

How to be a Professional Tour Guide

Updated June 2022

The purpose of this information is to clearly explain the legislative requirements of becoming an Adventure tourist guide in South Africa as well as what to look out for to prevent the many instances of guides being offered qualifications that are not valid.

I. THE LAW IN SIMPLE TERMS:

Tour Guiding is governed by the Tourism Act no.72 of 1993. This act states that any person or body who wishes to operate as a tourist guide for reward, whether monetary or otherwise, must:

1. Register as a Tourist Guide with the relevant Provincial Registrar¹
2. Be in possession of a certificate of competency issued by the South African Qualifications Authority²
3. Sign and adhere to the code of conduct and ethics provided by the Provincial registrar.

2. WHO IS A TOUR GUIDE?

The definition of a Tour Guide is as follows: *(taken from the Act)*

“Means any person who for reward, whether monetary or otherwise, accompanies any person who travels within or visits any place within the republic and who furnishes such person with information or comments with regard to any matter”.

This is a very broad description, but we have it from the controlling authority, the Department of National Tourism (DNT) that Adventure Guides are included in this definition.

3. HOW DO I GAIN A CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY?

The certificate can be in two formats: 1) **National Certificate**, or 2) **Record of Achievement**.

Both are issued by the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education Training Authority (CATHSSETA) *(The old THETA)* via accredited training & assessment providers.

To gain a certificate of competence you will need to be assessed by an accredited and registered Assessor who is a subject matter expert in the field you wish to guide in. This assessment could include any or all the following processes:

- Practical assessment
- Theoretical assessment
- The development of a portfolio of evidence
- Recognition of prior learning

¹ Provincial Registrars are usually attached to the Provincial Tourism Authority – contact your local authority.

² In Tour Guiding this will be issued by CATHSSETA

4. HOW DO I KNOW THE ASSESSOR IS GENUINE BEFORE I HAND OVER MY MONEY?

Assessors must be registered with CATHSSETA. You can check this by phoning them on 011 803 6010.

The Assessor must also be able to provide you with an Assessors registration number which should be in the following format: “613/A/*****/2019” The stars are a unique number to the Assessor. This number can be checked with CATHSSETA.

Ask them to show you their letter of scope as well – This will indicate the areas they are permitted to assess. Assessors cannot just assess anything they like, it is strictly controlled.

The Assessors scope letter will be on a THETA or CATHSSETA letterhead depending on when they got it and will have content something like the following: *(Note this is just a sample of the content)*

ASSESSOR REGISTRATION		
In terms of the ETQA regulations 11.27 (e), CATHSSETA ETQA hereby confirms your registration as an Assessor for the nationally registered unit standards listed below.		
Name of Qualification/Unit Standard	Number of Qualification/Unit Standard	NQF Level
National Certificate: Tourism: Guiding	17174	2
National Certificate: Tourism: Guiding	20155	4
Adventure Site Guide – Mountaineering	TGD/ASGMnt/2/0031	2
Adventure Site Guide Mountaineering	TGD/ASGMnt/4/0038	4
Generic Adventure Site Guide	TG/ADVSITEGD/4/0080	4

The Assessor must also be linked with an Accredited Provider. This is the CATHSSETA approved organisation through which the Assessor is permitted to assess.

5. HOW DO I KNOW THE PROVIDER IS GENUINE?

Again check by phoning CATHSSETA or checking the following link on the CATHSSETA website:

<http://cathsseta.org.za/service-providers/accredited-training-providers/>

Don't panic if the provider you are dealing with initially does not show, they may just be listed under a different province – check all provinces, or rather phone CATHSSETA (011-2170600) and ask for confirmation. AQN will be found under Western Cape at the above link. Or to verify the accreditation status of your training provider, please contact (Griselda) CATHSSETA on 011-217-0600 or visit their website www.cathsseta.org.za

The Provider/Assessor should be able to give you an Accreditation number that looks like the following: 613/P/000005/2004.

The next thing you will want to check is if the Provider has the correct scope for the qualification you wish to gain. Do this by asking to see a copy of the Providers Scope letter which the provider should be able to show you... It should look like the example below, again on a CATHSSETA letterhead:

CONFIRMATION OF PROVIDER ACCREDITATION

In accordance with Regulation 16 of the SAQA Act 58 of 1995, please be advised that 'Providers Name' has been awarded the status of Provisional Accreditation as a provider for the period 25/05/2004 to 25/05/2022.

'Providers name' has met the requirements to offer the following

SAQA/CATHSSETA ID	Title	Qualification Type	Level	Credits	Accreditation Type
TG/ADVSITEGD/4/0080	Generic Adventure Site Guide	Skills Program	NQF 4	46-65	FULL (Training & Assessment)

6. WHY IS THIS SCOPE SO IMPORTANT?

The scope tells us what the Provider and Assessor may assess. You as the guide must hold an 'Elective' (*your speciality*) that is consistent with the type of guiding you do. For example, a guide who has "Culture" as their elective, may not offer "Hiking" trips and vice versa. It is very important that you as the guide hold the appropriate elective for what it is you do. Do not let an assessor tell you it is okay to hold just any elective. It's not. **Your elective must match what you do.** *This is just a ploy to try to get your business, don't fall for it as it will cost you more in the future.*

7. I CANNOT FIND A QUALIFICATION FOR WHAT I DO?

The "Cultural" and "Nature" based activities are already fully covered so there are no problems there. For the Adventure industry however, there is skills program for adventure guides. This is a **Generic Adventure Site Guide** program (TG/ADVSITEGD/4/0080) which will suit ALL adventure disciplines. This was rolled out as of July 2013.

