

# AN ADVENTURE CAREER

The Generic Adventure Site  
Guide (GASG) Qualification  
& Legal Registration in  
South Africa



Do you dream of a life in the great outdoors, running activities like rafting, hiking, abseiling, mountain biking, climbing and quad biking?

## QUALIFY LEGALLY AS AN ADVENTURE TOUR GUIDE

Qualify for a career in adventure to be a legal guide and true professional. CATHSSETA – the tourism authority in South Africa – recognises Adventure, Nature and Culture as three types of guiding. Once qualified you are listed on CATHSSETA’s database as a legal Adventure Tour Guide, as required under the Tourism Act.

The Generic Adventure Site Guide skills programme and certificate is *the only qualification recognised for the accreditation of adventure tour guides in this country*. It will also stand you in good stead in Africa and further abroad as the principles are universal. Most countries in the SADC will recognise this qualification. Elsewhere you may be retested, and wherever you work you must comply with labour laws.

Our trainers have a lifetime of experience in the outdoors. Adventure Standards Africa (AsAfrica) is affiliated to the Adventure Qualifications Network (AQN) the accredited training provider for the GASG adventure skills programme.



**Adventure Qualifications** CAMPS  
**NETWORK**





There are more than 100 recognised adventure skills sets, from Abseiling to Ziplining. The number is growing all the time. You can qualify in a range of skills and so build a career based on your specialities. This tides you over seasonal changes affecting the outdoor environment – for example, go rafting in summer and mountain biking in winter.

## QUALIFY WITH A NUMBER OF SKILLS

The GASG skills programme allows you to specialise in several skills sets. For each set you need to have a **Specialist Certificate** proving your competence issued by a Subject Matter Expert (SME) after assessment. You must have a **logbook** with a minimum of 21 days (entry level) assisting on commercial trips. In addition, you must have a valid **Wilderness First Aid Level 3** certificate (valid for two years). These documents are put towards your **Portfolio of Evidence (POE)** showing your experience. There is also a **field assessment & theory test** to gain the GASG certificate. More detail about the POE later in this outline. Take it step by step...

## YOUR SPECIALIST CERTIFICATE

Outdoor activities are all very different, and so are the forms of training and assessment. Each skills set requires a logbook and assessment. For example, abseiling assessment takes a full day, while river rafting usually fills two days or several days. The equipment for each, the safety techniques and the client needs all differ. Do your skills one at a time.



The Specialist Certificate is issued after you are successfully tested by a Subject Matter Expert (SME) in that skill. This is a person recognised by our school, the Adventure Qualifications Network. We can recommend an SME for whatever skill you are to be tested in.

Most SMEs will expect you to do a practical field test and write a theory test. You may choose to do a course first, but not necessarily. The SME passes on the results and advises the GASG Assessor on technical skills and knowledge. You may appeal any decision by an SME.

The Specialist Certificate on its own is **proof of your competence in the skill** and will probably be recognised by insurers. But it is *not a certificate of guiding competence*. You may assist a qualified guide, but to become one yourself you must complete the GASG programme. It normally takes six months to a year to complete the process. You have two years before needing to re-register.

## WILDERNESS FIRST AID LEVEL 3 (WFA3)

All adventure guides qualifying through AsAfrica must have a WFA3 certificate valid for at least a year ahead. This normally involves a 4day course followed by a day of testing. The certificate must be recognised by the Department of Labour and must include outdoor exercises such as emergency casevac from a remote location. We can put you in touch with trainers.

## LOGBOOK

We provide a spreadsheet-type Logsheet in which you may log your trails experience. Do not mix types of trails (eg rafting, hiking) on the same logsheet. Once you have registered with us for the Specialist Certificate you can begin to accumulate log entries by assisting in **commercial tour operations**. *Social trips with friends or clubs are not accepted*. Entry level guides require 21 days logged in the skill. More advanced guides must prove “40 occasions” on a variety of routes at different levels of difficulty. See Scoping below.

**NOTE!** For the Specialist Certificate AsAfrica ONLY qualifies candidates who have logged experience. We offer Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Your logged days are your prior learning. Coming on any of our courses gets you logged days but we expect you to find work as well. We can recommend operators for you to approach.

## YOUR SCOPE AS A GUIDE

“Scoping” means how your assessor decides where and at what level of difficulty you may practice your speciality. It comes into play during the Specialist Assessment and again in the GASG assessment. AsAfrica and our school, the Adventure Qualifications Network, keep a record of your scope and it can be amended as you increase your trails experience. Scoping depends on three things:

1. Your logged experience. The more routes you do the wider your scope.
2. Your abilities, as proven in the SME test or later upgraded in a new test.
3. The routes or sites you know well. Obviously, you must be familiar with areas where you work.

You may only work at a site appropriate to your scope. Your scope is not fixed for ever. As you get more experience you can apply to have our record of your scope raised. The scope is not listed with CATHSSETA, but with us, and is a vital part of our certification for the qualification.

