

EatScotland Criteria

Tea Room / Coffee Shop



Tea Rooms and Coffee Shops may stand-alone or be part of a larger operation such as a Visitor Attraction. For the most part, they will open only during restricted hours (usually through the day) and serve principally light meals, sandwiches, tea, coffee and baked goods. They will often not be licensed.

Introduction

VisitScotland has a trained team of EatScotland food assessors who will eat in or purchase foods anonymously from establishments of scheme participants and complete a visit report on the visit experience. The food quality awards issued, following receipt and review of the report operate in parallel with the existing successful VisitScotland quality awards in accommodation, visitor attractions and caravan parks. Food is assessed for its appearance, quality of ingredients, skill and execution, flavour and appropriate portion size. Consideration is also given to the seasonal content of the menu and the use of natural fresh ingredients. Of course other factors contribute to a successful and memorable eating experience such as hospitality, service and ambience. These too are considered in the assessment.

The EatScotland scheme is all embracing. Any restaurant, pub, tea room, hotel, take away or fast food outlet, guest house or bed and breakfast is able to join and all are potentially eligible for a quality award. It is therefore possible for anyone to make an informed decision about the best places to eat wherever he or she may be, across the whole of Scotland.

There is no attempt to enforce a straitjacket of formal upmarket standards or style through EatScotland. For example, an important and growing area of catering is the pub food sector where a less formal approach is taken. Such establishments will also be able to obtain the highest quality grade in their own category, as will sandwich shops or takeaways.

Participants of the scheme will be allotted a "designator" which indicates the style and nature of their operation. Assessment of quality will then take account of the standards and expectations appropriate to that designator. These will clearly be very different as between, for example, a restaurant in a 5 Star Hotel and a family-orientated "cafe".

In the pages that follow, we have attempted to outline the aspects of food, service and ambience that will be taken into account when making quality assessments. It must be remembered however that these are general indications. In a document of this size, it is impossible to cover every eventuality, every nuance and every individual characteristic of all the diverse establishments, styles, menus and philosophies that we will encounter.

Statutory Obligations

All statutory obligations (and amendments), where applicable must be met, including:

Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008

Food Safety Act 1990

Consumer Protection Act 1979

The Health and Safety at work Act 1974 as amended

Licensing (Scotland) Act 1976 as amended

Sale of goods act 1997 amended 2002 to: Sale and supply of goods

Price display Orders 1977/79

Fire Precautions Act 1971

Hotel proprietors Act 1963

The Race Relations Act 1976 amended 2003

Standards of Achievements

Achieving the EatScotland Standard – the three rules

1. To achieve the EatScotland Standard the establishment must not have two or more 'Below Standard' in the following sections:
 - ☼ Serving Skills
 - ☼ First Course
 - ☼ Second Course
 - ☼ Third Course
 - ☼ Fourth Course
 - ☼ Sweet Dish
 - ☼ Vegetable/Salad

2. To achieve the EatScotland Standard the establishment must not have four or more 'Below Standard' in the following sections:
 - ☼ Menu
 - ☼ Sundries
 - ☼ Wine and other Alcoholic Beverages
 - ☼ Non Alcoholic Beverages

To achieve the EatScotland standard the establishment must not have one 'Below Standard' in any of the Hygiene sections (e.g. Toilets and Personal hygiene).

Tea room / Coffee shop

Ordering	Examples of standards required
<p>This covers the manner and efficiency of the waiter(s) taking the order of both food and drink.</p> <p>The manner in which all the pre-meal service is conducted is of greatest importance. Credit will be given to cheerfulness and willingness to please.</p> <p>The dispensing of foods from behind a counter, technical competence, speed in both dispensing food, and operating in an efficient, and hygienic manner.</p>	<p>Achieves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly with an ease of manner. • Good menu knowledge. • What is on and what is unavailable. • Cheerfulness and willingness to please. • Advising in any delays within kitchen. <p>Exceeds: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promptness and accompanying information within menu (e.g. soup of the day or any special cakes / pastries). • In-depth knowledge of individual dishes • Offer advice on special dietary requirements or further information on composition of dishes on menu. • Good knowledge of ingredients <p>Outstanding: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive knowledge of ingredients and their provinces. <p>Below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfriendly manner or attitude • Menu not being handed to customer for a long while • Not knowing what is on/off menu / specials.
<p>Staff Appearance</p> <p>In this section we are not judging styles of dress. In some establishments, all staff will wear a uniform, in others each member of staff will be dressed differently.</p> <p>We are not awarding credit for “designer” labels. Uniforms will not necessarily be preferred.</p> <p>Personal hygiene is of fundamental importance. All establishments are required to meet EatScotland standards</p>	<p>Examples of standards required</p> <p>Achieves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long hair tied back • Dress kept in style of establishment • Clean clothing • General all round hygiene and cleanliness <p>Exceeds: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House style throughout establishment adhered to <p>Outstanding: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visually appealing and striking dress code • Well groomed and in appropriate clothing <p>Below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Un-kept or food-smearred clothing • Dirty fingernails or general poor hygiene

