

Unit 17: Events, Conferences and Exhibitions

Unit code:	J/600/9621
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	5
Guided learning hours:	30

● Aim and purpose

This unit will develop learners' understanding of different types of conferences, exhibitions and events, and of how this industry is intrinsically linked to travel and tourism. They will learn about the different types of venues utilised and will respond to a client brief by proposing and costing an event, conference or exhibition.

● Unit introduction

Events, conferences and exhibitions make up one of the fastest growing and most dynamic aspects of the travel and tourism sector.

In many respects events, conferencing and exhibitions is an industry in its own right. However, it is also closely aligned with the travel and tourism industry as delegates often use hospitality and tourism products and services, such as transport, accommodation, restaurants and bars. Therefore the two are intrinsically linked. This unit will enable learners to familiarise themselves with the event, conference and exhibition industry and its links with travel and tourism.

Learners will examine the different types of events, conferences and exhibitions and the variety of organisations involved. They will investigate the different types of customers, as well as trends and issues which may affect the growth of the sector in the future.

Learners will research different types of events, conferences and exhibitions in terms of venues, equipment, facilities and services on offer.

This unit has a practical element as it gives learners the opportunity to propose and cost an event, conference or exhibition in response to a given brief.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Understand the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK
- 2 Understand types of venues utilised for events, conferences and exhibitions
- 3 Be able to propose and cost events, conferences and exhibitions.

Unit content

1 Understand the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK

Types of event: corporate hospitality; team-building events; incentives (employee, customer); fund raising; other eg product launch, music events and festivals, wedding fairs, reunions

Types of conference: political eg World Tourism Organisation, political party; business eg annual general meeting (AGM); other eg educational, medical

Types of exhibition: trade fairs eg International Confex, World Travel Market, Boat Show, Ideal Home Show; other eg promotion, roadshows

Specialist organisations: eg venue finding agencies, conference organisers, exhibition organisers, event management companies

Customers: corporate; associations eg ABTA, Institute of Travel and Tourism; governmental eg local authorities, government agencies; private individuals

Links with the travel and tourism sector: eg accommodation and transport provision, popularising destinations, extended stays before or after event, organised day trips, as a component of specialist holiday packages

Trends: eg popularity of unusual venues, growth of venue finding and event management companies, impact of web-conferencing, web seminars and e-meetings, growth of special interest trips and packages, growth of budget class meeting facilities, increasing security procedures, sponsorship

2 Understand types of venues utilised for events, conferences and exhibitions

Venues: purpose-built centres; hotels; academic venues; sporting venues; unusual venues eg theme parks, museums; civic venues

Facilities: room and space options eg seating layouts, seminar rooms, lecture theatres, concert rooms, exhibition space; hospitality eg catering; overnight accommodation eg single rooms, executive rooms; licences eg music, alcohol; entertainment; equipment eg LCD projection, video conference facilities

3 Be able to propose and cost events, conferences and exhibitions

Brief: objectives; customer; target market; budget; facilities required eg exhibition space, theatre style seating, stage; other eg dates, delegate numbers (high, low),

Proposal: format of event, conference or exhibition; venue; facilities to be used; date and time; agenda/programme eg speakers, activities; booking methods eg online; payment methods; equipment eg ICT, hire of computers; signage; refreshments and catering; additional services available to delegates eg accommodation, business centre; promotion eg advertising, email circulars, delegates' pack, direct marketing to regular exhibitors, invitations to VIPs, press release, early bird or group discounts; other eg registration format, prizes, sponsorship, evaluation

Health and safety factors: risk assessment; delegate numbers and flow; fire safety; security (delegate, property, building); evacuation; environmental factors eg ventilation, air conditioning

Operational factors: time constraints (deadlines, dates, setting up, preparation); timings; minimum numbers; staff (experience, numbers); contingencies eg delays (of speakers, of suppliers), weather, equipment failure

Costings: calculations per delegate/attendee eg exhibition space rates, conference, ticket costs; calculations of additional services eg accommodation, transport, refreshments; breakdown of costs; rationale in relation to budget