In order to register as a tourist guide (culture or nature or adventure) you need at minimum a CATHSSETA registered "Skills Programme" or higher (such as a National Certificate, National Diploma or Degree) and a valid first aid qualification. The smallest building block of a qualification is called a "Unit Standard". In order to get a Skills Programme you need several Unit Standards together to gain a minimum amount of credits. Just holding the unit standard "335816 – Conduct a Guided Adventure Experience" as an example, on its own is just a unit standard. If you do an assessment for just that one unit standard, you cannot register as a guide. You do need "Core" unit standard/s as a tourist guide to tie this into as you are expected to have tourist guiding skills and knowledge not just adventure leadership knowledge. Contact AQN about details. Or see: <http://www.adventure-qualifications.com>

8. HOW CAN I CONFIRM I AM REGISTERED FOR A LEARNING PROGRAMME?

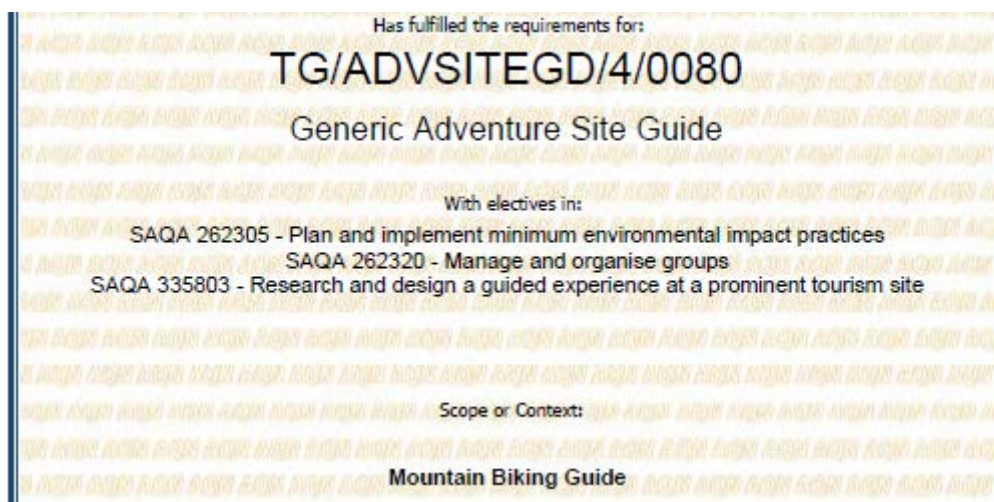
Before you start your actual assessment after you have registered with your assessor, you should have been given a Learner registration number, if not query this with your assessor. The number should be in the format: **613/L/*****/2019**. Without this number you have not been registered so I would not hand over any money to your assessor till you have been.

9. HOW CAN I TELL IF MY QUALIFICATION OR THE QUALIFICATION OF SOMEONE I WISH TO EMPLOY IS VALID?

The only way to do this presently is to check the CATHSSETA or THETA certificate you have as well as phone CATHSSETA to confirm it is valid. There is no presently available online system to do this.

10. HOW CAN I CONFIRM THE ACTUAL SCOPE? ADVENTURE SITE GUIDE (MOUNTAINEERING) FOR EXAMPLE IS QUITE VAGUE.

Ask to see the persons CATHSSETA and their AQN (Training Providers) certificate. On this will be a list of the unit standards they hold and on the AQN certificate it will show the scope. For example:



This person can offer: *Mountain Biking*. The CATHSSETA certificates will not have this information, but each AQN (or other Training Providers) certificate should have this on to show what activities the guide can offer.

Likewise, if they simply hold a CATHSSETA certificate and on the front it says “National Certificate in Tourism Guiding” look on the back to see what their ‘elective’ is. This is the only guiding field they can do.

As of 2016, the individual Unit Standards for different activities fell away and are now included in the scope provided for the Guide when they complete the Generic Adventure Site Guide skills program. So, in order to see what they can guide, ask to see their AQN Certificate and it will be listed in the ‘Scope’ as per sample above.

