

Scottish Tourist Guides Association

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Date as postmarked

Dear Sir/Madam,

SCOTTISH TOURIST GUIDES ASSOCIATION TRAINING PACK

Thank you for your enquiry regarding the training programmes leading towards membership of the Scottish Tourist Guides Association. I hope that the following information pack is helpful to you. STGA accredits tourist guides at three levels: Blue Badge (Scottish Tourist Guides); Green Badge (Regional Affiliate Tourist Guides) and Yellow Badge (Site Affiliate Guides). Career progression is possible through the three levels.

The **Blue Badge guide training course** tends to run every 2 years. The next course, provided by the University of Edinburgh, will commence in April 2010 and it will end in May 2012.

We are now recruiting for the next Blue Badge guide training course. The selection procedure includes interviews, scheduled to take place from 11th to 14th and 18th January 2010, and attendance of an Introductory Course from 12th and 14th March 2010. The fee for the Introductory Course will be £260 and is non-refundable. All students accepted onto the Blue Badge Guide training course are expected to become STGA student members and to pay the respective subscription, currently £117.50 per annum.

The guide training course itself includes web based learning, tutorials, lectures, weekends and summer school courses. The Blue Badge guide training course fees will be £5550, payable in instalments to the training provider. Students are expected to finance their own training but help will be given to access methods of funding, where appropriate. Career Development Loans and Individual Learning Accounts [www.ilascotland.org.uk] for those who meet the criteria may be available. The course fees include University course materials, access to web-based learning materials, lectures, tuition and tours. Books are not included but membership of University libraries is available. Overnight accommodation other than the 2nd year summer school is not included but can be arranged at competitive prices. STGA Final Examination Fees will also be payable, currently £325 plus £60 per language.

Please note that all prices given may be subject to change.

If you would like to apply for the next Blue Badge training course please complete the enclosed Blue Badge Application Form and return it to STGA **by 30th November 2009**.

Green Badge guide training courses will be arranged from time to time by a variety of training providers. They are normally run to meet market demand. If you would like to be contacted with information on courses, please complete the enclosed Green Badge Application Form and return it to us. We will contact you when an appropriate course is being held.

Yellow Badge guide training courses are normally run by employers or organisations for their own staff. You would have to work for such an employer or organisation to benefit from a Yellow Badge guide training course.

Yours sincerely,

Viola Lier

STGA Training Manager

THE SCOTTISH TOURIST GUIDES ASSOCIATION (STGA)

STGA is the Accrediting Body for all Scottish Blue Badge and Affiliate (Green & Yellow Badge) Tourist Guides. STGA is a company limited by guarantee and has a voluntary Board of Directors and an office in Stirling with professional staff.

STGA Membership:

- **Ordinary Members** (Blue Badge Guides) – qualified to guide throughout Scotland
- **Regional Affiliates** (Green Badge Guides) qualified to guide in specific areas of Scotland
- **Site Affiliates** (Yellow Badge Guides) qualified to guide on specific sites or fixed routes, normally for an employer or organisation
- **Student Members** – students training for the Blue Badge
- **Non-practising Members** – Blue Badge guides not currently working
- **Retired Ordinary Members** – Blue Badge guides who have retired
- **Honorary Members** – individuals who have given outstanding service to STGA
- **Associates** – organisations who wish to be associated with STGA

STGA Executive Board

Directors are directly elected, nominated by their branches or co-opted to serve on the Executive Board.

STGA Training Committee

The Training Committee prepares recommendations for the Board on the accreditation of courses; awarding of student membership; accreditation of student prior learning; consideration of appeals or complaints from students; provision of Continuous Professional Development (CPD); trainer training and other matters relating to training. A member of the committee is nominated to liaise between student members, the training provider(s) and the Board.

Quality Standards

STGA is a member of the World Federation of Tourist Guides Associations (WFTGA) and the Federation of European Guide Associations (FEG) and subscribes to the FEG Quality Charter and the WFTGA Code of Practice. All members and affiliates of STGA subscribe to the STGA Code of Conduct and Standards of Performance. The STGA training and accreditation programme complies with European and International Standards for the qualification and training of tourist guides, especially EN BS 15565 Tourism Services – Requirements for the provision of professional tourist guide training and qualification programmes.