<p>Serving Skills NB: Please note that it is possible that bread/butter – water – wine will be listed separately within the final reporting structure</p>	<p>Examples of standards required</p>
<p>An integral part of the overall experience of eating out is the service received. Surly and indifferent staff can ruin an otherwise excellent experience. On the other hand, what would have been an adequate and enjoyable meal can be elevated into a memorable occasion by thoughtful attentive service. The following are the main areas to which attention will be paid during an assessment. Again, account will be taken of the style of the operation.</p> <p>It is important to use an appropriate cup / glass, or to make sure that tea pots do not dribble and are not stained</p>	<p>Achieves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chilled or iced water should be available. • Offer more as necessary • Provision of adjuncts to drinks a variety of sugars and sugar substitutes, ice, lemon etc. • Correct cup or glass for the drink. • Provision of a mat or coaster. • Clearing away of empty cups, plates, glasses. <p>Exceeds: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double-checking of order plus which customer is taking which drink food etc. <p>Outstanding: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinks should be topped up as required. • You should feel that every effort has been made to give you a pleasant and relaxing experience <p>Below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No offer of bread/butter • No offer of water • Offering bread/butter at inappropriate time (mid way through first course) • Touching any of the middle of dishes/food/or inside glasses by hand. • Unthinking waiter/waitress • Not in tune with party's needs.
<p>Bill Handling</p>	<p>Examples of standards required</p>
<p>All too often there is a long gap between the end of a meal and the presentation of the bill. Guests are forgotten and it is often difficult to get hold of the bill, and then to pay it. Staff should be sensitive to when customers require their bill.</p> <p>This section also covers the acceptance of payment. Staff should be well versed in accepting and processing credit cards and cheques if the establishment accepts these.</p>	<p>Achieves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting detailed bill once asked • Making sure bill is correct <p>Exceeds: the above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt and efficiently handled <p>Outstanding: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly made out • Style of bill / incentives to return • Asking if all was ok with meal and service • Offering of detailed receipt where necessary

	<p>Below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having to ask for bill and being kept waiting • Having to ask repeatedly for the bill • Inaccurate billing • Ambiguous charging, for example: charging for service then leaving gap for gratuities • Giving bill over without seeing if customer has finished dining
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Menu	
Balance, Variety and Choice	Examples of standards required
<p>Where a small selection of hot and cold food is available then the choice of dishes should have a wide appeal, catering for vegetarian as well as non vegetarians. If there is good reason or purpose for a restriction in variety and choice then this will be understood and accepted.</p>	<p>Achieves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good selection of dishes to suit most tastes • There should be something on the list that could appeal to most people, so that if four friends are dining together they can all feel that the menu has something to offer each one and no one has to choose the least unappealing.
	<p>Exceeds: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There might be, in addition, more unusual choices and specials of the day
	<p>Outstanding: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There needs to be a "surprise" element; a feeling that horizons are being opened up to new taste sensations, perhaps using familiar raw materials but presented in mouth-watering creations. • It should be difficult to narrow down the choice to only one dish, as they are all appealing.
	<p>Below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of choice on menu • No lighter options

Menu Appearance	Examples of standards required
<p>This section covers the text, content, design and physical appearance of the menu offered.</p>	<p>Achieves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly set out menu • Easy to access all relevant information • Gives clear breakdown of dish and style
	<p>Exceeds: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informative and logically laid out
	<p>Outstanding: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indication provided of where food was sourced

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail regarding the fresh produce • High quality printed materials • Anecdotal, literate, amusing.
	<p>Below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dirty menu • Hand written but illegible • Dog eared • Too lengthy and complicated • Misleading inaccuracies in description of food offered • Use of technical terms should be correct and not a loose interpretation

Fresh Ingredients	Examples of standards required
Refers to the ingredients stated on the menu as fresh or local.	Achieves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate, honest description of key ingredients.
	Exceeds: the above plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More detailed information on origin of fresh or local products.
	Outstanding: the above plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly informative, interesting, readable descriptions of products giving a real insight into their source/production.
	Below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No information provided.

