

Unit 14: Specialist Tourism

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Unit code: | A/600/9499 |
| QCF Level 3: | BTEC National |
| Credit value: | 10 |
| Guided learning hours: | 60 |

● Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is to develop learners' knowledge and understanding of the growth of the specialist tourism market and to apply their research skills by profiling a specific specialist tourism market. In addition, learners will develop their skills through planning a specialist tourism holiday.

● Unit introduction

Leisure tourism has changed since mass market holiday products were introduced in the 1970s. Industries within the travel and tourism sector need to reflect current trends and interests by changing products and services to meet the changing needs and expectations of customers, and remain profitable. Consequently the sector has responded to changing customer needs with the rapid growth of specialist tourism over the last decade.

UK holidaymakers seek out warmer climates because of the close proximity of sunny resorts in Europe and the ease of travel to world destinations. However, seeking a sun tan is no longer the sole motivation for taking a holiday. People are aware of the dangers of sunbathing and are more used to world travel as air travel has become quicker and cheaper. Many people take more holidays and short breaks rather than a two week annual sun holiday. Thus, holidays have to offer a different experience. The travel and tourism sector now provides a plethora of specialist tourism products, sometimes tailor-made for the individual customer.

This unit enables learners to explore this important growth market which combines hobbies and interests, social and cultural encounters, sport and adventure activities with tourism.

Learners will find out about the different types of specialist tourism products on offer and who provides them. They will explore the factors that have led to the changes and growth in this market.

Learners will have the opportunity to research one type of specialist tourism in depth and to assess its market and future growth potential. Finally, learners will apply their knowledge by selecting specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Know the types and providers of specialist tourism
- 2 Understand how specialist tourism has developed
- 3 Know the market for a chosen type of specialist tourism
- 4 Be able to select specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles.

Unit content

1 Know the types and providers of specialist tourism

Types of specialist tourism: relating to sport eg cycling, golf, diving, water sports, hiking; adventure eg white-water rafting, bungee jumping, mountaineering; health tourism; nature tourism; ecotourism; relating to special interests eg painting, cookery; educational eg school tours; cultural tourism; other eg disaster tourism, volunteering.

Specialist tourism providers: integrated tour operators eg horizontal, vertical; independent tour operators; web-based operators; small and medium enterprises (SME)

2 Understand how specialist tourism has developed

Changing market factors: socioeconomic eg disposable income, leisure time, status, desire for new challenges; self-actualisation (Maslow); expectations of tailor-made holidays and high service level; trends eg for active holidays, for cultural holidays

Development: mass tourism to specialist tourism; growth of special interest tour operators; packaged to unpackaged; increased market segmentation; response to social change and trends; access to new locations; role of budget airlines

3 Know the market for a chosen type of specialist tourism

Market: providers; size eg market share, turnover, growth

Products: locations; components eg transport, accommodation, guides, equipment, instruction, insurance

Market segment/s: eg age, gender, income, socio-economic group, geographic location, psychographic factors

4 Be able to select specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles

Customers: eg groups, families, solos, couples

Motivations: eg looking for hobbies, adventure seeking, educational, sports, religious, cultural, active

Providers: types of organisation eg tour operators (integrated, web-based, SME); ground-only arrangements (guides, expeditions); packaged or unpackaged

Holidays: named providers; locations; access eg gateways; sample dates and prices; specialist elements

Special considerations: eg equipment, clothing, instruction, levels of competence, medical considerations, disabled access, age restrictions, insurance

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 describe the types and providers of specialist tourism | | |
| P2 explain the market factors that have led to developments in specialist tourism | M1 analyse how specialist tourism provision meets the demands of a changing market | |
| P3 produce a market profile for a chosen type of specialist tourism | M2 analyse the market for a chosen type of specialist tourism, interpreting relevant data | D1 assess the potential for growth in the chosen area of specialist tourism, suggesting new products for gaps in provision |
| P4 select suitable specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles [CT 1, CT 2, CT 3, CT 4, CT 5, CT 6]. | M3 explain how the chosen holidays meet the requirements of the customer, selecting the preferred option for each customer profile. | D2 evaluate the different options available to meet the needs of the specific customer profiles, justifying the preferred options. |

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

This unit lends itself to delivery in diverse ways to suit local needs, and learner and tutor preferences. Visits to providers and guest speakers from the sector are suggested in order to provide currency and specialist operational input. It is recommended that the unit is scheduled towards the end of the learners' programme as it is informed by and develops learning from other units namely *Unit 3: The UK as a Destination*, *Unit 7: European Destinations*, *Unit 8: Long-haul Travel Destinations* and *Unit 13: Tour Operations*.

The unit should start with an activity designed to explore what specialist tourism is. Learners can be guided to write their own definition(s) of the role and purpose of the sector.

Learners' personal experiences might cover a range of experiences that could be shared with their peers. They could work in groups to investigate the scope of different types of specialist tourism, identifying providers and typical types of holidays. A class display could be made to record their findings.

More recent types of specialism such as disaster tourism and volunteer tourism could be explored as a class as these can provide interesting areas for discussion.

To understand the reasons for change from mass packages to special interest tourism, learners should be encouraged to consider the changes in society and personal motivation that may have led to this. Reference to Maslow may support this discussion, particularly the role of special interest activities in engendering the self-actualisation stage. Discussion may be facilitated about the potential reasons for rejection of mass homogeneous products in favour of small-group and individually focused experiences. In addition, the role of the budget airlines from the mid-90s in enabling independent and small-group travel at low cost may be introduced into the discussion.

Further consideration of the 'cash rich, time poor' (middle to high earners whose careers mean they do not take their full holiday allowance) can provide evidence for the development of high-quality specialist packages and tailor-made packages for this lucrative sector; they are often attracted by 'sun-plus', ie warm climate and activity. Learners should be guided to identify that workers now have more holiday time and so more holidays, and a beach holiday (sun-lust) may often be followed by an activity holiday (sun-plus).

Learners should investigate major tour operators to find out what specialist holidays they offer and how they have taken over smaller specialist groups yet retained products and brands. Holidaybreak is a good example with an adventure holiday division. The role of smaller operators trading via the internet can be explored via learner research, and discussion may be developed exploring why so many specialist operators distribute their products via the web, some without brochures.

Growth and trend statistics, eg from Travel and Tourism Trends reports and data provided by ABTA, relating to specialist tourism, could be presented for group analysis. This could be in the form of group work or broader discussion.

There may be opportunities for learners to experience specialist tourism through a group trip relating to their interests.

To produce a profile of the market for one type of specialist tourism, learners will need to understand marketing concepts such as market segment, size and volume of market. They should have covered these in *Unit 5: Marketing Travel and Tourism Products and Services*. Tutors should help learners to conduct research into their type of specialist tourism through facilitating access to a broad range of resources including journals and newspapers, television programmes, brochures, the internet and industry gazetteers (eg OAG).

Tutors should provide customer profiles for learning outcome 4; learners can make up own profiles for their colleagues too. They will need access to the internet and to brochures and travel guides in order to find suitable holidays matching customer profiles. Class activities should be developed to encourage broad research, incorporating different types of specialist tourism. Practice role plays, responding to email enquiries etc will help to prepare for assessment.

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 |
|---|
| Introduction and overview of the unit and assessments |
| Discussion of personal experience of specialist tourism |
| Identification of different types of specialist tourism |
| Small group research to produce display on a specific type of sport or adventure specialist tourism provision |
| Working in pairs to research and make presentations on specific eco, green and volunteer tourism provision |
| Discussion |
| Research into different types of special interest tourism and culture |
| Travel agency scenarios to match to customer requests |
| Visit to a specialist tourism provider or guest speaker and class activities |
| Class research and discussion on disaster tourism |
| Independent research into specialist tourism and providers |
| Introduction to changing market factors |
| Tutor input on socioeconomic changes and development in industry leading to specialist tourism products since the 1970s |
| Identification of trends – discuss key trends |
| Tutor input and class activities based on Maslow |
| Market segmentation – matching different segments to different specialism |
| Review of providers of tailor-made holidays |
| Identification of service levels – compare with mass market |
| Review of budget airlines – route expansion and identification of developments in specific specialist tourism |
| Learners use cards to match up socio-economic change with developments, eg low cost airlines could link to interest in city breaks, greater consumption of wine at home could lead to an interest in visiting a wine region |
| Group research and presentations on operators in terms of size, location, distribution methods and products offered |
| Individual research and preparation for Assignment 1 |
| Assignment 1: The Specialists (P1, P2, M1) |
| Preparing and making a presentation |
| Feedback on assessment |
| Introduction to Assignment 2 |
| Components of a market profile, linking to Marketing unit and with examples |

| Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment |
|---|
| Types of customers – general information linked to previous knowledge from other units |
| Practical activity – matching customer profiles to specialist interest holidays |
| Comparing proposals |
| Market segmentation exercise and discussion to review different types of segmentation and relevance for market profiles |
| Introduction to research sources for market information |
| Practical research activities into size and scope of markets |
| Whole class case study to produce a market profile for a given specialist tourism in preparation for assessment |
| Discussion and allocation of specialist interest market to be researched |
| Individual research into a market |
| Assignment 2: Market Profile (P3, M2, D1) |
| Feedback on assessment |
| Introduction to Assignment 3 |
| Paired activities to produce customer profiles |
| Research to find holidays |
| Recommending holidays and 'best fit' |
| Selection of customer profiles for assignment |
| Individual research finding suitable holidays, recommending best fit |
| Preparation for presentations – practicing role plays, written proposals |
| Assignment 3: Holiday Match (P4, M3, D2) |
| Researching and presenting options |
| Feedback on assessment and unit review |

Assessment

The assessment criteria can be grouped together to enable learners to expand on one criterion in order to gain higher grades. The links are as follows: P1, P2 and M1; P3, M2 and D1; P4, M3 and D2. Where possible learners should be encouraged and given the opportunity to achieve the relevant higher grades at the same time as they attempt the appropriate pass criteria.

Centres should design their assessment strategies to meet a range of individual needs and the local work environment. Assessment should encourage the learners to apply knowledge gained from this unit and reflect on understanding gained from other units.

P1 – P2 – M1

The evidence produced for P1 must describe the different types and providers of specialist holidays. Learners should include examples from all the types of specialist tourism given in the unit content, plus any new emerging types of specialist tourism if appropriate. They should include named examples of the different types of providers in the unit content, in relation to the different types of specialist tourism.

For P2, they should explain the changes in the market that have led to increased demand for specialist tourism products, including socio-economic, self-actualisation, expectation of tailor-made holidays and high service level, and trends. Examples include the introduction of charter flights, more leisure time post-government legislation in 1999, increased paid holidays to four weeks per year, and corresponding changes in holidaying habits from one summer holiday to inclusion of additional holidays/breaks (eg sun-lust to sun-plus).

To achieve M1, evidence should be analytical to show what the demands of the changing market are, and how specialist tourism meets these demands. Links should be made between developments and specialist tourism products, for example how the growing demand for activity holidays has resulted in an expansion of provision of short activity breaks, which has been facilitated by the opening of new routes and flexible travel options provided by the low cost airlines.

P3 – M2 – D1

For P3, learners should select, through negotiation with the tutor, a specific specialist tourism market. This part of the unit could be assessed in the form of seminars delivered to the rest of the group (avoiding repetition) thus enhancing overall learning. Learners should research the market for their chosen type of specialist tourism, producing a market profile which reports on the main providers and their size, eg market shares, turnover and growth. They will identify and describe typical locations around the world for the type of specialism, components of the holidays, and clearly identify any specialist equipment and resources needed. There should be detailed links to the market segments targeted by the specialism. At pass level it should be recognised that the profile will be limited to data available in the public arena. However, learners with initiative might get information directly from tour operators or tourism organisations and from company reports and data acquired from companies.

To achieve M2, learners will be expected to have accessed relevant data and interpreted it accurately in terms of determining the providers, size, market segments and products from the selected specialism.

D1 allows learners to practise creative thinking. Having researched one specialist tourism market in detail, they should be able to identify gaps in provision and determine the types of specialist holidays for which there is potential to cater further for the selected tourism market, for example by adapting the product to attract a different market segment. They should make full recommendations for types and locations of holidays that would fulfil these gaps.

P4 – M3 – D2

Tutors should devise pen portraits of customers to be selected by learners for P4. Tutors should attempt to include an element of challenge by introducing some less common types of specialist holidays. They must ensure that the customer pen portraits are sufficiently detailed to allow learners to meet P4. It is recommended that a variety of pen portraits are devised, from which learners must select two. Learners are then expected to select three appropriate holidays in different countries to match each of the selected profiles. They should give details of the tour operator, holidays chosen and dates and price for each holiday selected, together with a description of the 'specialist' elements to enable the customer to see how their requirements have been met.

To achieve M3, they will explain clearly how the holidays meet the needs of the specified customers, and suggest their preferred option, ie the one that they feel best meets the customer's needs. This process must be completed for both of the pen portraits selected.

For D2, learners should evaluate the range of options that were available from the tour operators. They should determine any limitations in meeting the brief, explaining why certain options were rejected and justifying the preferred options.

Detailed observation sheets must be provided to support any presentations or role plays used for assessment, clearly indicating exactly how the learner has met specified grading criteria. Observation sheets must always be supported, signed and dated by the assessor and learner and should be supported by presentation slides, handouts, notes etc. It is also good practice to include peer and self-evaluations.

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, M1 | Assignment 1: The Specialists | Working as a freelance travel writer. Producing an article on the development, types and providers of specialist tourism | Illustrated magazine article |
| P3, M2, D1 | Assignment 2: Market Profile | Producing a market profile for a chosen type of specialist tourism for inclusion in a travel trade show. Assessing potential for growth | Visual presentation on market profile, supported by relevant data |
| P4, M3, D2 | Assignment 3: Holiday Match | Working as a specialist travel agent Proposing options to meet customer profiles – selection of suitable holidays, justifying recommendations | Oral presentation to customer. Role plays and supporting notes |

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC travel and tourism sector suite. This unit has particular links with:

| Level 2 | Level 3 |
|------------------|---|
| Holiday Planning | Investigating the Travel and Tourism Sector |
| | Marketing Travel and Tourism Products and Services |
| | Passenger Transport for Travel and Tourism |
| | Tourism in Rural Areas |
| | UK Visitor Attractions |
| | Researching Current Issues in Travel and Tourism (L4) |

Essential resources

Learners should have access to a library/resource centre and the internet, as well as atlases and specialist holiday brochures.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Visits to or talks by guest speakers from specialist tourist providers will support delivery.

This unit links to the following NOS in Travel and Tourism:

- TT39 Research and develop tour itineraries.

Indicative reading for learners

Dale G – *BTEC Level 3 National Travel and Tourism Student Book 1* (Pearson 2010) ISBN 9781846907272

Dale G – *BTEC Level 3 National Travel and Tourism Student Book 2* (Pearson 2010) ISBN 9781846907289

Dale G, Kelly M, King C and Jefferies M – *BTEC Level 3 National Travel and Tourism Teaching Resource Pack* (Pearson 2010) ISBN 9781846907296

Douglas N et al – *Special Interest Tourism* (Wiley, 2001) ISBN 0471421715

James E, Thirlaway J and Woodhouse U – *BTEC National in Travel and Tourism* (Hodder Education, 2007) ISBN 9780340945735

Swarbrooke J et al – *Adventure Tourism: The New Frontier* (Butterworth Heinemann, 2003) ISBN 0750651865

World Travel Atlas, Tenth Edition (Columbus Publishing, 2006) ISBN 1902221931

Journal

Travel Trade Gazette

Websites

Columbus World Travel Guide

www.worldtravelguide.net

Country maps

www.mapsofworld.com

National Statistics Online

www.statistics.gov.uk

OAG

www.oag.com

Online atlas

www.multimap.com

Star UK – statistics on Tourism Research

www.starUK.org.uk

The Schengen Office

www.theschengenoffice.com

Tourism Trade

www.tourismtrade.org.uk

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS)

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

| Skill | When learners are ... |
|--------------------------|---|
| Creative thinkers | selecting suitable specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles [CT 1, CT 2, CT 3, CT 4, CT 5, CT 6] |

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 ... |
|----------------------|---|
| Team workers | working in small groups to select suitable specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles |
| Self-managers | managing the assessment of the unit |

● 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 | researching suitable specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles |
| Use ICT to effectively plan work and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system they have used | planning the assessment of the unit |
| Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval | researching suitable specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles |
| Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices | ongoing |
| Troubleshoot | as required |
| ICT – Find and select information | |
| Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task | researching and presenting suitable specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles |
| 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. | presenting suitable specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles |
| Bring together information to suit content and purpose | presenting suitable specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles |
| Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience | presenting suitable specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles |
| Evaluate the selection and use of ICT tools and facilities used to present information | ongoing |
| English | |
| Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts | discussing suitable specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles |
| Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions | exploring suitable specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles |
| Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions effectively and persuasively | presenting suitable specialist tourism holidays to meet specific customer profiles |