



TURNSTONE

— ASSESSMENTS —
SELF CATERING SPECIALISTS

Self Catering Assessment Scheme Standard 2022



Contents

- Introduction to Turnstone Assessments
- The Assessment Scheme
- How does it work?
- Objective assessing
- Minimum Standards
- General
- Exterior/Car Parking/Gardens
- Living Areas
- Bedrooms
- Bathrooms
- Kitchen/Utility
- 5 Tick– Additional Requirements
- Quality Guidance for Property Owners



Introduction to Turnstone Assessments

Turnstone Assessments provide assessment services to leading holiday letting agencies in the south of England. We are a small, bespoke business that specialises in rating assessments for self catering properties.

The aim of the assessment scheme is to help owners to maximise the quality and letting potential of their property. We assist owners in setting up and maintaining the quality of their properties so that they appeal to today's holidaymaker and are competitive in the market. We also help owners to achieve the rating they want, one that best suits their property and their chosen market.

Turnstone Assessments is owned and managed by an experienced and independent self catering assessor.



The Assessor

Katie White

Katie is Director of Turnstone Assessments and has worked as an assessor since 2014 working exclusively within the self catering sector. Katie has undertaken a number of property development projects of her own. Her first project was to turn her 36' yacht into her home for four years. This was followed by her restoration of a Listed cottage in Dorset. The latest property development project is now underway in Bridport, Dorset.

'With eight years of experience assessing self catering properties I am able to offer sound and helpful advice to owners in order to target their particular segment of the market and to achieve the rating that will suit that market best'



Rob McCready

Rob helped set up the business and now works for the company within a consultancy capacity. Rob worked as part of the VisitEngland assessment team since 1996. His most recent position was with VisitEngland writing and developing their assessment schemes, including the self catering scheme. He was also responsible for training assessors and liaising with self catering agencies nationally.

'Self catering accommodation has risen in recent years to become the most important accommodation sector for English resorts and the countryside as the traditional B&B declines in popularity. Guest expectations grow every year and with intense competition it is important that self catering owners and agencies offer the very best quality that they can. Our job is to work with owners to offer help and guidance as to how optimum quality can be achieved.'

The Assessment Scheme

How does it work?

Your quality assessment will be divided into three sections:

1. Facilities and Services

The assessment scheme provides you with a list of items and services that we regard as essential for each property. We refer to this as the 'Minimum Standards'. This is simply a checklist of the items that customers will require when they stay in your property. This list details the obvious items such as, beds and seating, to essential cleaning materials and some health and safety items.

The full list can be found in the section below.

(Turnstone Assessments carry out a 'Quality Grading' in order to help owners provide the best quality accommodation that they can. We do include some health and safety items in order to help owners, where we can, with their health and safety policy. It is however, the full responsibility of each owner to ensure that their property is safe and meets all health and safety legislation. The quality assessment scheme is not designed to meet that requirement. It does, however, highlight the need to provide some protection such as fire detection and Carbon Monoxide protection).

2. Housekeeping

Cleanliness is of paramount importance. In order to be accepted into the scheme, cleanliness must meet the high standards expected by guests.

The assessor will be looking at cleanliness and the presentation of the property to guests. We will also want to ensure that a good and reliable housekeeping regime is in place from week to week.

3. Quality Standard

The assessor will look at all areas of the accommodation and give a quality rating to each area assessed. A mark will be awarded on a scale of 1-5. The Tick rating will then be awarded based on the percentage scored as an 'overall' score and the percentage scored for each of the sub-sections: Living Areas, Bedrooms, Bathrooms and Kitchen.

For example: For a property to achieve a 4 Tick rating the overall percentage score must fall into the 4 tick band, as must the scores for Living Areas, Bedrooms, Bathrooms and Kitchen. If one or more of the sections is scored at the 3 tick level, then a 3 tick rating will be awarded.

Objective Assessing

Our assessor will take an objective view of quality and will be looking at the intrinsic quality of each item as well as its age and condition. For example: Are curtains lined? Is the heating thermostatically controlled? Is lighting well positioned in the kitchen and bathroom? What style of bed and mattress is provided?