Courses including sweets and pastries	
Appearance	Examples of standards required
<p>The visual impact of the food as presented on the plate, its layout, quantity per individual portion, and the presentation of any garnish, or additional accompaniment.</p> <p>Where a Coffee shop or Tea room has a food display: The visual impact of the display, its layout ease of service and cleanliness.</p>	Achieves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care and thought given to the visual appeal of a dish, taking into account the balance of colour, arrangement of ingredients and the amount and viscosity of any integral sauce.
	Exceeds: The above plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pleasing and artistic arrangement, perhaps introducing extra elements to add to visual impact or a suitable garnish.
	Outstanding: The above plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptionally tempting, with garnish of unusual elements or displaying a high level of culinary skill.
	Below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too heavy • Too much • Over complex • Looks difficult to eat • Too neatly arranged

Quality of Main Ingredients	Examples of standards required
<p>Quality is essential. There is a vast range of establishments within this designation, from coffee shops / tea rooms serving very high quality confectionary, professionally produced, usually bought in, to establishments serving home produced items, of no lesser quality of ingredients, but perhaps lacking the professional finish. In this case, the consideration will be given to the amount produced in-house, and the quality of the ingredients used. The authenticity with regard to name and style: For example if a 'Sachertorten' were offered, there is, at the very least the expectation of a chocolate Genoese cake with a raspberry filling. Where hot food is offered, consideration will be given to the technical skill used in preparation and cooking, Authenticity with regard to style, type of dish and use of herbs and spices. Correct degree of cooking to retain colour and texture and to the required level.</p> <p>Freshness and seasonal variety. Consideration will be given to the use of fresh, locally produced foods, with due attention paid to seasonality.</p> <p>Where a sauce is part of the dish it should be of an appropriate consistency, usually similar to a single cream. The flavour should complement the main ingredient not too weak, or too strong.</p>	<p>Achieves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All cooking / baking etc should display competent professional skills and be made from good quality materials. <p>Exceeds: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high level of production quality would be expected, whatever the nature of the dish. <p>Outstanding: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive technical skills to provide a memorable dish. <p>Below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of material not suitable for the cooking, method (e.g. tough, dry, sinewy meat used for a sautéed dish). • Stale, out-of-date, tired produce.

Quality of Sauce / Accompaniment	Examples of standards required
<p>Accompanying sauces and salad dressings should be used to enhance or contrast with the main ingredient, but giving an overall balance. Well made fresh sauces, and dressings, as opposed to pre-prepared low quality bought in sauces, will be credited. Temperature will also be considered. Particularly in the light of possible delays caused by a waiting in a queue.</p>	<p>Achieves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good flavour. • Good Aroma. • Good colour and gloss. <p>Exceeds: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall effect is particularly pleasing. • District flavour of the style of sauce – a very good example of its type. <p>Outstanding: The above plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texture, flavour, consistency nor appearance could be improved. <p>Below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unappealing. • Lack of texture. • Consistency – too thin or thick. • Lack of flavour.

Balance and Flavour	Examples of standards required
<p>Flavour, Texture Most of the foods served will be either confectionary, or baked goods, but where an establishment serves hot foods such as baked potatoes, soups, salads and quiches, a balance of flavour, also texture, will be looked for. Regarding baked goods, the texture of the item. In bread for example: not too tight or loose. The flavour should also be typical for the item.</p> <p>Fresh/Seasonal Content: Credit will be given to those establishments who use fresh, seasonal ingredients locally purchased</p>	<p>Achieves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance of texture throughout meal. • No jarring or over powering elements at the expense of others. • A sauce, for example, should deliver what is promised on the menu, as to its nature, and be in sufficient quantity to add to

	the dish.
	Exceeds: The above plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall effect is particularly pleasing and adds significantly to the dish.
	Outstanding: The above plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of the above used to produce an exceptional dish displaying great technical skill.
	Below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dull or unattractive. Sauce too thick or thin Lacking flavour or imbalance of flavours. Poorly cooked (i.e. floury or burnt taste).