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:
<p>P1 describe the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK</p> <p>P2 explain the intrinsic links between the event, conference and exhibitions environment and the UK travel and tourism sector</p>	<p>M1 explain how trends affect the event, conference and exhibitions environment</p>	<p>D1 assess growth potential of the event, conference and exhibitions environment.</p>
<p>P3 explain the appropriateness of different types of venues for events, conferences and exhibitions</p>		
<p>P4 produce proposals for an event, conference or exhibition to meet a given brief [CT 1]</p> <p>P5 prepare costings for an event, conference or exhibition for a given brief.</p>	<p>M2 explain how the proposals and costings meet the brief.</p>	

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

As an introduction to the unit, learners could investigate the scope of events, conferences and exhibitions within the travel and tourism context and how the two are intrinsically linked. Learners should also study conference organisers and event management companies, as well as a variety of customers. This could be done through individual or group research. It would be ideal to visit an exhibition, such as the World Travel Market, or an event or conference so that learners can develop a better understanding of the environment. This is particularly important if learners attempt D1, for which they need to assess the potential growth of the event, conference and exhibition environment. Tutors are advised to introduce learners to some statistics and refer to sources of relevant data so that they are able to access higher grades.

Learners should also be familiar with a number of trends and issues affecting the event, conference and exhibition environment. This could be achieved through reading travel and tourism journals, articles from the national press or attending talks given by event, conference and exhibitions providers. Tutors should focus on developing learners' ability to understand trends and issues, as well as their ability to explain how trends and issues could impact on the event, conference and exhibitions environment, thus allowing them to access higher grades.

When looking at venues, tutors should help learners comprehend the vast selection of venues on offer, ranging from purpose-built, to hotels and visitor attractions. Learners could work in small groups and make presentations on selected venues. They could be given different scenarios to match venues to specified customer types. Tutors may use current examples and case studies to stimulate learner discussion, such as the need for security at a political conference and the differences between a small meeting and a larger conference. Discussions should focus on developing learners' reasoning for their choices of venues, and how closely they match their customers' needs. Comparative analysis could be emphasised while teaching this section of the unit.

Following this, learners could discuss the process of organising an event, conference or exhibition. This could be in preparation for proposing an event, conference or exhibition of their own or be based on a fictitious client brief. The event could be linked for example to *Unit 21: Entertainment for Holidaymakers* or producing a travel or careers exhibition that might support other units within the qualification. Discussions and brainstorming will identify the level of learners' prior knowledge. Tutors are advised to emphasise the complexities involved with the process of organising a large event, conference or exhibition; this section of the unit content will have to be covered in detail as it forms a large part of the learners' assessment.

Practical tasks, either individual or in small teams, could be set up to initiate the planning. In order to allow learners to achieve M2, the emphasis when covering this part of the unit should be on an explanation as to why learners made certain choices and how they met the needs of their clients. Analytic skills should also be developed in order to be able to assess the impact of factors on an event, conference or exhibition of the learners' choice.

Learners need to be familiar with various costs which have to be considered when planning an event, conference or exhibition. Examples of conference packages and delegates' packs, as well as venue and additional service charges, could be analysed in order to develop a better understanding of such charges. Learners will have to be able to calculate prices per person, as well as have some commercial awareness in terms of making profit and differentiating between costs and prices etc.

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 to unit and assessment requirements
Brainstorming activity to identify range of events, conferences, exhibitions
Discuss links with travel and tourism
Paired research into specific types of events, conferences and exhibitions. Prepare short presentation
Present findings to class
Discuss links with travel and tourism
Tutor input into organisations involved and customers
Case studies
Guest speaker from specialist organisation
Presentation and Q & A
Worksheet to match different types of venues to events, conferences, exhibitions
Research into different types of venues
Visit to local venue to view facilities, eg hotel conference centre
Small group research into specific trends
Presentation to class
Discuss findings and impact
Visit to national or significant exhibition
Preparation for assessment
Assignment 1: Update on Events, Conferences, Exhibitions (P1, P2, P3, M1, D1)
Feedback on assessment
Introduction to Assignment 2
PowerPoint presentation; walk through of the planning process for an event, conference or exhibition
Guest speaker on organisational aspects of planning an event, conference or exhibition
Tutor input on health and safety and operational factors
Class base costing activities
Practical activities to plan and cost an event, conference or exhibition for a given brief
Preparation for presenting proposals for assessment
Assignment 2: Practical skills (P4, P5, M2)
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, P3, M1 and D1; P4, P5 and M2. Where possible learners should be encouraged and given the opportunity to meet the relevant higher grades at the same time as they attempt the appropriate pass criteria.