Accreditation Levels

STGA accreditation complies with the Scottish Council Qualifications Framework (SCQF) as follows:

- **Blue Badge:** Level 7 (Higher National Certificate equivalent)
- **Green Badge:** Level 6 (Higher equivalent)
- **Yellow Badge:** Level 5 (Standard Grade equivalent)

Entry Requirements

STGA controls the entry of students to Blue and Green Badge Courses.

- **Blue Badge Training:** candidates will be interviewed and if successful will be invited to attend an Introductory Course, which will assess potential skills in verbal presentation, customer service and academic aptitude as well as give an insight into core knowledge, professional skills and area studies. STGA reserves the right to require specific skills e.g. language skills to meet market demand. The fee for the Introductory Course is currently £260 and is non-returnable. Successful completion of the introductory course, will allow entry to the Blue Badge Training Course and students must become Student Members of STGA. Student Members pay 50% of the full membership fee, which covers administration, incl. the services of the Training Manager; the STGA newsletter; access to the STGA web-based Members' Forum and STGA events and CPD activities.
- **Green Badge Training:** candidates are interviewed and if successful will be offered a place on the course. STGA reserves the right to require specific skills e.g. language skills to meet market demand.

Training Providers & Courses

- **Blue Badge (Level 7):** University of Edinburgh
 - Course Dates: April 2010 to May 2012
 - Fees: £5550, payable in instalments to the University of Edinburgh
- **Green Badge (Level 6):** Contact STGA for current providers and areas available
 - Course Dates & Fees: on application to be confirmed
 - Please note the accreditation of Green Badge Courses is currently under review.

TOURIST GUIDE JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSONAL SPECIFICATION

Definition of a Tourist Guide:

EN 13809 of the European Committee of Standardisation (CEN).

*A person who guides visitors in the language of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area which person normally possesses **an area-specific qualification** usually issued and/or recognised by the appropriate authority.*

This is distinct from tour manager, tour director or escort as defined by CEN as follows:
Person who manages an itinerary on behalf of the tour operator ensuring the programme is carried out as described in the tour operator's literature and sold to the traveller/consumer and who gives local practical information. Tour managers may or may not be tourist guides as well. They are not trained or licensed to work in specific areas unless they have the proper requirements or legal right, depending on the region.

In Scotland STGA is the appropriate authority under the terms of the definition and issues appropriate area-specific qualifications

Employment for Tourist Guides in Scotland: Scottish Tourist Guides (Blue and Green Badge) are self-employed, freelance guides and work for a variety of clients including tour operators and ground-handlers, conference organisers, corporate clients, public bodies and individual visitors. Blue Badge guides are qualified to guide throughout Scotland and Green Badge guides are qualified within specific regions of Scotland. STGA members and affiliates are usually self-employed and as such are responsible for generating their own income. The amount and type of work undertaken by individual members varies considerably. The majority of members travel with visitors on extended tours of a general or specialist nature. Some members do only part-time or local guiding from choice. Guides need to be flexible and some combine guiding with other work. It must be appreciated that demand for guides fluctuates markedly with the seasons and global economic changes. A benefit of membership is an entry in the STGA annual Guide List, which is distributed to an extensive UK and overseas mailing list and on the STGA website. STGA has a centralised booking service as a facility to its members and the travel trade; however we estimate most guides receive 90% of work from other sources. The majority of members develop good working relationships with various agents and in consequence obtain direct repeat bookings. STGA also markets all members through industry contacts and government organisations and attends appropriate international trade fairs and promotional activities.

Yellow Badge guides are normally trained and employed by specific companies or organisations e.g. National Trust for Scotland. STGA is responsible for the examinations and accreditation only.

Professional Qualifications for Tourist Guides in Scotland: Scottish Tourist Guide (Blue Badge), Regional Affiliate (Green Badge), Site Affiliate (Yellow Badge)

Personal Requirements: Enthusiasm, motivation, warmth, stamina, confidence, innovation, flexibility, clarity of speech and excellent communication skills.

Job Requirements (Blue and Green Badge):

- Research in-depth information for guided tours of the area of qualification
- Plan and agree itineraries and interpretation for guided tours in the area of qualification
- Interpret the area of qualification in depth
- Lead tour groups on coach, at site and on foot;

- Provide practical information, advice and assistance;
- Resolve emergencies and problems;
- Develop and maintain positive working relationships with clients, colleagues and visitors;
- Manage a small business and maintain appropriate records

Some additional words of advice

Stamina and good health are essential for tourist guides. The work of a tourist guide is very demanding. Hours can be long, e.g. starting with the arrival of the first aircraft at the airport and ending with a Scottish Evening at night, with guiding commentary and courteous customer service throughout the day. Your next assignment will involve getting up early in the morning, travelling for hours to get to the Highlands where you meet cruiseship guests for a full day excursion. Are you up for this?