The assessor will be marking up where the intrinsic quality is high and marking down where there is obvious damage or wear to an item.

1 Fit for purpose, but no more than that. Any item/area scored at '1' will be ready for immediate replacement or refurbishment.

2 Some quality, but still this item or area is likely to disappoint guests. It is an area in need of some investment soon.

3 Good quality and in good order. Could offer very good intrinsic quality, but with some wear and tear or be of more moderate intrinsic quality, but is in excellent condition.

4 Very good intrinsic quality and maintained in very good order.

5 Excellent quality. One could not reasonably expect anything of higher quality.



How is Housekeeping Assessed?

Housekeeping is marked in a different way to other parts of the accommodation. This is because cleanliness is all encompassing and guests expect to arrive to a clean and well presented holiday home.

The rules for cleanliness are:

Meets Expectations:

The property is cleaned thoroughly prior to each new letting. Cleanliness will be good in all areas of the accommodation

Exceeds Expectations:

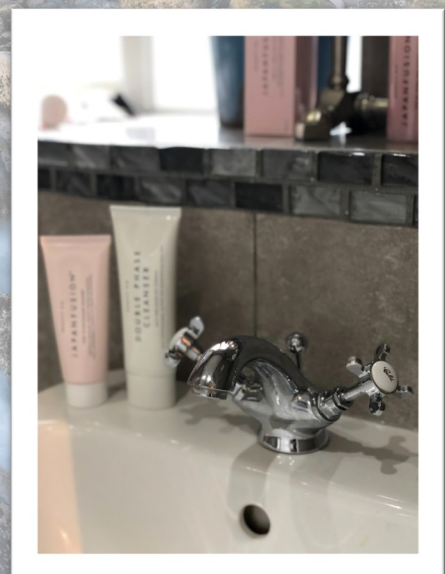
Extra care taken to ensure that the property is spotlessly clean with attention given to every aspect of the presentation. A property will only be scored at Exceeds Expectations, when the owner/housekeeping goes the extra mile to ensure a beautifully presented property.

Fails to Meet Expectations:

Significant lapses in housekeeping that makes the presentation and cleanliness of the property unacceptable.

The assessor will be looking at areas such as:

- High and low level dusting
- Flooring; are carpets marked etc
- Inside cookers and the hob
- Fridge interiors including door seals
- Cutlery and crockery
- Cutlery drawers
- Bathroom fittings



Minimum Standards

The assessor will be looking for the following facilities and items to be provided in all properties.

General

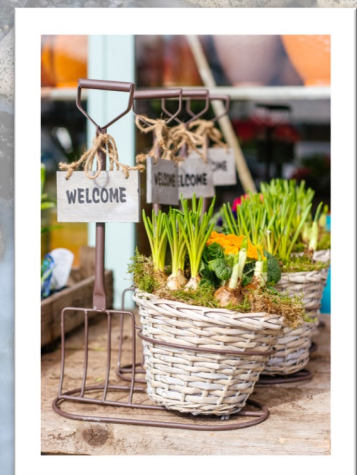
- All accommodation and facilities to be fully self contained
- Heating system: all rooms, including the bathroom and kitchen if an exterior window is fitted, to have sufficient heating. All heating should be fully controllable by the guests
- Hot water system: Guests to have full control of the hot water system providing hot water to all bathrooms and kitchen

Space: Number of guests accommodated.

- Sufficient space within the property for the number of guests accommodated
- Sufficient space in the living areas for the number of bed spaces

Health & Safety

- Smoke detector/s
- Fire blanket – fixed to wall in kitchen on the route of escape
- Exterior lighting (minimum at front entrance; could be street lighting)
- Emergency contact numbers and procedures
- If open fire or wood burner provided: safety equipment as appropriate (fire guard if children accommodated etc.)
- Carbon Monoxide protection for open fires, wood burners and other carbon burning appliances



Minimum Standards

The assessor will be looking for the following facilities and items to be provided in all properties.