It is essential to build up your logbook over time to reflect a wider scope, which we why we say you need “40 occasions” – or many more.

## THE GASG SKILLS PROGRAMME

**Generic** means this qualification applies to all Adventure tour guiding in terms of the Tourism Act and regulations. (The other types of guiding are Culture and Nature).

**Adventure** usually applies to specific outdoor pursuits in a context of “challenge by choice” where paying clients are led by a specialist.

**Site** means any place in South Africa where you can perform your skills, given your scope.

**The Guide** is the person who is qualified and registered through CATHSSETA via AQN and registered with the Department of Tourism (the tourism authority), thus legally allowed to lead a tour.

GASG is a **professional tourism qualification** that equips you for an adventure career. For the GASG certificate you must qualify in terms of four modules: Planning a trip; conducting it; handling safety and emergencies; and camping. This all requires a **Portfolio of Evidence (POE)** which is a lot of paperwork but you learn a lot. Also submit the Specialist Certificate, First Aid, and Logbook. There is a **field assessment** and **online theory test** based on the learning materials we provide. You may appeal any decision by the Assessor. Once qualified, you must **register with your Provincial Tourism Registrar** for a card and badge.



## INTERIM GASG CERTIFICATE

Once your GASG Assessor has cleared you as competent, the documentation is submitted to our school, AQN, for approval. They check everything and may return the folder for further work. Once they are happy, you will receive an

Interim Certificate stating that AQN is satisfied that you are competent as an Adventure Tour Guide.

## CATHSSETA CERTIFICATE

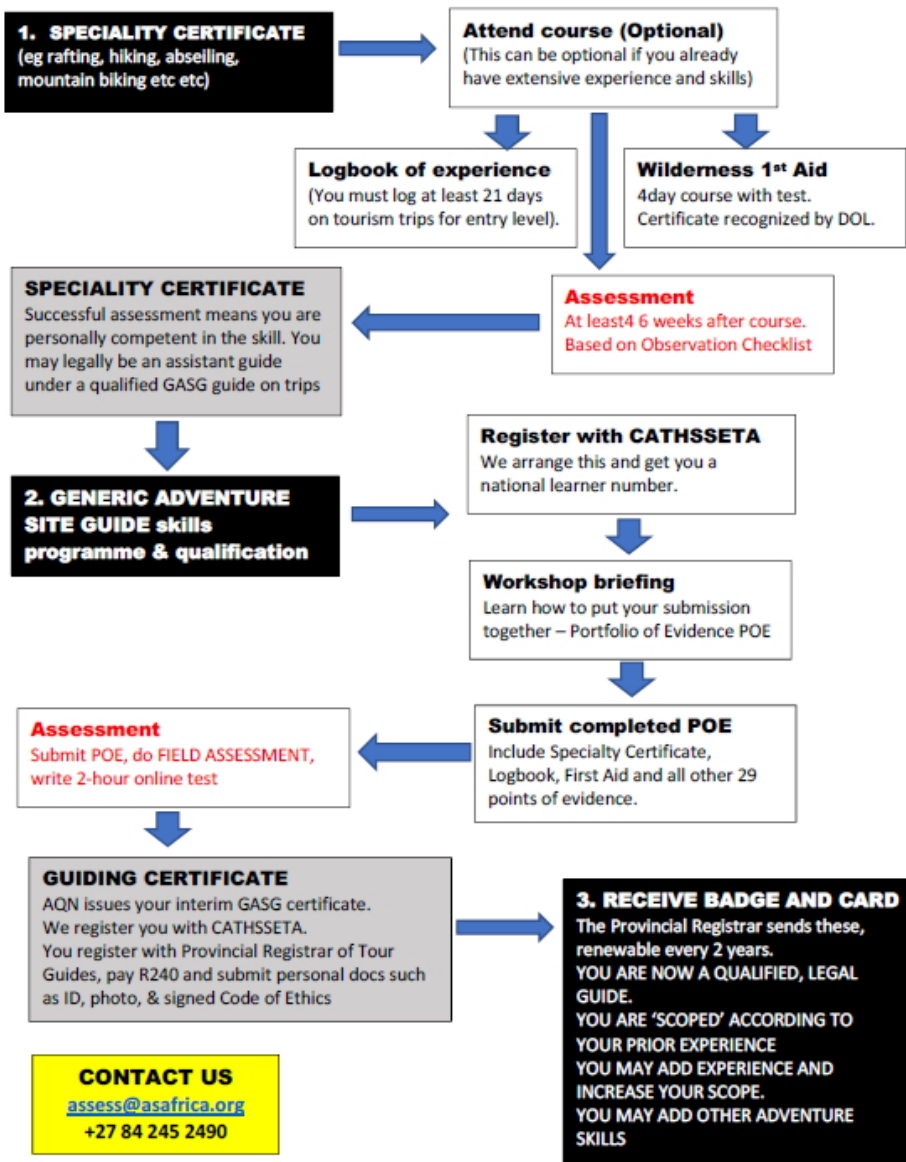
The remaining step is verification by CATHSSETA, the tourism authority in South Africa. It can take many months for the authority to produce the certificates but in the meantime we should receive your **certificate registration number** from CATHSSETA. This will mean that you are, in fact, a registered and legal tour guide.