II. OKAY SO I HAVE MY CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCE, WHAT NOW?

Well done. Now you need to register with your Provincial Registrar. To do this you must do the following:

1. Fill in an application to be registered as a Tourist Guide. Forms are available from your registrar or from the AQN website.
2. Submit valid proof of CATHSSETA assessment (certificate). If you have not received your CATHSSETA certificate/letter of competence, please provide the Registrar with a certificate from your training provider

e.g. Alex Educational, Details, NGT, AQN etc. The Registrar will process these documents in the interim and issue ID cards which will be valid until CATHSSETA certificates are issued.
3. Submit a copy of your Record of Learning from your assessor indicating clearly the category (Scope) for which you have been assessed e.g. Site Guide – Mountaineering - Abseiling.
4. Pay R240 (registration renewable every 2 years).
5. Include 4 passport size, colour photos with your registration.
6. Include proof of South African citizenship i.e. certified copy of a South African ID or a valid residential/work permit.
7. Include a signed copy of the Tourist Guide Code of Conduct and Ethics.
8. Be at least 21 years of age. (18 for adventure guides)
9. Submit a valid First Aid certificate, from an institution recognised by the Department of Labour (e.g. Red Cross, St John's, the Fire Brigade etc.). We highly recommend that Adventure guides rather do a course designed for the outdoor environment, so a course through Wild Medix would be far preferable. www.wildmedix.com
10. Submit a letter of verification from a consulate should you speak a foreign language.

I2. HOW DO I CONTACT MY PROVINCIAL REGISTRAR?

NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

Registrar: **Ms. Morongoe Ramphele**

Fax: (012) 444 7090

Address: Private Bag X
424, Pretoria, 0001

Telephone: (012) 444 6552

Email: mramphele@tourism.gov.za

See the last page for the list of **Provincial Registrars**.....

13. FINAL CHECKLIST:

- Have you seen your assessors CATHSSETA registration letter and been given their assessors (613/A) registration number?
- Have you received your own CATHSSETA (613/L) registration number from your assessor as proof of your registration with Theta?
- Have you checked that your Assessor is linked to an accredited Provider and do you have the Providers (613/P) registration number?
- Have you checked your Assessors and Providers scope is correct for the elective you wish to guide?
- Are you sure your elective (scope) is correct?

14. CHECKLIST TO REGISTER AS A TOURIST GUIDE

Please make sure that requirements from 1 – 8 (compulsory) are in order.

1	Completed and signed registration forms (NB registration forms must be fully completed, incomplete forms will not be accepted/ processed, whether <u>renewing or not</u>)
2	Valid and certified proof of CATHSSETA certificate
3	Letter of Competence/Learner Achievement from CATHSSETA accredited Training Provider
4	R240
5	4 passport size, color photos
6	Proof of South African citizenship i.e. certified copy of a South African ID or a valid residential/work permit
7	Valid and certified copy of your first aid certificate
8	Signed copy of the Tourist Guide Code of Conduct and Ethics.
9	Letter of verification from a consulate should you speak a foreign language

I. PROVINCIAL REGISTRAR'S CONTACT LIST

Eastern Cape: Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency	
Registrar: Mr. Mbulelo Siyo Fax: (043) 701 9642 Address: P.O. Box 18373, Quigney, 5211	Telephone: (043) 364 2570 Email: Mbulelo.Siyo@ecpta.co.za
Freestate: <i>Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs</i>	
Registrar: Mr. Mfundo Ngcangca (Acting) Fax: (051) 400 9590 Address: Private Bag X 20801, Bloemfontein,9300	Telephone: (051) 400 9598 Email: Mfundo@edtea.fs.gov.za
Gauteng: <i>Gauteng Tourism Authority</i>	
Registrar: Mr. Mbuyi Kona Fax: 086 609 3941 Address: P.O. Box 155, Newtown, 21003	Telephone: (011) 085 2101 Email: Mbuyi.kona@gauteng.gov.za
Kwazulu-Natal: <i>Department of Economic Development and Tourism</i>	
Registrar: Ms. Peggy Dlamini Fax: (033) 264 9300 Address: 217 Burger Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201	Telephone: (033) 264 9324/(033) 264 9323 Email: dlaminipe@kznded.gov.za
Limpopo: <i>Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism</i>	
Registrar: Mr. Moses Ngobeni Fax: (015) 291 1085 Address: Private Bag X 9486, Polokwane, 0700	Telephone: (015) 293 8510 Email: NgobeniM@ledet.gov.za
Mpumalanga: Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency	
Registrar: Musa Mahlangu Fax: (086) 603 6766 Address: Private Bag X 11338, Nelspruit,1200	Telephone: (013) 759 5487 Email: makindes@mtpa.co.za
North West: Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism	
Registrar: Adv Makinde Fax: (018) 387 7886/(018) 387 7924 Address: Private Bag X 15, Mmabatho,2735	Telephone: (018) 387 7883/(018) 387 7801 Email: smakinde@nwpg.gov.za
Northern Cape: Department of Economic Development and Tourism	
Registrar: Mr. Andries Mokgele Fax: (053) 831 3530 Address: Private Bag X 6102, Kimberly, 8300	Telephone: (053) 830 4875/(053) 830 4881 Email: amokgele@ncpg.gov.za
Western Cape: <i>Department of Economic Development and Tourism</i>	
Registrar: Fax: (021) 483 2957 Address: Ground Floor, St George's Mall 80 Waldorf Building, Cape Town	Telephone: (021) 483 8734/(021) 483 9130 Email: registrar@pgwc.gov.za