previous version due to their inability to be measured during the quality audit standards #52, #58 and #59

Disclaimer

This guideline was produced after consultation with MKG, testing with responsible business owners over the course of a year and continued feedback from multiple departments. The guideline will be revisited as necessary to include amendments and addition/removal of standards.



DEFINITION OF GRADING PROCESS

To operate any activity within AlUla, the operator must ensure full compliance to the below set standards. All activities must adhere to the standards set in the following categories:

- General
- Website – App
- Outside
- Welcome
- Visit/Tour
- Cleanliness
- End of The Visit/Tour

In addition, specific activities have been distinguished and given further standards that require compliance. Prior to commencing operations, all activity operators must ensure full understanding of the below set standards and compliance. Failure to adhere to the mandatory quality standards can result in cessation of operations, fines and even closure.

Obtaining all mandatory requirements does not automatically qualify as fulfilling the required percentage to operate and thus a number of optional requirements must be fulfilled.

A schedule of unannounced inspections to ensure compliance will commence including inspections conducted by quality auditors and mystery Shoppers who will gauge the level of quality based on the standards below. If the level of quality falls below the required grade or mandatory requirements are not followed, permission to operate will cease until the findings are closed and a reinspection is conducted. Obtaining all mandatory requirements does not automatically qualify as fulfilling the required percentage to operate and thus a number of optional requirements must be fulfilled.

GRADING PROCESS

- (1) Mandatory Requirements: All mandatory requirements (“M”) must be met by the activity operator. Without full compliance to these points, a classification is not possible.
- (2) Minimum Points: Even if all mandatory requirement points are achieved in the requested activities classification, the activity operator must comply in further optional points (“O”) to reach a necessary minimum percentage.
- (3) Minimum Required Percentage: All mandatory and optional points required as a percentage to be satisfactorily compliant to the minimum quality standards required to operate in AlUla.



QUALITY STANDARDS

CATEGORY	TOUR	HELICOPTER	ZIPLINE	SAFARI/HIKING	CYCLING
Minimum points	192	222	198	216	243
Maximum points	240	258	230	264	266
Required percentage	80%	86%	86%	82%	91%
Mandatory Requirement Points	187	205	197	211	243

MYSTERY SHOPPER STANDARDS

CATEGORY	ACTIVITY	EVENT
Mandatory Requirements	32	46



QUALITY STANDARDS

REQUIREMENT	No	CRITERIA	POINTS	STATUS
GENERAL	1	All licenses & certificates required for the business to operate are available, in clear view and valid	2	M
	2	Phone reservation is available with no additional fees for the call, no excessive delay in answering the call	3	M
	3	All staff are well groomed and wearing appropriate uniform relevant to their job with name badges	5	M
	4	Activities that are operational more than 45 days must have both TripAdvisor & Google Map accounts to receive feedback.	5	M
	5	Activity operator must respond to any feedback on TripAdvisor & Google Maps within 72 hrs from the date	5	M
	6	Reusable water bottles are provided to visitors prefilled with drinkable water. No plastic bottles allowed to be distributed or sold.	3	M
	7	Confirmation with information is sent (Email or text message) after the reservation Giving: dates, prices, number of people, possible associated services	5	M
WEBSITE - APP	8	Reservation online is possible (website or mobile application) The website - app is functioning fluidly	3	M
	9	Online payment is available	3	M
	10	The app or website is available in both languages' Arabic and English	3	M
	11	The website/mobile application provides easy access to accurate pricing information such as: full fare, list of free ticket holders, possible free days, children's prices and specifies if tax is included or excluded	2	M
	12	The website/mobile application provides a telephone number for individuals to obtain more information	2	M
	13	Mobile accessibility is provided on the website following W3C/WAI's accessibility guidelines"	5	O
	14	The website/mobile application specifies the accepted means of payment e.g. Visa, Mastercard, etc.	2	M
	15	Website/Mobile app must indicate the approximate level of physical fitness required to participate in activities	2	M
	16	Website/ mobile app must indicate minimum age requirement if applicable for each activity	2	M
	17	The website/mobile application provides recommendations to the customer regarding areas, sites, etc. suggested to be seen or visited.	2	M
	18	Advertising must portray a true picture of any difficulties and dangers involved if applicable.	3	M
	19	The website/mobile application provides information on specific events covered by the period such as temporary exhibitions, conferences, concerts, animations	3	O