It is absolutely essential that you enjoy working with people. Understanding the stresses and strains of the traveller – jet lag, lack of sleep, sickness, unfamiliar environment and language, hotel and transport problems, loss of valuables/luggage – is all part of the job of a tourist guide. The guide may be the only direct human contact for the visitor.

Competition is considerable. This particularly applies to guides who work in English only.

There are about 400 self-employed STGA Tourist Guides in Scotland and many more non-STGA Guides.

The income of Blue and Green Badge Guides is precarious. The work is seasonal, with long quiet periods in the winter, and fluctuates with world economics and politics. Furthermore such items as accident and sickness insurance, personal pension as well as National Insurance and Income Tax must be taken into account.

The Blue Badge Guide Training Course covers a lot of fascinating knowledge. However, it extends far beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge to the selection, presentation and delivery of that knowledge as well as tour management and customer service. Almost half of the course will involve the practical application of the knowledge you acquire.

SUMMARY OF STGA APPROVED COURSE CONTENT

All STGA approved training courses cover the following elements:

- **Core Knowledge**
- **Professional Skills**
- **Area-specific Studies**
- **Additional Self-Directed Study**

BLUE BADGE GUIDE TRAINING COURSE - TIMETABLE 2010 to 2012

The provisional timetable for the Blue Badge Course (2010 to 2012) is as follows.