P1 – P2 – M1 – D1

P1 requires learners to investigate and describe the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK. The evidence could be presented in the form of a written report or a presentation. A broad, basic description will suffice, ensuring that all of the listed content has been addressed and supported by relevant examples. In describing events, conferences and exhibitions, learners should consider organisations and types of customers that use these services. For P2, learners should be able to show links with the travel and tourism sector, and also recognise at least three current trends and briefly describe them. A list of bullet points is not acceptable.

For M1, the impact of trends on the event, conference and exhibitions environment needs to be explained. In order to award this criterion some form of analysis has to be demonstrated in order to explain how trends have impacted; this should not be simply a more-detailed description. For example, learners could explain the impacts of web-conferences, seminars and e-meetings on the need for conferences, seminars and face-to-face meetings, or the impact of the need for tighter security on large exhibitions. Learners do not need to focus on specific venues but should refer to examples where they are appropriate.

D1 follows on from M1 in that it ties in with trends. For this criterion, learners should consider the event, conference and exhibition environment as a whole and consider its potential for growth and reasons for that. This could be growth in terms of revenue or in terms of new and diverse markets. An example of an appropriate level of response could be an identification of the potential for growth in small, budget conference venues. Learners could base this on the growing number of people working at home, and the number of UK companies that are basing their business 'off-shore'. These two factors may have led to a decrease in large meeting rooms being available in-house, and many small and medium sized companies will need to hire out external venues on a regular basis. Learners could gain statistics on homeworking and 'off-shoring' to help make their case. While they may recognise growth potential in some types of events, conferences and exhibitions, learners may recognise potential decline in others, for example where businesses may be moving away from large-scale and potentially expensive conferences and moving to more web-conferences and e-meetings. This may limit the potential for growth.

P3

In order to achieve P3, learners should describe five venues, one of each type listed in the unit content (purpose-built centres; hotels; academic venues; sporting venues; unusual venues). Where there is some overlap in that some venues are multi-functional (for example where a conference centre is also used to stage events), the primary purpose of the chosen venue should be the main focus of the description. Learners should name selected venues, describe their location and what they offer the event, conference or exhibition organiser in terms of facilities. Examples of recent events, conferences or exhibitions held at the venues should be indicated.

P4 – P5 – M2

These criteria could be assessed through one piece of work based on a client brief, perhaps set by the tutor as a case study. It is envisaged that the event, conference or exhibition would be aimed at a minimum of 30 delegates or participants to enable enough scope for valid proposals to be developed by the learners.

The event, conference or exhibition could be fictitious or based on a 'live' brief. In order to assess these criteria a selection of client briefs could be prepared, so learners can select one to work on, or it could be linked to an event or activity being organised for another unit, for example planning a charity event for *Unit 21: Entertainment for Holidaymakers*. Learners may work in small groups in order to carry out research and gather information; however, their assessment evidence must be presented individually for all criteria attempted.

For P4, learners will need to produce detailed proposals that will meet the given brief. The proposals may be presented verbally but must be backed up in a suitable written format with a professional appearance, so spellchecking and proofreading should be stressed. The proposals should include all the aspects within the subheadings listed in the unit content, including health and safety and operational factors. Learners are expected to cover all the factors from the unit content list but may include more detail on the aspects that are most relevant to their own proposal. Where specific aspects of the unit content are not relevant to particular proposals, this should be stated (for example if there is no requirement for additional services to delegates). As part of the proposals learners will have to suggest how to promote their event, conference or exhibition. This should include details of the planned promotional activities.

P5 should be achieved by producing costings for all services mentioned in the plan. This could be supported by costs available on websites, obtained through learners' individual research and using various organisations' materials. It could be designed as information available to delegates, part of the exhibitors' pack or simply an information sheet. It should clearly state all the inclusions, whether costs are per company or per person. There must be a simple but clear rationale for the costs included in relation to the budget.

