

Unit 13: Preparation for Employment in the Aviation Industry

Unit code:	Y/504/2287
QCF Level 3:	BTEC Nationals
Credit value:	5
Guided learning hours:	32

● Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is to give learners knowledge of employment opportunities in the aviation industry and the necessary skills to plan for their own career and participate in the application process.

● Unit introduction

Working in the aviation industry can be a challenging and rewarding career choice with workplaces such as airports providing a bustling and demanding environment. Jobs in the aviation industry are often perceived as 'dream jobs' and therefore competition can be fierce. By studying this unit learners will investigate the wide variety of jobs and careers available in different sectors of the aviation industry and will gain a realistic insight into the requirements of employers.

The transportation of millions of passengers every day requires a high level of organisation and technical skill; employees that are excellent communicators, can demonstrate highly developed interpersonal skills, are flexible and can meet specific criteria are highly sought after by employers. Learners will reflect on their own skills and personal attributes to develop an action plan for successfully gaining employment in aviation.

Learners will apply for a job with the aim of making a shortlist and impressing employers with their level of presentation and communication. The unit will introduce learners to the different types of interview and they will practise the required techniques. An important evaluation phase will take place at the end of the unit to guide learners in their own journey into employment.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Know about employment opportunities in the aviation industry
- 2 Be able to plan for employment in the aviation industry
- 3 Be able to apply for employment in the aviation industry.

Unit content

1 Know about employment opportunities in the aviation industry

Employment opportunities:

- airlines, e.g. reservation agents, ground operations, cabin crew, crew scheduling, flight crew, marketing, customer service, ticket desk agent, other corporate functions
- airport operators, e.g. customer service agent, information assistant, security agent, maintenance, terminal control, public relations (PR), corporate support
- ground handling agent, e.g. passenger service agent, ramp agent, dispatcher, baggage handler
- air traffic services
- security agencies, e.g. security agent
- general aviation (GA), e.g. pilot, engineer, cabin crew
- cargo operations, e.g. call centre agent, flight planner, cargo agent
- UK Border Agency, e.g. immigration officer
- progression opportunities within each area of employment, e.g. entry level jobs, promotion, training, further and higher education, graduate training schemes
- apprenticeship schemes
- pre-employment education and training, e.g. further education courses, higher education

Job roles:

- role, e.g. position, purpose
- responsibilities, e.g. duties, service provision, maintaining standards
- factors to consider, e.g. seasonality, working hours, type of contract, level of pay, employee benefits

Entry requirements for aviation employment:

- qualifications
- skills
- personal attributes
- experience
- specific requirements, e.g. location, Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks, driving licence, minimum age, height, medical requirements

2 Be able to plan for employment in the aviation industry

Skills audit:

- specific skills, e.g. communication, customer service, self-management, organisation, teamwork, ICT, timekeeping
- level of skill, e.g. limited, well established
- how skills have been acquired, e.g. through paid work, through voluntary work
- transferrable skills to aviation employment
- qualifications
- areas for skills development

Personal attributes:

- specific attributes appropriate for aviation job roles, e.g. honesty, integrity, reliability, initiative, confidence
- opinions of others, e.g. peers, careers staff, tutors, managers/supervisors
- areas for personal development

Action plan:

- identification of desired job roles
- setting SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) objectives, e.g. produce a CV to a professional standard, develop presentation skills, gain experience, gain qualifications
- actions required to achieve objectives
- resources and support available to aid achievement of objectives, e.g. enrichment programmes, careers centre, tutor, recruitment agencies and websites

3 Be able to apply for employment in the aviation industry

Documentation:

- letter of application
- curriculum vitae (CV)
- completion of application forms (online and paper based), e.g. black ink, answer all questions
- personal statement

Participate in an interview situation, for example:

- telephone screening, e.g. pre-application, post-application
- group interview, e.g. for cabin crew, individual introductions, assessments, group activities, trying uniform, panel interview
- open-day events
- individual interview, e.g. for passenger service agent, customer service agent, ramp agent