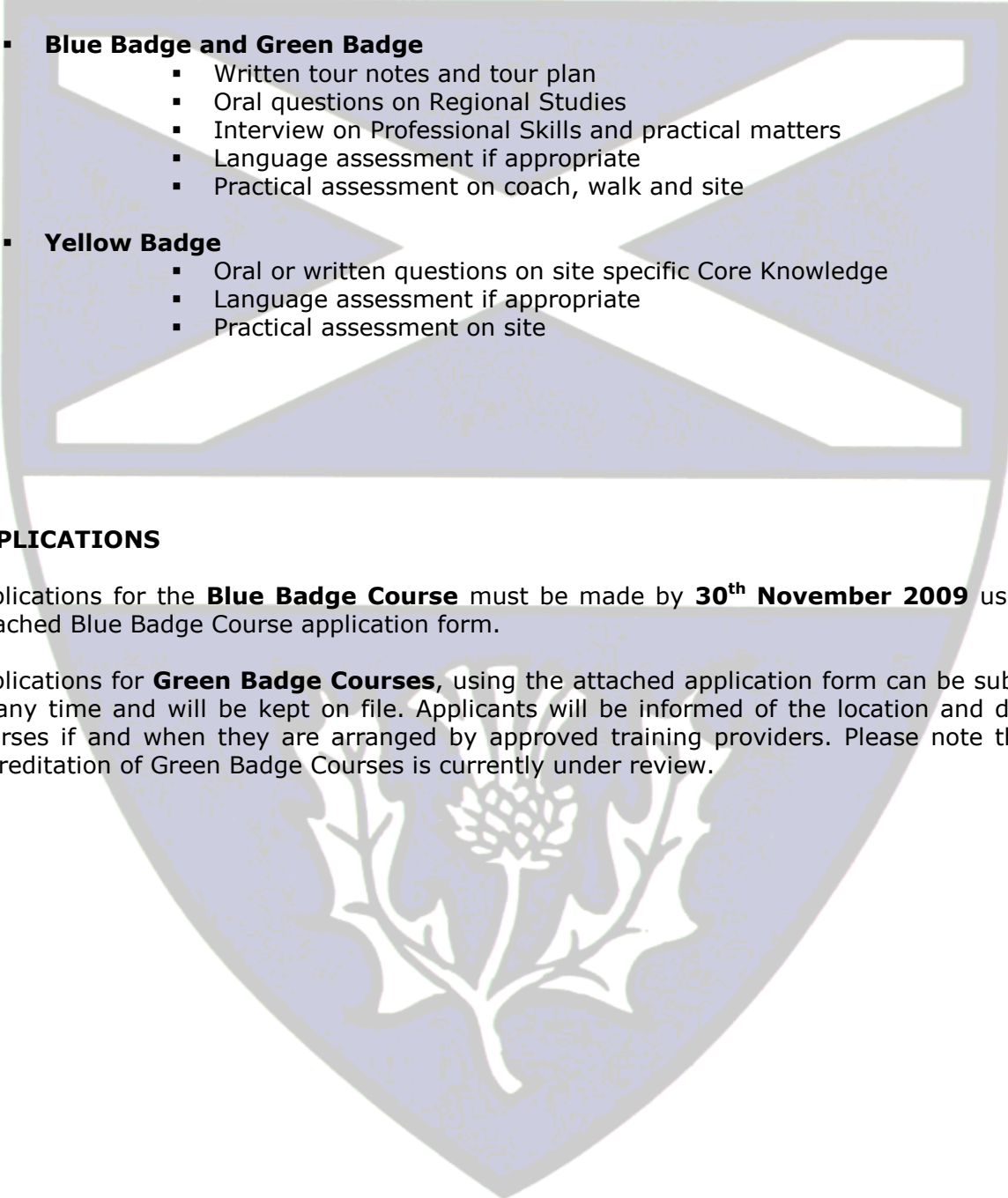
2010	
March 13 th and 14 th	Introductory Course
April 02 nd to 05 th	<i>Easter</i>
April 16 th , 17 th and 18 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills, Core Knowledge
May 14 th , 15 th and 16 th	Professional Skills, Core Knowledge
June 04 th , 05 th and 06 th	Professional Skills
June 18 th , 19 th and 20 th	Core Knowledge, Professional Skills
July 02 nd , 03 rd and 04 th	Core Knowledge, Regional Studies
July 16 th	Core Knowledge
July 17 th to 21 st	Summer School: Regional Studies
August 13 th , 14 th and 15 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills, Core Knowledge
Sept 10 th , 11 th and 12 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills, Core Knowledge
Oct 08 th , 9 th and 10 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills, Core Knowledge
Nov 13 th and 14 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills
Nov 19 th , 20 th and 21 st	Core Knowledge
Dec 11 th and 12 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills
2011	
Jan 14 th , 15 th and 16 th	Core Knowledge
Feb 05 th and 06 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills, Core Knowledge
Feb 25 th , 26 th and 27 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills, Core Knowledge
March 12 th and 13 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills
March 25 th , 26 th and 27 th	Core Knowledge, Professional Skills
April 08 th , 09 th and 10 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills, Core Knowledge
April 22 nd to 25 th	<i>Easter</i>
May 14 th and 15 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills, Core Knowledge
June 03 rd , 04 th and 05 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills, Core Knowledge
July 08 th and 09 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills, Core Knowledge
July 16 th to 21 st	Summer School: Regional Studies, Professional Skills
Sept 24 th and 25 th	Regional Studies/Professional Skills
Oct 08 th and 09 th	Regional Studies, Professional Skills, Core Knowledge
Oct 22 nd and 23 rd	Regional Studies, Professional Skills
Nov 05 th	Professional Skills
Dec 03 rd and 04 th	Core Knowledge, Professional Skills, Regional Studies
2012	
Jan 13 th , 14 th and 15 th	Regional Studies/Professional Skills
Feb 18 th	Professional Skills
April 06 th to 09 th	<i>Easter</i>
April 21 st and 22 nd	STGA Exam
April 28 th and 29 th	STGA Exam

Sessions in the above timetable take place on Friday evenings from 17.30 to 21.00, all day Saturday & Sunday and all day during the July Summer Schools. Lectures & tutorials take place in Edinburgh. Professional Skills & Regional Studies take place on location around Scotland. The programme includes tours in both the Lowlands & Highlands of mainland Scotland. Students are responsible for their own travel & accommodation although accommodation may be offered at group rates during tours. Coach transport will be provided for most tours leaving from appropriate central locations.

EXAMINATIONS

All training providers will conduct their own practical and written examinations throughout the courses as appropriate, which must be approved by STGA and which will be a pre-requisite for sitting the STGA membership examination.

STGA is responsible for the final membership examinations as follows. Examination Fees for the Blue Badge are currently in the region of £325 plus £60 per language assessment. Language assessments are based on the FEG Language Testing Policy. Examination Fees for the Green Badge are currently around £150 per person.

