

5. TOUR AND/OR TRANSPORT OPERATORS

This category is open to tour and/or transport operators with fewer than 15 annual fulltime equivalent employees. It is not a transport award but does recognise a significant contribution to tourism through the provision of tour guiding services and transport services. Entrants must offer a tourism experience as a significant part of their operation.

Important reminders:

- *Entrants must ensure their answers refer specifically to the product and category they are entering.*
- *Entrants are encouraged to answer questions to highlight participation in tourism-related accreditation programs.*

Question 1. Product (20 points)

- a) Describe the scope and components of your operations. (10 points)
- b) What value-added services do you offer to enhance the tourism experience? (10 points)

TIPS: Part a) could include schedules, routes, prices etc.

Part b) You should consider commentary, tourism videos, brochure distribution, guest speakers, interpretation etc.

Question 2. Business Plans (20 points)

- a) Describe the key features of your business plan for example goals, strategies and outcomes. (10 points)
- b) Demonstrate your financial viability. If your business has not experienced growth, explain. (10 points)

TIPS: Part a) Explain what you were trying to achieve i.e. your business vision, how you went about it and the related outcomes.

Part b) would benefit from the inclusion of graphs illustrating income and expenditure and/or nett profit/loss for the qualifying period. This could be presented as a percentage or dollar value.

To demonstrate if your business is viable you can show:

- *An increase in average spend*
- *Reduction in loans*
- *Amount of forward bookings compared to previous year*
- *Agents/wholesalers – 3rd party referrals*
- *A percentage increase*
- *Customer numbers (have they increased?)*

Judges want to see that you've got plans in place (particularly if you're a new business) to ensure the continuity of your business, that you have a pipeline. That could be:

- *You have a relationship with a local Visitor Information Centre or other sources for referrals*
- *Repeat customers*

You can also show that you've done research into things like the lifetime value of a customer.

Question 3. Marketing (20 points)

- a) Describe the marketing strategies used to attract each target market and detail the success/outcomes of those strategies. (10 points)
- b) What is your distinctive difference and how do you promote it to attract each of your target markets? (10 points)

TIPS: Consider all arms of marketing (e.g. sales, advertising, public relations, word of mouth and e-marketing) where appropriate. Your objective should be to demonstrate a clear plan, supported by market research, and the results achieved.

Part a) Consider displaying your target markets and the strategies and outcomes for each in a table format. Ideally there should be a strategy described for each target market listed in part a).

Part b) relates to your marketing material e.g. brochures, flyers, advertising, website etc. and keeping them up to date.

Question 4. Customer Service and Professional Development (20 points)

- a) Explain how you achieve and maintain quality customer service throughout your organisation. (10 points)
- b) Describe the range of training/skill development programs undertaken. (10 points)

TIPS: Part a) Consider how you stay abreast of industry developments. Other points to consider could include your repeat business strategy, feedback collection and changes implemented based on feedback.

Part b) Points to consider could include the objective of staff/self training/skill development programs, how they were measured, the extent of uptake and outcomes for the business.

Question 5. Sustainability and Innovation (20 points)

- a) Describe and demonstrate your commitment to environmental sustainability. (10 points)
- b) Describe any innovations that have taken place during the qualifying period to improve your business and the specific benefits achieved. (10 points)

TIPS: Part a) This could include energy and water conservation, building design and location, waste management, recycling, tree planting, engaging environmentally sensitive procedures and accreditation programs.

Part b) Include innovations that have taken place to improve your visitor experience, infrastructure development, new marketing ideas or sales activities. Innovations do not include routine repairs and maintenance.

Total score: 100 points.