

The TGCSA recognises its quality assurance ambassadors

By [Thembi Kunene](#)

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Accredited star grading assessors are the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa's (TGCSA) team on the ground; having close professional relationships with all graded establishments (and those who are applying for first-time grading) and working to help the hospitality industry extract maximum value from its investment in grading, and to ensure tourists in South Africa enjoy all the benefits that come from staying in at a quality graded establishment.

The TGCSA Annual Assessor Conference brings each of the 50 assessors together to talk the serious business of star quality grading in South Africa: the whys and wherefores and the vitally important tools that assessors have at their disposal to become ingrained partners with an industry that's in pursuit of excellence and completely committed to global competitiveness.

A symbol of quality and service excellence

In an incredibly competitive global environment, an easily recognised symbol of quality and service excellence in accommodation and conferencing becomes essential for our destination to grow and to establish a reputation as a destination (and an industry) that takes customer service seriously.

The TGCSA's grading criteria are both globally benchmarked as well as internationally competitive. We offer our industry a fantastic, collaborative service where we become partners for success and growth. We have a large, varied and enthusiastic accommodation and conferencing sector. However, if the industry is to benefit - and benefit fully - from the work we do at TGCSA, we need a group of credible, professional and committed specialists to engage the industry, advise them on quality assurance matters, and work with them to make sure they get the best value through the many marketing benefits we offer - for their grading.

Passion for the tourism industry

The TGCSA is fortunate to enjoy the services of assessors whose capacity to deliver is matched only by their passion for the tourism industry and their determination to grow South Africa's global positioning as a quality destination of choice for local and international tourists.

We look forward immensely to the 4th Annual Assessor Conference and to meeting, under one roof, each of our assessors who work and who deliver their service to the industry across the length and breadth of South Africa. The conference gives us all an opportunity to meet face to face, discuss the challenges and triumphs of the TGCSA and to share research, insights and other valuable data with each other to improve even further the services we offer to the industry and the travellers that book into graded establishments.

Trade-focused marketing strategy

This year, the TGCSA will launch its trade-focused marketing strategy that clearly articulates its reason to believe in star grading. The campaign's six messages are:

- Access to millions of global travellers through the TGCSA strategic online partnerships, such as TripAdvisor and Expedia.
- Savings on Search Engine Optimisation, graded establishments get top results on Google Search.
- Further access to potential travellers through the global marketing investment made by South African Tourism, worth

hundreds of millions of rands each.

- Access to the multi-billion-rand government business. Only graded establishments can be used by government officials.
- Exclusive rights to display the globally recognised plaque - giving your establishment an immediate quality identity.
- Star-graded establishments have an unfair advantage over ungraded establishments.

This campaign enables our assessors in marketing the South Africa's only official quality assurance system - the Star Grading System. We are determined to work with the assessors to help them deliver outstanding service to our industry and to establishments that enjoy benefits of being star graded. It's only through collaboration with our industry partners that we are able to grow the number of establishments in South Africa and, as we like to say: "Put stars where they belong."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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