

Unit 19: UK Visitor Attractions

Unit code:	D/600/8488
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	5
Guided learning hours:	30

● Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is for learners to develop their understanding of the importance of both built and natural attractions to the appeal and popularity of destinations or areas within the UK. Learners will have opportunities to visit different visitor attractions and gain knowledge about the products and services they offer, the interpretation techniques they use and the types of visitors they appeal to.

● Unit introduction

Visitor attractions are often cited as the reason mass tourism began in the UK. In the Victorian era it became fashionable for some people to travel to see stately homes which were opened by their occupants on request. Today, the UK has thousands of visitor attractions, including country parks and farms, historic properties, theme parks, zoos, gardens, museums, galleries and places of worship. They offer a wealth of unique experiences for inbound and domestic tourists alike.

Attractions act as a major draw for visitors, generating income for local and regional economies and for other sectors, such as hospitality, transport, retail. They are a key component of the travel and tourism industry and may be either built (such as a visitor centre, museum or historical building) or natural (such as a waterfall, lake or caves). Built attractions are often developed as a result of something or someone significant in the area such as Shakespeare for Stratford or the Brontë Country for Haworth and sometimes built attractions, such as visitor centres, are developed around a natural attraction.

This unit enables learners to realise the importance of visitor attractions and gives them the opportunity to examine attractions, their products and services and the techniques they use to attract visitors and give them a meaningful and enjoyable experience. Learners will see how visitor attractions impact on the visitor, the local environment and the local and national economy. They will develop an appreciation of the variety of visitor attractions and the interpretation techniques they use to create appeal to different types of visitor. Learners will investigate the appeal that different types of visitor attractions have for different types of visitor, looking at features such as location, price, the products and services they offer, what they do to generate interest and to attract and entertain visitors, as well as considering ways to increase their appeal.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Know the products and services provided by different types of visitor attraction
- 2 Know the range and purpose of techniques used for visitor interpretation
- 3 Understand the appeal of visitor attractions to different types of visitor
- 4 Understand the importance of visitor attractions to the popularity and appeal of UK tourist destinations.

Unit content

1 Know the products and services provided by different types of visitor attraction

Products and services: primary eg exhibits, landscapes; secondary eg shops, catering; additional eg guided tours, education, corporate hire; visitor services eg cloakrooms, parking, first aid

Types of visitor attraction: built eg London Eye, Edinburgh Castle; natural eg Cheddar Gorge, Brecon Beacons

2 Know the range and purpose of techniques used for visitor interpretation

Interpretation techniques: eg displays, use of actors, interactive technology, guides and tours, leaflets, maps, curators, range of activities, signage

Purpose: to inform eg education, conservation, security; to entertain; meeting specific needs eg non-English speaking, visual and hearing impairment, children

3 Understand the appeal of visitor attractions to different types of visitor

Appeal: accessibility eg location, opening times, transport links, 'Access for All'; range of products and services provided; cost of visiting eg admission charges, special offers; other eg image; novelty

Different types of visitor: eg adults, children, overseas visitors, groups

4 Understand the importance of visitor attractions to the popularity and appeal of UK tourist destinations

Importance: eg attracting visitors from overseas, stimulating domestic tourism, supporting the regeneration of areas, contributing to the local and national economy, promoting cultural exchange; conservation, providing a learning environment

Popularity and appeal: eg numbers of visitors, types of visitors, length of stay

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 products and services provided by one built and one natural visitor attraction	M1 analyse how the products, services and interpretation techniques of a built or a natural attraction contribute to the appeal for two different types of visitors	D1 evaluate the contribution of a visitor attraction to the popularity and appeal of a destination or area.
P2 describe the purpose and techniques used for visitor interpretation at one built and one natural visitor attraction		
P3 explain the appeal of one natural and one built visitor attraction for two different types of visitors [CT 1]		
P4 explain why visitor attractions are important to UK tourism.	M2 compare the importance of two different visitor attractions to the popularity and appeal of a destination or area.	

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

For the purposes of this unit National Parks are acceptable to use as an example of a natural visitor attraction as they are a managed facility. Many natural attractions also have built attractions in the form of visitor centres but for the purposes of this unit these can be classed as natural attractions.

Learners and tutors should use their own holiday or leisure experiences of built and natural UK visitor attractions to think about what they offered in terms of products and services. Discussions based on this will set the scene for this unit. Setting an internet-based research task may also prove useful as attractions generally have detailed websites; learners can then prepare short presentations and/or work in groups to look at similarities and differences between attractions. From this research it would then be possible to draw up a list of products and services offered by visitor attractions. Wherever possible, centres should organise visits to local or national visitor attractions throughout the delivery of the unit.