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- **Blue Badge and Green Badge**
 - Written tour notes and tour plan
 - Oral questions on Regional Studies
 - Interview on Professional Skills and practical matters
 - Language assessment if appropriate
 - Practical assessment on coach, walk and site
 - **Yellow Badge**
 - Oral or written questions on site specific Core Knowledge
 - Language assessment if appropriate
 - Practical assessment on site

APPLICATIONS

Applications for the **Blue Badge Course** must be made by **30th November 2009** using the attached Blue Badge Course application form.

Applications for **Green Badge Courses**, using the attached application form can be submitted at any time and will be kept on file. Applicants will be informed of the location and dates of courses if and when they are arranged by approved training providers. Please note that the accreditation of Green Badge Courses is currently under review.

STGA Detailed Training Requirements: SCQF Level 7 Blue Badge

Pre-requisites:

A depth of interest in Scotland and:-

- Evidence of academic capability, e.g. diploma and/or STGA Level 6 qualification
- AND at least one of the following
 - Foreign language fluency
 - Relevant work experience
 - Outdoor activity qualification
- IT Skills

Entry Requirements

Interview by representatives of STGA Board

Successful completion of the Introductory Course

NB: holders of STGA Level 6 qualification are exempt from the interview procedures and the Introductory Course; holders of STGA Level 5 qualification are exempt from the interview procedures but must attend the Introductory Course.

Introductory Course (100 hours)

Introduction to the Core Knowledge and Professional Skills required by a Scottish Tourist Guide
Diagnostic assessment of academic, communication and customer service skills

Students whose mother tongue is not English will be monitored for reading, writing and comprehension to ensure that full benefits can be derived from the course.

Candidates wishing to present an additional language will have the opportunity to have a level check in that language.

Course Content

- **Core Knowledge (4 modules: divided into 8 subject areas – 120 hours):**
 - 1. Physical and Natural Environment**
Geology and Geography; Natural Heritage
 - 2. Archaeology and History**
Archaeology and Pre-history; Medieval and Modern History
 - 3. Cultures of Scotland**
Art and Architecture; Literature, Music, Folklore and Customs
 - 4. Scotland's People**
Human Landscapes; Scotland and Society: Comparative Religion, Cultural Awareness, Education, Legal System, Politics, Sport and Recreation, Food and Drink
- **Professional Skills and Area Studies (4 modules – 380 hours)**
 - 1. Professional Skills for Tourist Guides**
Professional Ethics, Legal Requirements, Tourist Guide Profession, the Tourism Industry: Europe and Worldwide
 - 2. Interpretation and Practical Guiding Skills**
Landscape Interpretation, Guiding and Presentation Skills
 - 3. Area Studies: Highlands and Islands**
 - 4. Area Studies: Lowlands**
- **Additional Self-Directed Study (700 hours)**

Total minimum learning hours: 1,200 plus 100 hours for Introductory Course

Assessment

University Credits and eligibility for STGA Exam

- Written assessments
- Practical assessments on coach, on foot and on site

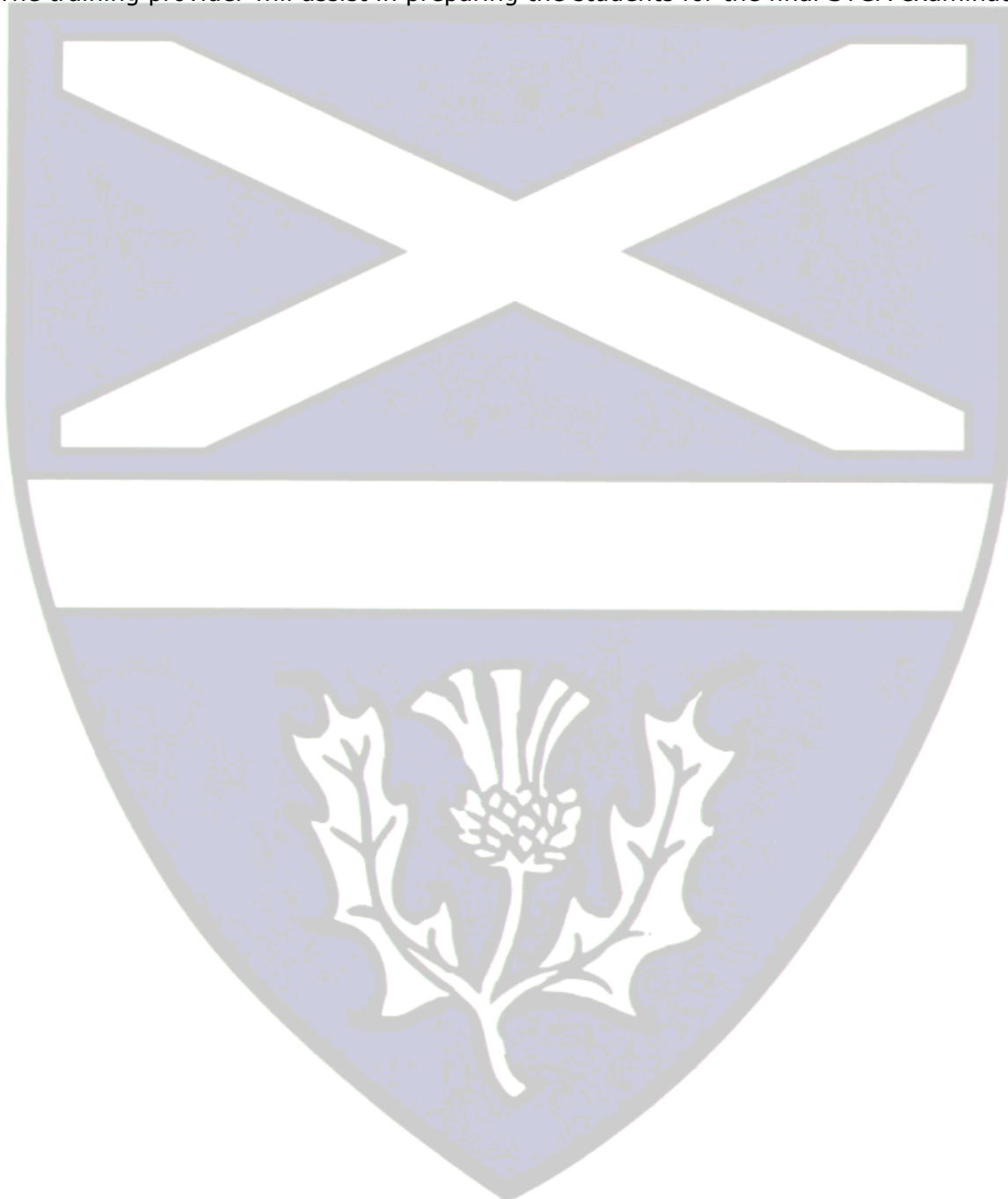
Final Membership Examination: (four days)

- Written Tour Plan

- Oral questions on Regional Core Knowledge
- Individual interview on practical matters
- Language assessment if appropriate
- Practical assessment on coach, on foot and on site

Notes:

1. Training Provider is currently the University of Edinburgh
2. Prior knowledge will be verified at the discretion of the Board of the STGA and the training provider
3. On-going assessment & examination is under the control of the training provider
4. Final STGA Membership Examination is under direct control of STGA Board of Directors
5. The training provider will assist in preparing the students for the final STGA examination.



STGA Detailed Training Requirements: Regional Affiliates SCQF Level 6 Green Badge

Pre-requisites:

A depth of interest in Scotland and:-

- Evidence of academic capability, e.g. Highers or equivalent school leaving qualification and/or STGA Level 5 qualification
- AND at least one of the following
 - Foreign language fluency
 - Relevant work experience
 - Outdoor activity qualification
- IT Skills

Guiding Areas: specifically defined regions of Scotland - currently under review

Selection Procedure

Interview by approved representatives of the STGA Board e.g. local trainers. Note holders of STGA Yellow Badge are normally exempt from the interview procedures.

Core Knowledge: (70 hours)

Background Knowledge for all of Scotland

1. Archaeology & Pre- History
2. Medieval & Modern History
3. Physical & Natural Environment
4. Art & Architecture
5. Historical Geography/Human Environment
6. Contemporary Scotland, Culture & Institutions

Professional Guiding Skills & Area Studies (170 hours)

1. Interpretation & Presentation Skills; Practical Guiding Skills; Professional Ethics
2. Business Skills; Tour Planning; Product Knowledge of Scottish Tourism; Customer Service; Health & Safety; Region Related Awareness of Scottish, UK, EU & World Issues for Tourist Guides
3. Region Specific Applied Knowledge

Additional Self-Directed Study 360 hours

Total Minimum Learning Hours: 600 hours

Final Membership Examination: (one - two days)

- Written Tour Notes & Tour Plan
- Oral questions on Regional Knowledge
- Individual interview on practical matters
- Language assessment if appropriate
- Practical assessment on coach, on foot and on site

Notes:

Training Providers will be approved by STGA

Prior knowledge will be verified at the discretion of the Board of the STGA

Final Membership Examination under direct control of STGA Board of Directors

STGA Detailed Training Requirements: Site Affiliates SCQF Level 5 Yellow Badge

Pre-requisites:

A depth of interest in Scotland and:-

- Evidence of academic capability, e.g. Standard Grade or equivalent school leaving qualification
- AND at least one of the following
 - Foreign language fluency
 - Relevant work experience
 - Outdoor activity qualification
- IT Skills

Guiding Area: specific fixed route tours of a site e.g. visitor attraction, nature reserve or fixed route town walk or coach/bus tour.

Selection

By the training provider/employer in conjunction with representatives of the STGA Board

Core Knowledge: (40 – 50 hours)

Selected from appropriate site specific information

1. Archaeology & Pre-History
2. Medieval & Modern History
3. Physical & Natural Environment
4. Art & Architecture
5. Historical Geography/Human Landscapes
6. Contemporary Scotland, Culture & Institutions

Professional Guiding Skills & Area Studies (30-40 hours)

1. Interpretation & Presentation Skills; Practical Guiding Skills; Professional Ethics
2. Site Specific Product Knowledge; Customer Service; Health & Safety; Site Related Awareness of Scottish, UK and EU Issues for Tourist Guides
3. Site Specific Applied Knowledge

Additional Self-Directed Study 130 hours

Total Minimum Nominal Learning Hours: 200hours

Final Membership Examination: (one day)

- Oral or Written questions on Site specific Core Knowledge
- Language assessment if appropriate
- Practical site assessment

Notes:

Provider: An approved provider or in-house training course

Prior knowledge will be accredited at the discretion of the Board of the STGA

Final Membership Examination under direct control of STGA Board of Directors

STGA APPLICATION FORM
(Blue Badge – all Scotland)

Date of Application: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ POSTCODE _____

TEL NO: _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

NATIONALITY: _____ NATIVE LANGUAGE/S: _____

PRE-REQUISITES CLAIMED

Do **not** send copies of certificates or diplomas. These will be verified at interview should you be selected.

School leaving certificates

Tertiary/Post school education/qualifications

Foreign language(s) you plan to guide in (include English if this is not your native language)

Relevant work experience: _____

Outdoor pursuits: _____

Other interests relevant to work as a tourist guide

Signature _____ Date _____

STGA APPLICATION FORM
(Green Badge)

Date of Application: _____

Region for qualification – Please tick:

Inner Hebrides ; Outer Hebrides ; Orkney ; Shetland - others currently under review

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ **POSTCODE** _____

TEL NO: _____ **E-MAIL ADDRESS:** _____

NATIONALITY: _____ **NATIVE LANGUAGE/S:** _____

PRE-REQUISITES CLAIMED

Do **not** send copies of certificates or diplomas. These will be verified at interview should you be selected.

School leaving certificates

Tertiary/Post school education/qualifications

Foreign language(s) you plan to guide in (include English if this is not your native language)

Relevant work experience: _____

Outdoor pursuits: _____

Other interests relevant to work as a tourist guide

Signature _____ Date _____

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS
NOTES FOR COMPLETION OF APPLICATION FORM

PRE-REQUISITES CLAIMED

* ***Due to the nature of the work, applicants are expected to be individuals who enjoy good health.***

* ***School leaving certificates*** - a brief summary of qualifications gained.

* ***Tertiary/post school education*** may be a degree, diploma or other post school qualification that demonstrates ability to study at University level or other relevant qualifications

* ***Foreign language fluency*** will be tested at the Introductory Course or interview and must be at the level of General Competence judged against a checklist of:

- accent;
- fluency;
- grammar;
- comprehension;
- delivery;
- clarity

* ***Relevant work experience*** should include working with people, ideally in a leadership role, with experience of speaking to groups, and in a position of responsibility.

* ***Outdoor pursuits*** - examples could include mountain leadership, yacht-master, ski instructor.

* Other ***interests*** - especially to show a love of Scotland and involvement with other people.

*

Please submit your completed application form to:

The Training Manager, STGA, Norie's House, 18b Broad Street, Stirling, FK8 1EF.
or by e-mail to info@stga.co.uk