Culinary Skills	Examples of standards required
One of the areas assessed is culinary skills displayed in a dish. The level of technical ability will be commensurate with the style of establishment and judged accordingly. Consistency is very important and the ability to produce food to a high standard at every meal will be credited.	Achieves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dish corresponds to the description on the menu. Has a good blend and balance of flavours. Presented in a tidy fashion. Appetising. Competently prepared.
Creativity will be judged wherever it is found based on its suitability for the occasion, originality, purpose and its balance within the overall meal.	Exceeds: The above plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of good manual skills. Innovative approach. Subtlety of flavours. Good visual impact. Delightful experience consistent through every aspect of the dish.
	Outstanding: The above plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate eye-appeal displaying and artistic flair. Highly skilled use of ingredients (perhaps in novel combinations of flavours and textures in soups, sandwiches, quiches etc). Memorable experience.
	Below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burnt food. Under cooked or raw food.

Serving Temperature (Achieves or below standard only)	Examples of Standards
Serving Temperature of the dish will also be mentioned. However, this section can be 'achieves' or 'below standard' only.	Achieves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct serving temperature
	Below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Below the expected standard

Sundries	
Water (Achieves or below standard only)	Examples of standards required
The style of water service will differ. Essentially water should be offered – preferably a choice of tap water, bottled water, still or	Achieves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served chilled or iced.

sparkling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tap water served in a jug, with options offered of ice and possibly lemon slices. • Water glasses topped up as required.
	Below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tap water served warm. • Tainted flavour.

Bread/Butter	Examples of standards required
Credit will be given for quality, variety, choice, quantity and if totally produced in house, finished baked or brought in.	Achieves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality bread provided even if only one type. • Fresh.
The choice and quality of butter and butter substitutes will also be taken into account.	Exceeds: The above plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice (e.g. unsalted and salted butter) • Minimum of two choices or specialist bread made specifically for the meal.
	Outstanding: The above plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlimited supply • Wide variety. • Unusual breads offered.
	Below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stale. • Mouldy. • Sliced white bread only

Beverages	Examples of standards required
Beverages, within the context of a coffee shop, or tea room, are as important as the food served. The following areas will be assessed:	Achieves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable choice. • Well made and served with appropriate accompaniments e.g. sugar/cream/milk.
Quality. The range of qualities available for each beverage, for example: blended tea such as 'House tea', made from broken leaf tea, to speciality teas, such as 'Assam', made from leaf tea. 'House blend coffee', made from a blend containing Robusta beans, to 'Colombian', made from Arabica beans. In addition, how they are presented.	Exceeds: The above plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide range of choice of actual beverages and methods of preparation and service • Freshly prepared for each guest.
Variety. The diversity of the beverages on offer, and the number of varieties within each group.	Outstanding: The above plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using high quality products. • Unusual choices.
Methods of preparation. In the initial preparation, for example: Are the coffee beans roasted in- house, and are they also ground, in- house? Is the tea, leaf or bags? The quality and range of machinery used for producing the drinks, and how it is operated.	Below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left to stew. • Too strong or weak in flavour • Tepid. • Instant products of modest quality.
Presentation and Service. The use of specific serving items, such as the 'Jezve' (long handled coffee pot) for Turkish coffee. 'Iced coffee' in tall glasses. The correct use of saucers, under plates, and doilies.	
The range of accompaniments: Sugars, milks, creams, biscuits, and chocolates, and the method of dispensing from fresh, or pre-packaged.	

Toilets/House Keeping Hygiene	
Please note that the following criteria within this section receives only an "Achieves" or "Below" Standard rating.	
Impression of Facilities	Examples of standards required

<p>Cleanliness of toilets and housekeeping are of fundamental importance. All establishments are required to meet EatScotland entry standards.</p>	<p>Achieves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good standard of cleanliness and hygiene. • Well maintained. • Fresh, clean-smelling atmosphere. • Ease of entrance and exit into the toilet. • Good quality and condition of the entire decor including floor, ceiling and walls. • Good condition of the fittings. • Accessories and machines providing hygiene products well stocked and maintained.
	<p>Below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dirty • Smelly • Encrusted grime etc • Poor maintenance of décor and fittings.