



AITO CODE OF BUSINESS PRACTICE

OUR MISSION

To be the most successful and highly regarded travel industry representative body in the UK.

OUR ROLE

AITO is the association for specialist holiday companies. Our member companies, usually owner-managed, strive to create holidays with high levels of professionalism and a shared concern for quality and personal service. The Association promotes the unique range of its members' holidays and encourages the highest standards in all aspects of tour operating. It provides services for its members and represents their interest to Government, industry and the media.

AGREEMENT TO FOLLOW THE AITO CODE OF BUSINESS PRACTICE

The primary aim of the Code of Business Practice is to encourage the pursuit of excellence by members of the Association. The secondary aim is to encourage members to promote the Association and its values whenever possible.

In signing an application for membership or an annual membership renewal form you are agreeing to follow the Code of Business Practice as outlined below, on behalf of your company.

THE CODE OF BUSINESS PRACTICE

1. Adherence to the law

All members must adhere to the terms of current legislation and act within the law. They should be particularly aware of all legislation relating to the travel industry. The Association undertakes to make every effort to bring changes of relevant legislation to the notice of members.

2. Maintaining the reputation of the Association

Members will not do anything that will bring the Association or its members into disrepute.

3. The AITO Quality Charter

The AITO Quality Charter is the Association's consumer promise and forms part of this code. All members must adhere to its terms. The AITO Quality Charter must appear in full and at a reasonable size, in all members' brochures and websites. Other marketing literature (print or electronic) should display the AITO Quality Charter or the shorter AITO Quality Statement where appropriate.

4. Consumer financial protection

An AITO member is required to arrange financial protection for all holidays and other arrangements (including accommodation only) booked by customers with the member under the AITO logo. This financial protection applies to customers who are resident in the UK at the time of booking and to most overseas customers who have booked directly with the member. In doing so, the member must comply with UK government regulations.

All members must display their bonding arrangements prominently in all promotional materials. Evidence of the member's bonding arrangements must be provided to the AITO office on an annual basis or at any time that the arrangements are changed during the year.

5. Promotional materials

All members' promotional materials, both printed and electronic, should be accurate and clear. Members should aspire to achieve the highest standards of accuracy and presentation within the travel industry.

A copy of each new brochure or major promotional publication must be submitted to the AITO office as soon as they are published. Details (address/URL) of each website created by the member must be submitted to the AITO office as soon as they are created and listed on the annual renewal form.

6. Display and use of the AITO logo

The AITO logo is available for members' use to support and endorse the promotion of their holiday products. The Association wishes to establish and maintain the logo as the kitemark of quality in the travel industry. It is in the interest of the Association and its members that the logo is seen widely and often.

The AITO logo must appear in all promotional material and on standard stationery (including letterheads and booking forms) at a reasonable size. In a brochure the logo must appear on the front or back cover, or on pages 2 or 3. The AITO logo must also appear in a prominent position on a member's website. All advertisements must include the AITO logo (preferred) or its acronym according to the size of advertisement.

The AITO logo should neither be used in any way that is misleading, nor to support any products that do not form part of approved AITO membership.

7. Customer Service

Customers should receive the best possible standards of service from AITO members. This should be reflected in the speed with which telephones and correspondence are answered, in the courtesy extended to customers, in the swift dispatch of information, in rapid booking confirmation, in clear invoicing and travel documentation and in high standards of service from suppliers, employees and representatives both abroad and in the UK.

8. Customer Complaints and the Dispute Settlement Service

Any complaints received from customers by members should be responded to with speed and courtesy. Should a member be unable to resolve a dispute with a customer and should the customer elect to refer the matter to independent arbitration, both parties will be required to abide by the ruling of the Mediator. Members must comply fully with the conditions of the arbitration company. Full details are available on the Membership website.

9. Relations with Staff and Suppliers

AITO members should be committed to an open and ethical policy towards both suppliers and employees, and to maintaining a well-trained and knowledgeable workforce.

10. Public Liability

All AITO members must hold public liability insurance to cover all aspects of their tour operation, including the operation of road vehicles, aircraft and boats where relevant, with a minimum cover of £2 million. A copy of the insurance certificate must accompany each member's annual application to renew AITO membership and be produced at any time requested by the Association.