Centres are encouraged to organise visits to local or national visitor attractions during the delivery of this unit. It is a good idea to visit an attraction early on in the delivery of this unit in order to benchmark against its products and services. Centres could make links with visitor attraction organisations and arrange for behind-the-scenes tours or guest speakers. Most large visitor attractions have educational centres/departments with staff who are generally familiar with educational specifications. Some visitor attractions produce educational packs accessible through their websites. Some will also be happy for visitor satisfaction surveys to be carried out on site.

Learners should discuss their experiences at the visitor attraction after their visit. It is important when carrying out a visit that learners have had prior input and developed an understanding of what to look for in terms of different customer types. Learners will need to have some input on appeal to different visitor types as they need to look critically at visitor attractions as other types of customers, apart from themselves, may see them.

By looking at a range of visitor attractions learners will be able to gain a clear picture of what is 'best practice' by considering the most effective aspects of each visitor attraction studied. These findings could be adapted to make recommendations for visitor attractions chosen for assessment in terms of products and services, as well as the investigation of the range of interpretation techniques. For this topic area it could also be beneficial to look at some major overseas attractions, such as the Disney and Universal theme parks, in order to see how some of their types of activities could possibly be incorporated or adapted in the UK. It should be noted that, while private sector attractions can be expensive to visit, some in the public and voluntary sectors will be free, as are the majority of natural attractions.

When looking at what appeals to different visitor types it is important to ensure that learners appreciate the range of needs of different visitors, for example how overseas visitors' need for interpretation will be different to that required by local people who may be familiar with local heritage and culture. Equally, when referring to sensory impairment the focus is on those with hearing or vision impairment or in some cases (possibly with natural attractions) smell.

The most effective way to analyse the needs and expectations of different types of visitors is to actually interview/conduct surveys with them at an attraction. It may be possible, by prior arrangement, to tour attractions blindfolded or with earplugs to achieve a first-hand appreciation of how they cater for people with sensory impairment.

Visits are ideal for researching and assessing the range of services and interpretation techniques. Case studies could also be used to demonstrate the range, purpose and appeal of visitor attractions. English Heritage and The National Trust in particular have support materials for learners related to their provision. When carrying out visits it is important to gather not only information on the facilities of the attraction but also about their visitors. This is best done formally, for example with the use of questionnaires. Some input may well be needed on compiling questionnaires for research purposes. Permission to survey visitors will also be needed from the attraction in advance; many will also be able to supply the group with statistical information that will aid assessment completion.

It is useful to consider the location of the chosen visitor attraction as learners should be able to revisit local visitor attractions in order to gather further information. Consideration should also be given to the timing of the visit if questionnaires are to be carried out, to ensure there will be sufficient visitors to ensure a reasonable sample. For example, if learners are visiting during term-time, there will be a lack of family visitors with school-age children but they may, at this time, come across school groups.

It can be also be useful for learners to undertake a group task where they look at planning the development of a new visitor attraction in their locality. They should think about location, the products and services they would offer, how they would attract visitors and how they would entertain them once they were there. This could be fed back as a presentation to confirm learning; this would involve peer-group learning. From this it should be possible for learners to use these presentations as case studies from which they could look at widening the attraction's appeal to different types of visitor. This understanding could then be applied to actual attractions for the assessment.

There are a variety of DVDs and TV programmes that focus on the visitor attraction sector of the industry, giving learners an insight into the wide range of visitor attractions. These can be obtained directly from visitor attractions themselves or tourist boards. A visit to the BBC Learning website could also prove helpful.

Guest speakers could give learners an insight into the impact of a visitor attraction on a particular area. There are many visitor attraction websites that learners can access that will provide valuable information on the facilities, development and operations of the attraction and statistics, although this is no substitute for an actual visit.

When looking at the importance of UK visitor attractions to tourism there should be a clear focus on attracting visitors, regeneration and economic benefits. This is all learners need to comment on; they do not need to consider impacts normally associated with tourism development, such as environmental and sociocultural impacts as these are covered widely elsewhere in this specification.

Statistical information could be sought from actual attractions, regional tourist boards, government agencies etc. These could be provided for the learners to analyse through class-based discussion or could be sought independently. Historical archives could be visited, often through websites, to produce evidence of regeneration; equally local councils may have useful records to evidence historical developments as well as current plans that are taking place. It is a good idea to keep the focus of learning outcome 4 on the local area as there will generally be easier access to information.