Interview skills:

- first impression, e.g. greeting, appearance, punctuality
- advance preparation, e.g. question and answer, company research
- company knowledge, e.g. relevant to position applied for, current issues, company history
- project a positive image throughout interview, e.g. body language, confidence
- communication skills, e.g. active listening, speaking clearly
- personal presentation, e.g. appropriate dress and grooming
- respond to and ask questions
- tests, e.g. aviation geography, psychometric testing, general knowledge, numeracy, literacy, ICT

Evaluation:

- self-evaluation
- based on feedback, e.g. peer, assessor, company personnel
- strengths, weaknesses and areas for development

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 Outline employment opportunities in the aviation industry	M1 Match own skills and attributes to specific aviation job roles	D1 Discuss further action required to gain employment in aviation following participation in the application process
P2 Define aviation job roles and responsibilities		
P3 Review entry requirements for aviation employment		
P4 Produce a personal skills audit		
P5 Analyse personal attributes for aviation employment		
P6 Develop an action plan for progression into aviation employment	M2 Perform to aviation industry standards throughout the application and interview process for an aviation job from development of action plan to evaluation of own performance	
P7 Complete documentation as part of the application process for employment in aviation		
P8 Participate in different interviews for aviation employment [EP]		
P9 Evaluate own performance during the application process [RL]		

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Delivery of this unit will support learners in investigating the diverse range of job opportunities within aviation and in preparing to apply for selected jobs. It is recommended that this unit is delivered during the final year of study by which time learners will have a good appreciation of the demands of working in the industry and the nature of employment opportunities. Competition is high for sought after jobs and delivery must emphasise the importance of preparation, planning, and the development of knowledge and skills prior to applying. This unit relates well to the use of tutorial support and it is recommended that action plans are purposeful and relevant to the learner at the time of studying the unit.

As a starting point learners could work in groups to research different employment opportunities within aviation and exchange findings with the class in the form of a job conference. This will engage learners in discussing the range of opportunities available. Job advertisements found on company websites, trade press and recruitment websites are necessary for learners to build up an accurate picture of the different job roles and the entry requirements. At this level, learners should be encouraged to investigate the roles in terms of their purpose and function within the organisation. The entry requirements for aviation employment can be very specific and employers often require a minimum amount of experience. Learners may identify that further experience and qualifications are required for selected jobs and tutors will be required to provide guidance on this. Tutors should encourage learners to focus on matching themselves to the different job opportunities from the start of the unit to support them in achieving the merit and distinction grades.

Tutors will need to give learners guidance on the purpose of a skills audit and emphasise the importance of this being honest and a useful starting point for career planning and preparation. Delivery should guide learners on each of the elements to be included and learners should be encouraged to focus on skills they have acquired and not tasks that they have carried out. It may be useful at this stage for learners to start compiling a CV so that they can collate their experiences and skills gained so far. Extension activities should guide learners in matching their skills to selected jobs in aviation and this could be linked to ongoing tutorial sessions.

Class discussions could identify the personal attributes looked for by aviation employers and learners could produce a display as a starting point for P5. Tutors will need to create opportunities for learners to consult others to make an informed analysis of their own attributes and individual tutorials would be a good starting point. At this stage in the unit learners would benefit from a guest speaker from an aviation organisation to give advice and guidance on presenting themselves for employment. Learners should also be made aware that many application forms and interview questions are designed to seek out the desired attributes.

Discussion of skills audits and attributes should naturally lead onto learners identifying areas that require further development and this should form the basis for action planning. Delivery must explore aviation standards for gaining employment and learners should be guided to identify success criteria. Action planning should be a purposeful exercise and learners should be encouraged to break down their objectives into realistic actions that can be carried out.

For example, becoming a confident communicator can be achieved in several ways such as gaining customer facing experience either in a formal position or within the learner's own centre, taking the lead in class activities, and giving presentations.

Learners should be given examples of action plans and, if necessary, tutors should produce an exemplar template. Tutorials can greatly assist in supporting learners to follow their plans.

Class discussions should identify criteria for presenting a professional image throughout the application process including CV and letter writing, application forms and personal statements. Good use should be made of learner work relating to entry requirements, skills audits and analysis of attributes when completing

each of the documents to ensure that the 'applicants' can demonstrate that they are well matched to the job requirements. Examples of both good and poor quality application forms could be reviewed and compared to aid this process. The careers office can help greatly in providing guidance on style, templates and content for the required documentation, although tutors should emphasise that each organisation may state specific requirements for application documentation, for example word and page limits. Tutors should explain the process of shortlisting from an organisational point of view and input from staff from the HR department within the centre could enhance this delivery.

Creating a professional first impression and sustaining this throughout the interview is key to being successful. Class activities should explore the full range of interview techniques aviation organisations use and tutor input must focus in detail on face-to-face interviews. Learners could produce flow charts of the interview processes and the standards required at each step in order to be successful.

Realistic scenarios are required for learners to practise their interview skills and peer groups can be useful for observing practice interviews. Learners should have opportunities to practise giving timed presentations, participating in group activities where feedback is given and also in role-play interviews. Delivery should cover the full range of skills and tutors must stay up to date with current industry practice. Examples of tests should be relevant to the job roles and can include numeracy, problem solving, aviation geography as well as personality tests. To support learners in evaluating their performances, video recorded evidence would be particularly useful; it is recommended that staff unknown to learners, such as from the careers office, are also present during the interviews to make the process more realistic and to provide useful feedback.

Following the interview processes, tutors will need to explain the purpose and importance of evaluating performance. Time will need to be allocated for learners to receive feedback from others in order to inform their evaluation. Learners should also be encouraged to consider their performance against industry standards and against their action plan and to review their job choice, this will support them in achieving the higher grades.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way of planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Class discussion of different employment opportunities, research tasks followed by class job conference to share information. Tutor input to define job roles within organisations and research tasks to identify entry requirements for selected jobs ready to carry out review.
<p>Preparation for assignment</p> <p>Assignment 1: Careers in Aviation (P1, P2, P3)</p> <p>Feedback on assignment</p>
Introduction to skills auditing, collate experiences and qualifications to date. Class discussion and display to explore the personal attributes required by aviation employers. Guest speaker from an aviation organisation to discuss the desired skills and attributes. Learners to consult others before starting an analysis of personal attributes.
<p>Preparation for assignment</p> <p>Assignment 2: Part A: Career Preparation (P4, P5, M1)</p> <p>Feedback on assignment</p>

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment

Group and individual tutorials to discuss skills audits and analysis of attributes in order to inform action plans. Tutor input to explain the structure of action plans, the use of SMART objectives and how to review plans.

Preparation for assignment

Assignment 3: Part B: Career Preparation (P6, partial M2)

Further evidence for M2 will be generated in Assignment 4.

Feedback on assignment

Discussions of aviation industry standards and success criteria for application documentation and interview skills. Practise all interview skills and ongoing evaluation leading up to assessment.

Preparation for assignment

Assignment 4: Time for Take Off! (P7, P8, P9, partial M2, D1)

Feedback on assignment

Assessment

Suitable methods of assessment for this unit could include a guide to employment opportunities and learners could produce a career journal in which they can collate research, develop the required documentation and reflect on their own personal development throughout the unit. The merit and distinction criteria expand the pass criteria and additional tasks should not need to be set. To achieve the higher grades learner work will need to show progression in knowledge and abilities from the pass level.

P1 – P2 – P3 – P4 – P5 – M1

P1 requires learners to produce an outline of the different opportunities for each of the sectors listed in the unit content. Progression within each section should be outlined, for example within ground handling which jobs are entry level and which jobs require further experience and training. The outline for P1 must also include education and training opportunities, for example apprenticeships, pre-employment further education courses.

For P2, learners are required to define job roles and responsibilities for a minimum of three specific jobs within aviation; this should include a concise definition of the role, responsibilities and factors to consider relating to the role. At this level, learners should be able to define the role in terms of its purpose and function within the organisation.

For P3, learners must review the entry requirements for a minimum of three specific jobs within aviation and this must cover all of the required unit content listed. This can be for the same jobs or different jobs to those covered in P2.

For P4, learners must produce their own skills audit that includes all the listed unit content, i.e. specific skills held and the level of these skills, how the skills have been acquired, which skills are transferrable to aviation employment, qualifications held and areas for development of further skills.

For P5, learners are required to analyse their own personal attributes for aviation employment. This must demonstrate that they have questioned their personal attributes in line with recognised industry requirements and the analysis should be supported by opinions gained from others such as tutors, peers, careers staff and employers.

For M1, learners should match their skills and attributes identified in P4 and P5 to specific job roles. This should include a minimum of two job roles and they should be the same jobs as for P2 and P3. Learners should develop their work at the pass level as M1 is an expansion of P1 to P5. An appropriate assessment method could be either a real or simulated tutorial where the learner verbally matches their skills and attributes to the two jobs or the learner could extend their written work within a career journal.

P6 – P7 – P8 – P9 – M2

P6 should be a realistic plan of action that shows clearly how the learner aims to progress into aviation employment. All of the required unit content should be included, i.e. identify desired job roles, set SMART objectives, state the actions required to achieve each objective and the resources and support available to aid achievement.

For P7, the evidence must include a covering letter, CV and an application form. The application form should be aligned with those currently used by organisations and, if possible, real documentation should be used. Within either the application form or CV a personal statement is required that is related to the job being applied for. At pass level, all documentation must be completed accurately, i.e. all sections of application forms are completed and in black ink, the letter must include contact details and the date. Where learners complete online application forms, printouts or screenshots must be provided as evidence.

For P8, evidence of participation in a minimum of two interviews, including a face-to-face interview, must be provided. Detailed observation records are required that specify how the learner has demonstrated the interview skills. Each skill must be demonstrated across the entirety of the evidence. The evidence for group interviews must be supported by activities, task sheets, presentation notes etc. The evidence for individual interviews must be supported by a record of questions and responses. Video recordings and photographs would also be useful as supporting evidence.

The evaluation for P9 must link clearly to the evidence and feedback for P7 and P8. Learners must evaluate their performance in terms of strengths and areas that could have been improved.

M2 is an expansion of the P6 to P9 criteria and learner work should show development of the pass level work in performing to aviation industry standards, from action planning through to evaluating their performance.

To achieve M2, learners must demonstrate that they have developed a useful and focused action plan that will support them in meeting their objectives. Actions identified by the learner should demonstrate that they are working towards meeting aviation industry standards, for example becoming a confident communicator, smartly presented, gaining customer service experience, developing aviation knowledge. Assessors will need to provide detailed feedback that states how the action plan is developmentally appropriate for the learner and why they consider it to be suitable for gaining employment in aviation.

Learners must demonstrate aviation industry standards of presentation throughout their application documentation and be likely to make a shortlist for an interview; therefore, the application documents should be refined in appearance, and communicate the required information clearly. Learners should demonstrate that they have performed to aviation industry standards during the interview and be likely to have been successful in gaining employment through this process. For M2, the standard of the evaluation should show progression from the pass level and will need to be specific, and could state the value of any preparation and planning that was either carried out or lacking and how this impacted on their performance.

D1

D1 requires learners to reflect on the entire unit. Assessment could take place through either a real or simulated tutorial session where learners are required to prepare for a discussion. This form of assessment must be evidenced through a detailed observation record and could be supplemented by printouts of tutorial records.

Following on from M1 and M2, learners should take into account their skills, attributes, action plan, interview performances and evaluation and discuss further action to be taken in order to be successful in gaining employment. They should be able to show that they can link their performance and evaluation back to their

skills audit and action plan. The discussion should relate to opportunities within different sectors of the industry to those already researched, specific entry requirements and the possibilities of continuing with education or seeking apprenticeships. Actions could, for example, relate to further skills development or to actively seeking and applying for real aviation jobs. Learners could revise their action plan following their performance as a basis for a discussion.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, P2, P3	Assignment 1: Careers in Aviation	Working for an airport operator to produce materials for a careers exhibition.	Guide to the different career opportunities within aviation
P4, P5, M1, P6, partial M2	Assignment 2: Career Preparation Part A and Part B	Personal preparation for own career.	Personal Career Journal: Skills audit and analysis of personal attributes Action plan
P7, P8, P9, partial M2, D1	Assignment 3: Time for Take Off!	Making the shortlist and taking part in interviews for aviation jobs.	Practical skills producing a CV and letter of application, application forms, participating in two different job interviews Evaluation of performance including feedback from others Discussion of further actions for the future

Links to other BTEC units

This unit forms part of the BTEC aviation sector suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the aviation suite.

Key

* indicates unit from the *Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Aviation Operations on the Ground (Knowledge) (QCF)* qualification

** indicates unit from the *Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to Cabin Crew (QCF)* qualification.

Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Unit 1: Working as Cabin Crew**	Unit 1: The UK Aviation Industry	n/a
Unit 4: Airport Check-in Services*	Unit 12: Human Resources in the Aviation Industry	
Unit 13: Aircraft Dispatch Process*	Unit 19: Handling Air Passengers	
Unit 23: Aviation Communications	Unit 22: Onboard Passenger Operations	
Unit 30: Aircraft Marshalling		

Essential resources

Learners must have access to the internet to research job opportunities. Current application forms from industry should be used for assessment.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Visits to employers or guest speakers from aviation organisations will be invaluable for learners to find out about career opportunities, entry requirements and application and interview processes.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Christen C – *What Color is Your Parachute? for Teens: Discovering Yourself, Defining Your Future, 2nd Edition* (Ten Speed Press; 2010) ISBN 978-1580081412

Corfield R – *Preparing the perfect job application: application forms & letters made easy, 5th Edition* (Kogan Page, 2009) ISBN 978-0749456535

Reilly Collins V – *Working in Aviation* (Vacation-Work, 2004) ISBN 978-1854583222

Rogers C – *The Cabin Crew Interview Made Easy, 3rd Edition* (Aspire Press, 2010) ISBN 978-0956073549

Journals

Travel Trade Gazette – United Business Media

Travel Weekly – TW Group Ltd

Websites

www.aviationrecruitment.co.uk	Aviation Recruitment
www.baa.com/jobs-at-baa	BAA Airports careers
www.britishairwaysjobs.com	British Airways careers
www.easyjetcareers.com	easyJet careers
www.servisair.com/hr	Servisair careers
www.thomascook.com/recruitment	Thomas Cook careers
www.ttgdigital.com	<i>Travel Trade Gazette</i>
www.travelweekley.co.uk	<i>Travel Weekly</i>

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Reflective learners	evaluating their performance during the job application process and interviews
Effective participators	taking part in job interviews for aviation employment.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	investigating career opportunities, job roles and entry requirements
Creative thinkers	creating an action plan and preparing for a job interview
Reflective learners	producing a skills audit, analysing personal attributes in order to develop an action plan
Team workers	sharing research into employment opportunities, taking part in group activities for simulated interviews
Self-managers	managing their workload
Effective participators	taking part in the interview process.

● Functional Skills — Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT — Use ICT systems	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	using the internet independently to research job roles and entry requirements
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	saving work to retrieve and develop documents
Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices	using the internet
Troubleshoot	as required
ICT — Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	selecting appropriate information to assist them in researching entry requirements for specific job roles
ICT — Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text and tables • images • numbers • records 	developing a CV, covering letter and action plan
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	producing a CV and covering letter
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	discussing job opportunities, taking part in job interviews and tutorials
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	writing a covering letter, CV and completing application forms.