REQUIREMENT	No	CRITERIA	POINTS	STATUS
	20	The website/mobile application gives precise information on the opening hours/visit times	5	M
	21	Information on welcoming disabled visitors is available	5	M
	22	The website/mobile application allows visitors to give their opinion: links provided to TripAdvisor & Google Map for evaluation if Activity is activated more than one month.	5	M
OUTSIDE	23	Opening hours and days are clearly displayed outside the site/rendezvous point, phone number is provided for more information	3	M
	24	The space/queue is organized: delimited space, clear direction of circulation, queue manager, staff to direct/manage the queue/animate the wait/inform	3	O
	25	The estimated waiting time to enter the site is indicated at the beginning of the queue (panel, poster, dynamic display, announcement by staff...)	3	O
	26	The access to the starting point of the tour / excursion is clearly indicated, allowing visitors to find the way easily. Signage is available in both Arabic and English	2	M
	27	The starting point of the tour/excursion is clean and in good condition	2	M
	28	The excursionist's vehicle (if applicable) is clearly identifiable from the outside	3	M
WELCOME	29	Visitors with disabilities are given priority if necessary (pregnant women, people with illnesses, etc.).	5	M
	30	Staff are available when visitors arrive	3	M
	31	The different means of payment accepted are clearly displayed inside: type of credit cards (Visa, American Express, Mastercard)	2	M
	32	Change is available to give customer when required	3	M
	33	A receipt / proof of fare is provided	3	M
	34	If there are facilities, functions or areas not available during guest visit for any reason, guest must be informed prior to payment	2	M
	35	The welcoming agents are trained to adopt a professional attitude in all circumstances via a training with certificate proof.	2	M
	36	Staff only engage in work-related conversation with other employees when guests are present, with priority given always towards the guest experience.	2	M
	37	Wi-Fi is available and free for all guests. If password protected, placards available to inform of password or instructed of password by staff.	5	O
	38	All staff in contact with the visitor have a professional attitude and controlled body language	2	M
	39	Additional comfort and service elements are provided for the visitor, such as coffee, candy, or cold drink dispenser or any other such initiative.	3	O



REQUIREMENT	No	CRITERIA	POINTS	STATUS
	40	Security personnel are trained in welcoming gestures via general training	5	M
	41	Any information communicated or displayed is up to date using quality equipment i.e. not handwritten, not losing color not damaged etc.	2	O
VISIT/TOUR	42	Information about the organization and the way things are done is clearly explained at the start of the tour: routes, conditions of use, time taken to reach the destination, safety, environmental responsibility & languages spoke	3	M
	43	The website/mobile application provides easy access to precise and complete information on the tour departure points address, map of the area, lines, and modes of transport, stops, directions.	3	O
	44	The exterior of the vehicle (if applicable) is clean Quick cleaning after each tour, complete cleaning once a day	3	M
	45	The interior of the vehicle (if applicable) is clean, Quick cleaning after each tour, complete cleaning once a day	3	M
	46	The operator is equipped with emergency and warning means proportionate to the risks to call for help.	3	M
	47	The operator is trained to adapt the tour route based on group ability and if members of group are special; operator is trained and aware of rights of special groups with evidence to prove so e.g. Certification	3	M
	48	An individual who is trained in basic CPR with accredited certifications to prove so must accompany the tour or activity.	3	M
	49	The operator checks that the client's clothing and equipment are appropriate for the visit.	3	O
	50	During the tour and execution of the itinerary, the varying ability levels, physical limitations, and expectations of the group is taken into consideration by the guide who assesses them in relation to the possibilities within the itinerary	3	M
	51	Tour guides respect the schedule transmitted to the customers	2	M
	52	Guides must present accurate information that is relevant to local history and cultures	2	M
	53	Guides must be knowledgeable and able to communicate the natural history of the environments visited such as general ecology, flora, fauna, etc.as well as information about local history and archaeology	2	M
54	The content shared by the guide must be relevant to the audience. i.e. the guide tries to understand the knowledge level & interests of the visitors to ensure relevance of content as well as ensuring that the information presented is understood by participants.	5	M	