Exterior/Car Parking/Gardens

- Exterior of building maintained in good order (decoration and fabric)
- Parking area well maintained (if provided)
- Parking area with clear marking and signage (if required)
- Garden maintained in good order (paths, fencing, lawns etc)
- Garden furniture with seating and dining for each guest (if garden, patio or balcony is provided)

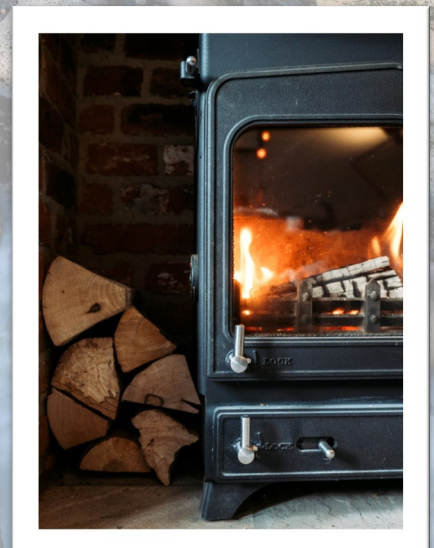


Minimum Standards

The assessor will be looking for the following facilities and items to be provided in all properties.

Living Areas

- Sufficient space in the living areas for the number of guests accommodated
- Dining table and chairs for the number of guests accommodated
- Sufficient, comfortable seating – (easy chairs, lounge suite) for each guest accommodated
- Sufficient coffee/occasional tables
- Table mats or table cloth
- Appropriate wall and floor coverings
- At least one opening window (for natural light and ventilation)
- Curtains/blinds for all windows (for privacy when required)
- Television (At 4 tick level Smart TV's are a requirement)
- Adequate lighting in all areas
- If sleeping is provided in living area (bed settee) then bedside lighting to be provided
- If sleeping is provided in living area (bed settee) then dedicated storage for bedding and clothes to be provided somewhere in the property
- If waste bin is provided, then a non-flammable bin
- If an open fire or wood burner is in use, then there should be a fire guard (if the property accommodates children) and all the necessary equipment to clean and operate the fire and Carbon Monoxide protection
- Information folder: contact details, refuse collection details, Wi-Fi code, etc



Minimum Standards

The assessor will be looking for the following facilities and items to be provided in all properties.

Bedrooms

- Appropriate wall and floor coverings
- Adequate lighting for the room; controlled from light switch at entrance to room
- Bedside lighting for all beds; controlled from bedside
- Access to both sides of double beds
- Single beds minimum size 6' 3" x 3' (190cm x 90cm)
- Single beds minimum size 6' x 2'6" (child use only) (183cm x 76cm)
- Double beds minimum size 6'3" x 4'6" (190cm x 137cm)
- Bedside table/shelf accessible from each bed
- Mattress protection for all beds (if waterproof then with quilted top)
- 2 pillows per guest
- Duvet per bed; appropriate to the letting season (sheet, 2 blankets, bedcover as an alternative)
- At least one opening window (for natural light and ventilation)
- Curtains/blinds for all windows (for privacy and ease of sleeping)
- Sufficient clothes storage for guests in each bedroom; drawers/shelves, wardrobe with sufficient hangers
- If some bedrooms not large enough to accommodate all furniture, storage space can be provided in another room.
(units let for family use only)
- Mirror
- If waste bin is provided, then a non-flammable bin



Minimum Standards

The assessor will be looking for the following facilities and items to be provided in all properties.

Bathrooms

- One bathroom for up to 6 guests
- One bathroom & 1 extra WC for 6-8 guests
- Two bathrooms for more than 8 guests (then pro-rata)
- Bath or shower
- At 4/5 tick at least one shower is required for 4 guests or more
- Showers should be thermostatically controlled (not mixer taps)
- Full size washbasin
- WC
- Adequate lighting
- Slip resistant flooring
- Suitable wall coverings in good condition
- Storage space for toiletries (shelf/cupboard)
- Mirror for use in conjunction with washbasin
- Forced air extraction; if no opening window
- Curtains/blinds for all windows (for privacy)
- Shaver point or adaptor
- Towel rail
- Toilet roll holder
- Toilet brush
- Covered bin



Minimum Standards

The assessor will be looking for the following facilities and items to be provided in all properties.