M2 is an extension of P4 and P5 and could be assessed in written format or through a question and answer session. However, responses need to be documented and signed off by the assessor. Learners should focus on the proposals and explain how they meet the given brief. This involves stating why specific choices have been made such as 'a venue with a high number of parking spaces was selected because ...' or 'it was decided to have a buffet lunch because ...' or 'available ICT facilities affects the organisation of my conference as without web-conferencing we cannot include some of the delegates'. Decisions relating to costs must be fully explained; for example, 'the admission price has been calculated at x because...' or 'we decided on this menu because...' or 'the budget affects the organisation of my conference as only advertising in relevant publications such as Hotel and Caterer will ensure a high number of organisations are interested. It is expensive to advertise in this publication so we may have to compromise with a journal with a smaller circulation.'

If presentations are used as any part of the assessment, these should be supported by detailed observation records showing clearly how the grading criteria have been achieved. These should be further supported by copies of handouts, preparatory notes, PowerPoint slides etc

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, M1, D1	Update on Events, Conferences, Exhibitions	Working for an Event, Conference, Exhibition Organiser – producing a supplement for TTG	Supplement for inclusion with TTG describing the Event, Conference, Exhibition environment and venues (P1, P2, P3), explaining trends (M1) and future (D1)
P4, P5, M2	Practical Skills	Working for an Event, Conference, Exhibition Organiser – producing proposals and costings to meet a given brief	Written proposals (P4, P5) – meet with 'client' to explain proposals (M2)

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
The UK Travel and Tourism Sector	Investigating the Travel and Tourism Sector
Exploring Marketing in Travel and Tourism	Marketing Travel and Tourism Products and Services
	Specialist Tourism
	Passenger Transport for Travel and Tourism
	UK Visitor Attractions
	Hospitality Operations in Travel and Tourism
	Entertainment for Holidaymakers

Essential resources

Learners will require access to the internet for research. Access to sample delegate packs will be useful.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Visits to view facilities in venues will be invaluable. Talks from event organisers will give greater insight into organisational aspects.

Indicative reading for learners

Allen J – *Event Planning* (Wiley, 2000) ISBN 0471644129

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

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

Journals

Travel Trade Gazette

Websites

Directory of event organisers www.event-management-uk.co.uk

Academic venues, eg

Warwick University www.warwickconferences.com

Event organisers, eg

JLP Events www.jlpevents.co.uk

Hotels, eg

Hilton Hotels www.hilton.co.uk

Marriot Hotels www.marriott.co.uk

Purpose-built venues, eg

Harrogate International Centre www.harrogateinternationalcentre.co.uk

Manchester Central www.manchestercentral.co.uk

NEC www.necgroup.co.uk

Sheffield Arena www.sheffieldarena.co.uk

The O2 www.theo2.co.uk

Unusual venues, eg

Unique Venues www.uniquevenuesoflondon.co.uk

Sporting venues, eg

York Ace Course www.yorkracecourse.co.uk/conference-events

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	producing proposals for an event, conference or exhibition to meet a given brief [CT 1]

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 ...
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 the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK
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 the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK
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 the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	researching the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK
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 information about the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	presenting information about the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	presenting information about the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK
Evaluate the selection and use of ICT tools and facilities used to present information	presenting information about the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK
Mathematics	
Understand routine and non-routine problems in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations	preparing costings for an event, conference or exhibition
Identify the situation or problem and the mathematical methods needed to tackle it	preparing costings for an event, conference or exhibition
Select and apply a range of skills to find solutions	preparing costings for an event, conference or exhibition

Skill	When learners are ...
Use appropriate checking procedures and evaluate their effectiveness at each stage	preparing costings for an event, conference or exhibition
Interpret and communicate solutions to practical problems in familiar and unfamiliar routine contexts and situations	preparing costings for an event, conference or exhibition
Draw conclusions and provide mathematical justifications	preparing costings for an event, conference or exhibition
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	discussing the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	researching the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions effectively and persuasively	presenting information about the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK