



**SAPOA**

SOUTH AFRICAN PROPERTY  
OWNERS ASSOCIATION

# **SAPOA OFFICE GRADING DEFINITIONS**





## **Grade: P**

Top quality, modern space. Prime buildings are often considered iconic and a flagship in its market. Essential features include high security- both manned and electronic, the latest generation of building services, ample parking and a prestigious lobby finish. High ceiling heights, flexible floorplates and column spacing. To be considered Prime-grade, an Office should be 4-star Green Certified or in the absence of a formal rating include equivalent environmental initiatives which could include zoned lighting, energy-efficient building services and systems, water-efficient fixtures, rainwater harvesting, water-wise landscaping, and low VOC interior finishes.

## **Grade A**

High quality properties providing good access and are professionally managed with continued above average maintenance. High quality modern finishes, air conditioning, adequate on-site parking. Clearly articulated entrance, lobby with clear circulation. High ceiling heights, flexible floorplates likely.





## **Grade: B**

Generally older buildings, but accommodation and finishes are close to modern standards because of refurbishments and renovation from time to time. Air conditioning and on-site parking or bays dedicated to the building is essential. Minimum ceiling height, less flexible floorplates. Modest landscaping with minimal exterior space.

## **Grade: C**

Buildings typically in fair condition but with older style finishes, services and building systems. Purely functional space with infrastructure generally limited. May or may not be air-conditioned or have on-site parking. Minimal or no lobby, landscaping or exterior space. Unarticulated entrance.



## Notes:

1. It is assumed that buildings comply or meet certain key standards, such as:

- Safety and Health standards are met, including access for persons with disabilities (preferably exceeded)
- Insurance - ability to insure all normal aspects of structure
- Subterranean - longevity of underlying geographical factors - no faults, instability, flood line encroachment etc. are evident
- Town planning zoning and by-law provisions



2. Care should be taken in the interpretation of subjective adjectives used - these include the use of words such as:

- 'adequate'
- 'poor'
- 'quality'
- 'reasonable'

3. As it is anticipated that the change-over will occur gradually, SAPOA should differentiate between 'new ' and 'old' grading definitions, i.e. brokers involved with the vacancy panels I schedules will be required to indicate whether or not buildings have been graded according to the new system.





4. Particularly in the area of technology, rapid changes tend to occur, which may necessitate the employ of broader terms, or else updates to specifications/terms on a regular basis.
5. By owner/manager consent, examples of buildings under the various grades could included as a means of further illustration.
6. The above gradings and definitions are subject to on going review and comment from the industry and will be re-issued on an annual basis.
7. Due cognizance should be given that there are a number of office building typologies and formats that make the application of certain criteria more or less applicable (e.g. buildings in park settings compared to high rise urban environments)

**Annexure** Guidelines for the evaluation of grade  
*80-90% of these criteria should be satisfied across each category*

## **GRADE:P**

Services - Security comprising high grade guards, patrol dogs, multiple positions, maintenance services of the highest calibre.

Amenities, Finishes & Quality - Base finishes of the highest spec and appearance; fast, luxurious and hi-tech elevators; wide stairwells with luxurious flooring & finishes permitting natural light; state of the art lobby & reception service, general floor plate permitting high degree of space planning flexibility; efficient natural light penetration, state of the art permitting a high degree of control & environmental flexibility, landscaping & greening in a functional & integrated design, many support amenities/services either available on site or as part of a functional complex, fully fitted kitchen/catering facilities for individual tenant use.





Parking - High ratio of basement parking

Age/Upgrading - New buildings, well maintained and upgraded at intervals of around five years, generally less than 10 years old.

Public Environment - Street/foyer interface with visible security, pristine environment; additional public management initiative with visible benefits; direct involvement in Improvement District/private services, with active implementation, best visibility/exposure area, vehicular access premised on clear, fast at all times, multiple ingress and egress points.