REQUIREMENT	No	CRITERIA	POINTS	STATUS
	55	Guide must curate content that is presented and organized in a thematic manner i.e. the topic and theme of the material during the visit is presented in a well-organized manner, fitting for the purpose	5	M
	56	Operating company is committed to the Principles of Leave No Trace with guides that are knowledgeable and trained in it i.e. 1- Plan ahead and prepare 2-Travel and camp (if applicable) on durable surfaces 3-Dispose waste correctly 4- Leave what you find 5-Minimize campfire impacts (if applicable) 6-Respecting Wildlife 7-Consideration of others	5	M
	57	Guides must document, condone and report the use of any illegal activities or items as well as unethical activity in the areas that they are guiding in to the local authorities. This is not limited to any vendors found to be engaged in aforementioned acts.	2	M
	58	Guides must report any instances of animal cruelty or exploitation. This includes any instances of animals being poached, deprivation of food/water, illegal trade.	2	M
	59	Guides must report any evidence of destruction of vandalism of heritage sites	2	M
	60	Guides must be aware of country laws that protect exotic wildlife	2	M
	61	Guides must instruct visitors not to attempt to deface, mark or damage any historical areas visited and share that such an act can have an irreversible impact	2	M
	62	Guides must be aware of KSA Heritage Law	2	M
	63	Content is available for children	5	O
	64	Content is available on digital tools (mobile application, responsive website, audio guide)	5	O
	65	The guide is trained to adapt the tour based on the variety of people in the group: dealing with disabilities, children etc. with proof of training available i.e. Tour guide license	3	M
	66	Information panels are clear and well installed, information at a minimum is available in both English & Arabic languages.	5	O
	67	No handwritten panels, reliability of information transmitted is checked	3	O
	68	A plan, guide or brochure is available presenting at least the route carried out, in English and Arabic	3	O
	69	The tour site provides several resting areas for visitors	2	M
CLEANLINESS	70	Washrooms are available for visitors (if applicable)	3	M
	71	Visitors are requested to respect the cleanliness of the area by announcement during the tour and direction to dispose waste in correct waste containers	2	M



REQUIREMENT	No	CRITERIA	POINTS	STATUS
	72	Separated waste containers specific to type of waste & recyclability e.g. glass, organic etc. to be placed along the route taken (if applicable)	5	M
	73	If terrain does not allow for separated waste containers to be placed along route, guide must have handy a reusable bag during the activity for waste that is disposed of at the end of the visit.	5	M
	74	Deep cleaning is done following a schedule, pre and post activity, in all visit areas and more if necessary depending on visitor traffic.	2	M
END OF THE VISIT/TOUR	75	The visitor is given the opportunity to leave a comment or is informed of the opportunity to send feedback	5	M
	76	Visitors have the possibility to purchase a souvenir	2	O
HELICOPTER TOUR	H1	The aircraft must comply with GACA requirements	2	M
	H2	Crew members must comply and be qualified by GACA	2	M
	H3	Briefing is done in at least Arabic & English languages	2	M
	H4	Personnel shall make sure that every safety rule is clearly understood by the passengers	2	M
	H5	Adapted speech shall be delivered to children	2	M
	H6	The exterior of the vehicle is clean with cleaning conducted after each tour and deep cleaning once a day	2	M
	H7	The interior of the vehicle is clean with cleaning conducted after each tour and deep cleaning once a day	3	M
ZIPLINE	Z1	Sports instructors shall hold certifications relevant to the zipline requirement	2	M
	Z2	Each equipment must be cleaned before handed to visitors	2	M
	Z3	The internal regulations must be visibly displayed and mentioned at a minimum the following:	3	M
		Safety instructions to follow		
		Limitations and restrictions of use		
		- Titles and diplomas of the staff		
	- The certificate of the civil liability insurance contract			
	- The safety and emergency organization plan (identification of responsible persons, emergency telephone numbers, routes to be followed, etc.)			
SAFARI/HIKING	SH1	An awareness session on safety measures and respect of the wildlife and heritage is delivered to the visitors before the tour	3	M
	SH2	Operators must ensure that visitors do not pick, damage, collect or remove any plants, rock, sand or material culture such as pottery, archaeological objects and artefacts during the hiking on trails or around camps	2	M
	SH3	Guides must maximize the benefits to cultural heritage and environment while minimizing negative impacts	2	M



