



tourism  
northernireland

## OFFERING TOURIST ACCOMMODATION IN NI – FACT SHEET

Operating a tourist accommodation business can be a very rewarding experience, but there are many things you should consider before starting, including important legal considerations. The Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992 stipulates that all tourist accommodation providers must receive certification from Tourism NI before they are allowed to begin operating to ensure minimum standards are met.

### ***Accommodation Categories – Build Your Business***

There are currently 8 recognised accommodation categories that require certification by Tourism NI. Find out more on our website: [What are the different accommodation categories? \(tourismni.com\)](https://www.tourismni.com/what-are-the-different-accommodation-categories/)

- Hotel
- Guest House
- B&B
- Guest Accommodation
- Self-Catering (*including the sub-letting of caravans/mobile homes*)
- Hostel
- Bunk House
- Campus Accommodation

### ***Glamping***

Depending on the facilities provided within the glamping accommodation, Tourism NI Certification may be required. A number of glamping sites in NI are already certified, and Quality Graded, under categories such as [Guest Accommodation](#) (the provision of ensuite accommodation) or [Self Catering](#) (the provision of fully self-contained sleeping accommodation with living and dining space and fully equipped kitchen facilities). If you are unsure if your accommodation requires certification by Tourism NI, please email [QA@tourismni.com](mailto:QA@tourismni.com) to discuss your accommodation facilities specifically or more information is available on our [accommodation categories here](#) which may assist you.

**It is illegal to offer tourist accommodation in Northern Ireland without a certificate from Tourism NI.**

### **Key Benefits of Tourism NI Certification**

- While certification is mandatory, it is ultimately a positive experience
- Our Certification Officers work with tourist accommodation providers to make sure that their accommodation is safe, clean, legal and fully equipped for guests
- They will share important advice, such as the need for Fire Risk Assessments and Public Liability Insurance, promoting your property and free resources you can avail of
- Properties are inspected every four years and costs are as low as £40 for a self-catering property
- Certification drives standards and helps to improve our reputation as a destination
- Certified accommodation can avail of a free listing on our consumer website [Discover Northern Ireland](#), which receives 2.4 million visitors each year
- Knowing total accommodation stock numbers has been a great help in bidding for major events such as the 2014 Giro d'Italia and the 148<sup>th</sup> Open in 2019 – helping to drive revenues for accommodation providers

### **Tourism NI's Quality Grading Scheme**

The next step of the journey is to join the Quality Grading Scheme. Tourism NI works in partnership with our counterparts in Scotland, England, Wales and The AA to ensure consistent standards throughout the UK. Northern Ireland is a new destination for many people, and visitors understand what a star grade represents, so this provides consistency in expectations and helps attract new business to Northern Ireland. Quality Grading assessments take place once a year and Tourism NI works closely with operators to create a world-class standard of accommodation.

### **Useful Links and Resources**

Further in depth information on certification, accommodation categories and setting up can be found on our website: [Getting started in Accommodation - What do you need to consider? \(tourismni.com\)](#)

If you are ready to certify your property, you can apply online here: [Tourism Northern Ireland \(tourismni.com\)](#)

All certified accommodation is given the option to appear, at no extra cost, on our consumer website: <http://www.discovernorthernireland.com>. Details on how to onboard/sign-up to the Business Hub and how to get your property listed on Discover NI are available from [here](#)

Certified members can also join the Quality Grading Scheme [Tourist Accommodation Quality Grading Scheme \(tourismni.com\)](#), pay an outstanding invoice or apply for a change of statutory category via Tourism NI Forms Portal [here](#)

If you have any queries regarding certification of tourist accommodation or would like to talk through your plans with one of our team, please contact Tourism NI directly via [qa@tourismni.com](mailto:qa@tourismni.com)