Kitchen/Utility

- Appropriate wall and floor coverings
- Adequate lighting
- Curtains/blinds for all windows (for privacy)
- Forced air extraction system if no opening window
- Cooker: minimum 4 rings, oven and grill (a smaller configuration can be considered if space is limited and no more than 2 guests)
- Microwave oven
- Fridge with icebox or larger fridge and separate freezer
- Sink, draining board
- Hygienic work surfaces
- Sufficient storage space for all kitchen equipment provided
- Storage space for guests' food and provisions



Minimum Standards

The assessor will be looking for the following facilities and items to be provided in all properties.

Kitchen Inventory

Crockery (dinner plates, side plates, cereal bowls, mugs)

Glassware (wine glasses, large and small tumblers)

Cutlery (knives, forks, teaspoons)

Ideally all of the items above will be provided at two items per guest, especially if a dishwasher is fitted to the property.

Kitchenware

- Set of saucepans
- Frying pan/wok
- Oven trays /roasting tins
- Set of kitchen knives (bread, carving, general purpose)
- Set of kitchen utensils (slotted spoon, ladle, slice, whisk, etc.)
- Serving Spoons
- Egg cups
- Kettle
- Toaster
- Colander
- Chopping board
- Oven dishes (casserole, oven to table)
- Mixing bowls
- Jugs (measuring jug, water jug, milk jug)
- Teapot
- Tray
- Wooden spoons (or equivalent)
- Tin opener
- Bottle opener
- Kitchen scissors
- Storage containers (biscuits, bread etc)
- Ice making containers
- Coffee maker (cafetiere, electric etc)
- Grater



Minimum Standards

The assessor will be looking for the following facilities and items to be provided in all properties.

Cleaning & Housekeeping Equipment

- Vacuum cleaner
- Brush
- Dustpan and brush
- Dusters
- Tea towels
- Spare light bulbs
- Oven cloth
- Bucket (mop if required)
- Clothes drying and pegs
- Iron and board
- Kitchen cloth
- Washing up liquid



Minimum Standards

5 Tick Accommodation

In order to achieve a 5 Tick rating all of the Minimum requirements need to be in place plus the items listed below:

- All beds full adult size
- No sleeping in living areas
- All bedding and towels provided and beds made-up
- One bathroom for every four guests
- Freezer
- Dishwasher
- Washing machine
- Tumble drier
- Excellent technology (SMART TV, Smart speaker, Bluetooth music system, etc)
- Hairdryer for each bedroom



Quality Guidance for Property Owners

General guidance for providing a comfortable and commercial holiday home

Buy the best quality that you can afford. Guests are more likely to respect and look after higher quality furniture and fittings

Focus your budget on the most important areas. For example:

- High quality beds (pocket sprung mattress)
- Bedding to match the appropriate season (summer & winter weight duvets)
- High quality shower units
- Well equipped kitchen with modern appliances
- Good, modern technology

When deciding how many guests to accommodate be sure that there is sufficient space to allow comfort in all areas. Ask yourself:

- Is there sufficient space for all guests at the dining table?
- Is there sufficient comfortable seating for all guests?
- Is there a good guest/bathroom ratio? Guests expectations are rising in this area. Try to achieve better ratios than the minimum standard.

Think about ease of use in all areas of the property.

- How are guests going to dry their hair in the bedrooms? Is there a well-placed power point, light and mirror?
- Are there sufficient coffee tables for guests to place drinks?
- Are there good lines of sight to the TV?
- Is there sufficient shelf space in the bathroom?

First impressions are all important. Spend time on the final presentation of the accommodation on change over day. Think about:

- Personal touches; flowers, tea, coffee, milk, a personalised welcome card.

Guest requirements increase year on year. There is now an increased expectation of items such as; washing machines, dishwashers, SMART TV, Internet access, Bluetooth connections.

Quality Guidance for Property Owners

General guidance for providing a comfortable and commercial holiday home

When equipping your kitchen include items over and above the minimum kitchen inventory where it adds to the guest experience; also buy in bulk.

Glassware is a good area for adding quality. There is no need for high quality crystal glassware. Buy good quality supermarket glassware, but provide an extended range of glasses; large and small tumblers, beer glasses, champagne flutes, red and white wine glasses. The key to great presentation is to buy in bulk and always have spare items in reserve, as glasses will be broken. Opening cupboards to find full matching sets, neatly arranged makes such a difference to the presentation of any holiday home.

Crockery is similar to glassware. White crockery is always popular. Again, an extended range to include serving dishes will look good. Also, keep a good supply of spare items. This will provide a cost saving over time.

When selecting saucepans a good set of stainless steel pans is probably the best option. Non-stick pans might look good at the outset, but the interior surface can quickly become worn and damaged in a holiday home and they will soon need to be replaced. Frying pans are likely to have a non-stick surface and these will need to be replaced regularly.

A good set of matching kitchen knives in a block always looks good. Avoid the cheaper set with plastic handles and bendy blades.

Having a set of kitchen utensils on a rack or in a crock makes them easier to find and use. Keep full matching sets rather than oddments. Be sure the wooden spoons are replaced regularly so that they look clean and fresh.

Quality Assessment Areas

Exterior

The assessor will mark **UP** for:

- Well maintained exterior decoration
- Well tended gardens
- Good signage
- Tidy and well maintained car parking areas
- Good garden furniture, with seating options for dining and relaxing

The assessor will mark **DOWN** for:

- Decoration in need of attention
- Untidy garden areas
- Poorly maintained parking areas and signage
- Damaged or low quality garden furniture

Living Areas

The assessor will mark **UP** for:

- Decoration with a professional finish
- Decoration in good order
- High quality furniture, soft furnishings and fittings
- Modern thermostatically controlled heating systems
- Effective lighting
- Accessories and personal touches provided by the proprietors
- Modern technology
- Good space and ease of use

The assessor will mark **DOWN** for:

- Tired decoration
- Excessively worn furniture, soft furnishings and fittings
- Heating without thermostatic control
- Poorly lit areas

Quality Assessment Areas

Bedrooms

The assessor will mark **UP** for:

- Larger beds
- High quality mattresses (pocket sprung)
- High quality bedding
- Curtains/blinds that offer good blackout
- Good clothes storage space
- The usability of the rooms; positioning of mirrors, power points and lighting for hair drying
- • High quality furniture, heating and lighting

The assessor will mark **DOWN** for:

- Lower quality mattresses
- Worn mattresses; due to age or lack of appropriate turning
- Lack of storage space
- Overcrowded rooms; too many beds
- Lower quality bedding; thin pillows, obvious mattress protection (rubber)
- Lower quality furniture, heating and lighting
- Poor ease of use

Bathrooms

The assessor will mark **UP** for:

- Properties with bath and shower provided
- High quality bathroom fittings
- Showers with good water pressure
- The provision of high quality towels
- Comfortable levels of heating
- The usability of the mirror with the washbasin etc
- Well maintained tiling and bath/shower seals

The assessor will mark

DOWN for:

- Grout and bath/seals in poor condition
- Tired or damaged sanitaryware
- Poorly positioned lighting
- Lack of heating

Quality Assessment Areas

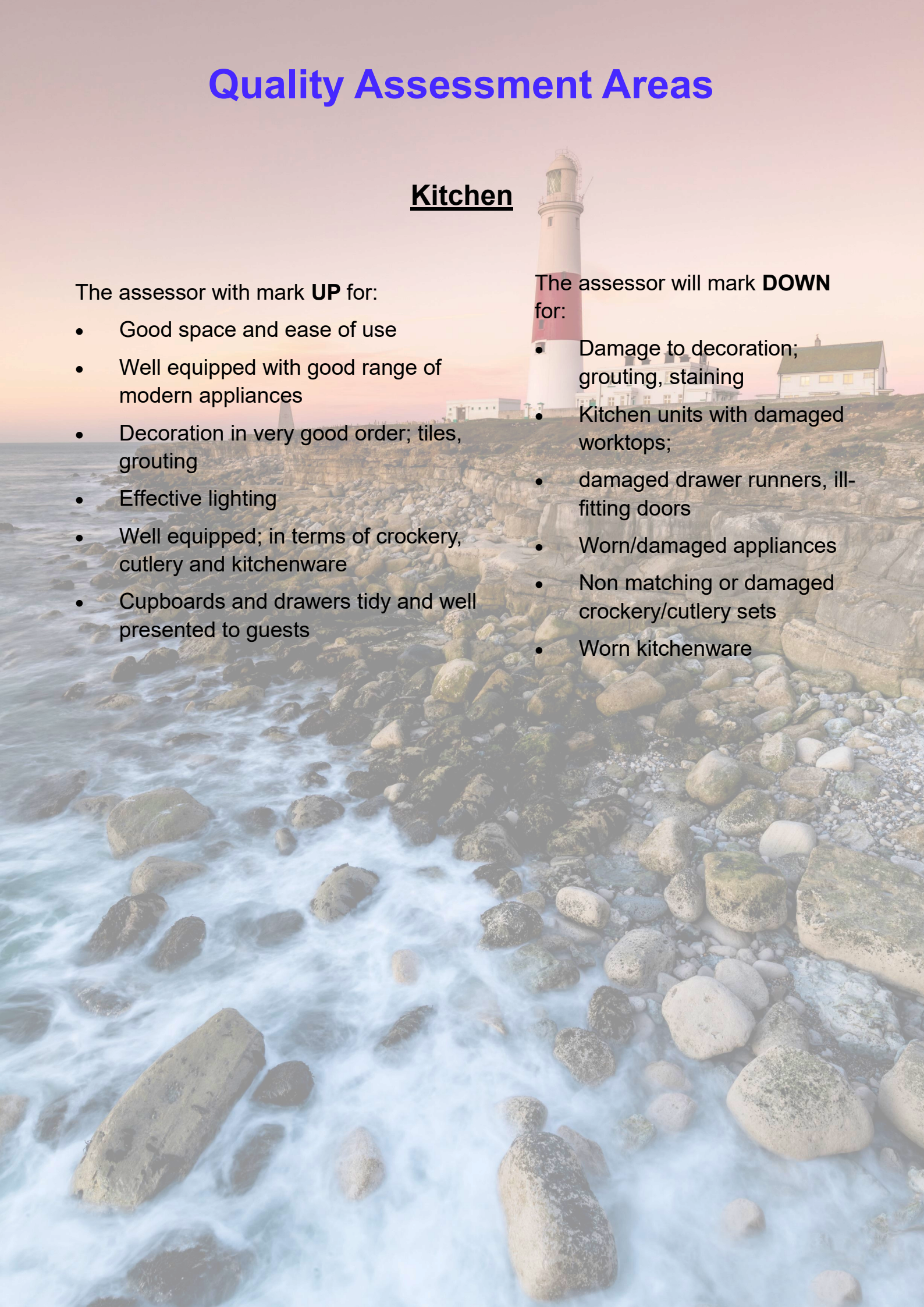
Kitchen

The assessor will mark **UP** for:

- Good space and ease of use
- Well equipped with good range of modern appliances
- Decoration in very good order; tiles, grouting
- Effective lighting
- Well equipped; in terms of crockery, cutlery and kitchenware
- Cupboards and drawers tidy and well presented to guests

The assessor will mark **DOWN** for:

- Damage to decoration; grouting, staining
- Kitchen units with damaged worktops;
- damaged drawer runners, ill-fitting doors
- Worn/damaged appliances
- Non matching or damaged crockery/cutlery sets
- Worn kitchenware



Turnstone Assessments

Web: www.turnstoneassessments.co.uk

Email: admin@turnstoneassessments.co.uk

Telephone: 07833226641



TURNSTONE

— ASSESSMENTS —
SELF CATERING SPECIALISTS