REQUIREMENT	No	CRITERIA	POINTS	STATUS
	SH4	Guides must document, condone and report the use of any illegal activities or items as well as unethical activity in the areas that they are guiding in to the local authorities. This is not limited to any vendors found to be engaged in aforementioned acts.	2	M
	SH5	Operators must provide health certificates for all animals (such as camels or horses) used for activities within the RCU nature reserve for bio-safety reasons (if applicable).	2	M
	SH6	Camp sites (if applicable) must be kept clean, tidy, and well always maintained	2	M
	SH7	Designated roads and tracks shall be respected	2	M
	SH8	Tour operator guides must complete specific First Aid, safety, and outdoor survival training	2	M
CYCLING	C1	An awareness session on safety measures and respect of wildlife is delivered to the visitors prior to the activity	3	M
	C2	Designated roads and tracks shall be respected	2	M
	C3	Guides must complete specific First Aid, safety.	2	M
	C4	Guides must carry cycling toolbox	2	M
	C5	Bikes are cleaned after each use	3	M
	C6	Functioning inspection is made after each use, In particular, the condition of tires and brakes, batteries for electric devices	3	M
	C7	Rented material shall not present any damage, i.e. damaged saddle or handlebars	2	M
	C8	Operator shall make sure that the weather forecast is suitable for the activity	2	M
	C9	Information about the organization and the way things are done is clearly explained: routes, conditions of use, time taken to reach the destination, languages spoken...	2	M
	C10	The guide checks that the client's clothing and equipment are appropriate for the activity such as sun protection, water, shoes, and clothes	2	M



MYSTERY SHOPPER STANDARDS

CATEGORY	NO	REQUIREMENT	POINTS	ACTIVITY	EVENT
ONLINE BOOKING	1	Was a detailed schedule of events available on the website, including the timing of all performers and details of activities?	1	M	M
	2	Were the event/activity details available online in both English and Arabic?	1	M	M
	3	Were the transportation options to the location provided on the website?	1	M	M
	4	Does the company offer online customer support through live chat?	1	M	M
	5	In case there was a live chat, did the support respond with the required details?	1	M	M
	6	Was there an option on the website to email for support?	1	M	M
	7	Did the email support respond, if available?	1	M	M
	8	Did the email support answer your question with the required details?	1	M	M
	9	Did you face any issues while booking for the event/activity?	1	M	M
	10	In case of reservation for an event, did you receive a confirmation that includes dates, prices, number of people, and possible associated services?	1	M	M
EVENT WELCOME	11	Was the bus stop/parking clean and free of litter?	1	N/A	M
	12	Was the signage directing to tickets/ entrance clear?	1	N/A	M
	13	Was the signage available in both Arabic and English?	1	N/A	M
	14	Were the opening hours and days clearly displayed outside the site?	1	N/A	M
	15	Was there a phone number provided for further information outside the site?	1	N/A	M
	16	Did the place provide clear and comprehensive information about the events and activities available?	1	N/A	M
	17	Were staff available when you arrived?	1	N/A	M
	18	Were you greeted and welcomed warmly upon arrival at the place?	1	N/A	M
	19	Was the space or queue organized with clearly marked boundaries, a clear circulation direction, a queue manager, and staff to direct and manage the queue, keep the wait lively, and provide information?	1	N/A	M
	20	Did the staff give you a wristband/chain at the entrance?	1	N/A	M
	21	Did the event staff allow guests to enter systematically, ensuring an organized line to prevent bottlenecks and stampedes?	1	N/A	M
	22	Was there an information booth or guide available?	1	N/A	M
	23	Did the staff approach and ask if you require assistance?	1	N/A	M