## BADGE AND CARD

Before you actually work as a legal Adventure Tour Guide you must register with a province. This does not limit you to that province: it gets you onto the national database and you may work at any appropriate “Site” (see above). On payment of R240 and submission of your verified ID, photos, CATHSSETA registration no or certificate and a signed Code of Ethics, you should receive the badge and card as a legal guide. Now you can run trips. A list of Provincial Registrars is available.



## SUMMARY OF STEPS IN BECOMING A LEGAL GUIDE



**GASG PROCESS STEPS & PRICING**

*Not all prices apply to everyone and you don't need to pay all at once.  
Ask about your options and use this chart to plan ahead.*

MAXIMUM 2 YEARS TO COMPLETION	STANDARD	STATUS	UNITS	YOUR CALC.
<b>A</b> MEMBERSHIP of AsAfrica (annual) for discount offers	R 450,00	Optional		
<b>B SIGNING UP</b>				
<b>1</b> SPECIALIST TECHNICAL SKILL REGISTRATION	R 950,00	Pay when you start		
<b>2</b> GASG ENROLMENT, ADMIN, TEMPLATES	R 2 500,00	Pay when you start		
<b>3</b> RENEWAL or ADDED SCOPE OF GASG (1-5 years)	R 950,00	Pay when required		
<b>C WORKSHOPS (OPTIONAL)</b>				
<b>1</b> GASG how-to workshop, 1 day	R 1 500,00	Optional, if offered		
<b>2</b> Facilitated assessment workshop, 3,5 days	R 3 950,00	Optional, if offered		
<b>D COURSES (prices at 1 June 2021)</b>				
<b>1</b> Wilderness First Aid level 3 (with lunch) 4 days	R 2 950,00	Pay when doing it		
<b>2</b> River rafting proficiency (not including meals) 4 days	R 3 250,00	Pay when doing it		
<b>3</b> Hiking training and mentoring (self cater) 3 days	R 2 650,00	Pay when doing it		
<b>E ASSESSMENTS</b>				
<b>1</b> SPECIALIST ASSESSMENT*	R 1 500,00	Pay when doing it		
<b>2</b> GASG TOURISM FIELD ASSESSMENT	R 1 950,00	Pay when doing it		
<b>3</b> OPTIONAL ASSISTED GASG with consultant	R 4 950,00	Includes E.2		
<b>F AFTER ASSESSMENT IF SUCCESSFUL YOU MUST REGISTER WITH</b>				
YOUR PROVINCIAL TOURIST REGISTRAR (2020 price)	R 240,00	As at January 2020		
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>			R	
<b>TOTAL</b>			R	

**DISCOUNTS FOR WORKING GUIDES, GROUPS AND OPERATOR-COMMISSIONED COURSES**

## CONTENTS OF THE POE

Some 29 points of evidence are required, falling into four modules: 1. Planning the trip; 2. Conducting the Trip; 3. Handling Safety & Emergencies; and 4. Camping. By far the most important point is 1.4, the **Adventure Trip Plan (ATP)**. You must plan a multi-day trip with all details, from the Itinerary and client information, to maps, route information, ecology & wildlife, guiding requirements, indemnities and feedback forms, transport logistics, catering, permits, environmental care, camping routines & waste management, risk management and Profit & Loss estimates.

## ENCOURAGEMENT

**It's not difficult, only detailed and time consuming.** To get qualified you must apply yourself consistently and finish all the requirements. The Assessor cannot accept incomplete work and will merely send it back. Assessors are responsible to AQN and CATHSSETA to ensure that every box is ticked.

**DOCUMENTATION:** If you experience problems with the formatting or uploading of documentation, AsAfrica is here to help you. Do not hesitate to ask for advice or clarification.

**FIELD ASSESSMENTS:** These are always fun as you join other candidates to show your knowledge and skill. They are a learning experience all around.

## UPHOLDING STANDARDS

### Adventure Standards Africa (AsAfrica)

aims to raise and maintain the quality of outdoor tour guiding in South Africa. We provide training, advice, guidance, resources

and qualifications. AsAfrica is a consultancy, not a member-based association. We deal regularly with local and foreign associations dedicated to the same aims. Those who participate in our processes sign a Code of Ethics undertaking to be safety conscious always, care for the environment, provide well informed information to participants, and apply principles of ecotourism in all dealings with landowners and suppliers.



## CONTACT

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