Technology & Communication - Full central control UPS with flexible points, vertical (high rise) and horizontal communication spaces sized for future generations, dedicated (or potential) individual patch rooms, a high capacity and flexible telephone network system, high spec and certified fibre optical backbone - fully 'intelligent' building, a CCTV system incorporating Digital camera/recording, sensors (heat/motion), event driven (chip technology) Access Control premised.





## **Annexure** Guidelines for the evaluation of gr *80-90% of these criteria should be satisfied across each ca*

### **GRADE: A**

Services - Security comprising graded guards at entry points, with patrols and a guard monitoring system, quality maintenance services

Amenities, Finishes & Quality - High material spec, functional design base finishes, fast elevators, high spec stairwells, lobby & reception of quality finishes/appearance & service, general floor plate permitting design flexibility, good balance between light and environment control, Central Environmental Control premised on typical building management system v quality split system incorporated, attractive and functional landscaping & greening or attra building exteriors: limited on site amenities but close at hand and/ in safe walking and driv proximity, Kitchen/ catering facilities available individually or on shared basis.



Parking - Adequate parking on site- mostly shaded or covered

Age/Upgrading - Generally 10-30 years old and major renovation or upgrade after 15 years

Public Environment - Safe, attractive and clean street/foyer interface, surrounding public environment comprising good infrastructure, Improvement District/Private services involved or plans; good exposure and visibility; vehicular access only occasionally hindered, locality good access to freeways.

Technology & Communication - Provision for individual UPS TI vertical (high rise) and horizontal communication spaces with spare capacity above the average requirement; Patch rooms available on every floor; telephone network compatible with high spec system, cabling & network infrastructure premised on Cat5e std plus, plug & play /internet ready, CCTV perimeter large coverage with multiple recording, Online Access Control system with proximity reader and unique tags.





## **Annexure** Guidelines for the evaluation of gr *80-90% of these criteria should be satisfied across each ca*

### **GRADE: B**

Services - Security comprising graded guards at entry points, with patrols and a guard monitoring system, quality maintenance services

Amenities, Finishes & Quality - Base finishes of functional/pleasant design & compliant specifications, comfortable elevators in working order, stairwells permitting comfortable & passage, pleasant & functional central lobby/reception, general floor plate allowing some flexibility, some/adequate natural lighting, Central Environmental Control based on electro pneumatic system with limited flexibility, well functioning a/c units and natural ventilation permitted; basic landscaping & greening.



Parking - Adequate parking available on & off-site - mostly open or shade cloth

Age/Upgrading - Any age- adequately upgraded/refurbished to modern standards

Public Environment - Safe and clean street/foyer interface, visible maintenance of infrastructure, Vehicular access generally unhindered except at peak times.

Technology & Communication - Clean power with back-up generators only to critical areas, adequate communication spaces for current demand, patch rooms adequately sized with some capacity, basic 3X3 grid & sufficient cabling for telephone network flexibility, cabling network infrastructure based on lower technology/Certified cat 5,2 RJ45's/point, basic CCTV with a few coverage points and standard to low/or no recording capacity; Access Control on 3-6 levels





## **Annexure** Guidelines for the evaluation of gr *80-90% of these criteria should be satisfied across each ca*

### **GRADE: C**

Services - Security comprising unqualified/unregistered security personnel

Amenities, Finishes & Quality - General finishes are dated/unattractive/worn & of poorer s  
slow or old elevators; narrow/dark stairwells; poorer quality lobby and limited reception ser  
poor flexibility of general floor plate; low natural lighting; inflexible pneumatic/old tech  
environmental control, poor natural ventilation, limited and poorly maintained  
vegetation/greening, amenities not at hand.

Parking - Inadequate but safe parking, generally offsite

Age/Upgrading - Generally older buildings, visibly ageing and/or no sign of upgrading

Public Environment - Poor street/foyer interface and surrounding public environment; relatively poor exposure & access; general delays and hindrances for vehicular access and/or one access point.

Technology & Communication - Back-up generator service may be poor; communication spaces may be adequate but inflexible for future demand; telephone network system offering low flexibility/capacity; cabling & network infrastructure of low flexibility; basic CCT permitting low coverage and no recording capacity, Access Control generally an offline system and only on entry Points.