CATEGORY	NO	REQUIREMENT	POINTS	ACTIVITY	EVENT
	24	Were the welcoming agents and guides trained to maintain a professional attitude in all situations, refraining from using slang and avoiding getting angry?	1	N/A	M
	25	Were all staff well-groomed and wearing appropriate uniforms that differentiate them as a team?	1	N/A	M
	26	Could all personnel communicate with guests in both Arabic and English?	1	N/A	M
	27	Were guests informed in advance about any facilities, functions, or areas that were unavailable for any reason during the tour?	1	N/A	M
	28	Did the staff engage in work-related conversations with other employees only when guests were present, prioritizing the guest experience?	1	N/A	M
	29	Was there an entrance that was wheelchair accessible?	1	N/A	M
RESTROOMS	30	Were restrooms available and clearly indicated with signage?	1	M	M
	31	Did the tour guides or staff communicate that restrooms were not available and provide you with an opportunity to use the bathroom before proceeding to the site?	1	M	M
	32	Were disabled restrooms available and clearly indicated with signage?	1	M	M
	33	Were the restroom clean and well maintained	1	M	M
	34	Were paper towels available in the restroom?	1	M	M
	35	Was hand soap available in the restroom?	1	M	M
FOOD AND BEVERAGE	36	Were food and beverages available at the event?	1	M	M
SOUND AND LIGHTING	37	Was the event free of major audio issues such as microphone or sound cutting off, audio interference, or high-pitched sounds?	1	N/A	M
	38	Was the event audio consistent in different areas of the arena/space?	1	N/A	M
	39	Was the event crowd space/dancefloor adequately lit for movement and visibility of others around you?	1	N/A	M
	40	Was the event stage lighting sufficient enough to see the performer?	1	N/A	M
STAGE	41	Was the stage height sufficient for the audience to see the performer?	1	N/A	M
SECURITY	42	Was security present at the event?	1	N/A	M
	43	Were security barriers maintained throughout the event?	1	N/A	M
	44	Were there areas that are out of bounds for guests and marked as staff only throughout the event?	1	N/A	M
WIFI	45	Was Wi-Fi available at the event space?	1	M	M
EVENT SCHEDULE	46	Did all performers start on schedule, with a 10 minute wait time allowed?	1	N/A	M
ACTIVITY	47	Was the access to the starting point of the tour, excursion, or activity clearly marked, making it easy for visitors to find their way?	1	M	N/A
	48	Was the starting point of the tour/excursion clean and in good condition?	1	M	N/A



CATEGORY	NO	REQUIREMENT	POINTS	ACTIVITY	EVENT
	49	Was the excursionist's vehicle clearly identifiable from the outside?	1	M	N/A
	50	Did the tour guides respect the schedule transmitted to the customers?	1	M	N/A
	51	Was the exterior of the vehicle clean?	1	M	N/A
	52	Is the interior of the vehicle clean?	1	M	N/A
	53	Was the tour conducted in both Arabic and English languages?	1	M	N/A
	54	Were the guides knowledgeable and able to effectively communicate information about the natural history of the visited environments, including general ecology, flora, fauna, and so on?	1	M	N/A
	55	Did the guide make an effort to understand the knowledge level and interests of the visitors to ensure that the shared content remained relevant?	1	M	N/A
	56	Were the information panels clear, well-installed, and available in both English and Arabic languages?	1	M	N/A
	57	Was the store free from handwriting panels?	1	M	N/A
	58	Were safety precautions explained to you before beginning the activity?	1	M	N/A
	59	Was safety gear provided?	1	M	N/A
	60	Were you provided with an opportunity to leave a comment or informed about the chance to provide feedback?	1	M	N/A