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 the unit
Discussions about various visitor attractions that are familiar to learners, eg those in the local area, those visited recently by learners
Exploration of the differences between built and natural attractions and in particular those natural attractions that have developed built attractions to facilitate visitors
Examination of attractions that have developed from something significant in the area, eg the Bronte sisters, William Shakespeare
Classroom investigation into the products and services offered by the different types of visitor attraction through websites, videos etc
Classroom discussion and investigation into the interpretation techniques used in visitor attractions for different types of visitor and the purpose of the techniques utilised, eg for learning, for entertainment
Classroom discussions about the appeal of visitor attractions for different types of visitor and an identification of the appeal of a range of local, national and international visitor attractions
This can be a small group activity using websites, DVDs etc
Preparation for a visit to a local or national built attraction
Agreement about how the learners will gather sufficient and appropriate information to meet the requirements for assessment: details about the products and services, about the techniques used for interpretation and the appeal to different types of visitor (P1, P2 and P3)
Preparation of questionnaires, feedback forms etc as agreed
Distribution of responsibilities for the visit
Obtaining pre-visit material from the attraction
Agreement on code of conduct for the visit and the itinerary
Dissemination of information after the visit
Assignment 1: A Visit to a Built Visitor Attraction (P1, P2, P3, M1)
Feedback on assessment
Preparation for a visit to a local or national natural attraction
Agreement about how the learners will gather sufficient and appropriate information to meet the requirements for assessment: details about the products and services, about the techniques used for interpretation and the appeal to different types of visitor (P1, P2 and P3)
Preparation of questionnaires, feedback forms etc as agreed
Distribution of responsibilities for the visit
Obtaining pre-visit material from the attraction
Agreement on code of conduct for the visit and the itinerary

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment

Dissemination of information after the visit

Assignment 2: A Visit to a Natural Visitor Attraction (P1, P2, P3, M1)

Feedback on assessment

Classroom discussions and examination of statistics about the importance of visitor attractions to the popularity and appeal of UK tourist destinations

Learners can work in small groups to identify and explain the impact visitor attractions have had on the popularity and appeal of a destination or area and evaluate the success of visitor attractions to the popularity and appeal of a destination or area, making recommendations for the future

Learners can select one destination or area to research and investigate for the purposes of assessment

Assignment 3: Visitor Attractions – Their Popularity and Appeal on Destinations (P4, M2, D1)

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 and M1; P4, M2 and D1. 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.

Different forms of assessment can be used for this unit. Evidence could be in the form of a single report or a portfolio of activities, with tasks linked to speakers, visits, research and case studies. It could be assessed in part through class presentations.

The assessment requires the learners to investigate two different visitor attractions, one natural and one built. Learners should ensure that when selecting their attractions they give themselves opportunities to meet all the assessment requirements, particularly for the higher grades; tutors may need to guide learners in their selection. Learners need to select one area or destination in order to assess the impact that visitor attractions have had on popularity and appeal in that area. Learners should be guided to select an area where there are enough significant visitor attractions to be able to measure a tangible impact on the area (see more specific guidance below). Please note that for assessment purposes National Parks are acceptable as an example of a natural visitor attraction as they are a managed facility. Many natural attractions also have built attractions in the form of visitor centres but for the purposes of assessment these can be classed as natural attractions.

P1 – P2 – P3 – M1

To achieve P1 and P2, learners are required to apply their learning to two specific, different visitor attractions: one natural and one built. They will need to visit their chosen attractions to develop the required familiarity, although some of the information required at this level could be obtained from detailed internet research. The descriptions should cover all of the essential content within learning outcomes 1 and 2 and should not merely be a list of products and services or interpretation techniques. Learners can undertake some of the research for P1 and P2 from publicity material provided by visitor attractions; however, learners should not submit these materials as part of their assessment evidence, but may refer to them in a bibliography or appendix if appropriate. Learners may wish to quote from publicity materials where appropriate but substantial use of text from websites or leaflets does not constitute the learner's own work.

For P3, learners may use the same two visitor attractions as those selected for P1 and P2. Learners should select two different types of visitor and link the appeal of each of the visitor attractions to these visitors. An appropriate response at this level would be for learners to explain that the location of a museum on the outskirts of town will appeal more to a family with a car than to an overseas tourist who may not have access to their own vehicle and therefore finds it less convenient to visit than a town-centre attraction.

For M1, learners will need to have first-hand experience of their selected visitor attraction in order to analyse how the products, services and interpretation techniques contribute to the appeal for two different types of visitors. This analysis should be a progression from the descriptions for P1, P2 and P3 and demonstrate a good understanding of how the selected visitor attraction appeals to different types of visitor. The evidence can be presented in verbal or written format. Verbal presentations must be supported by detailed tutor observation records.

P4 – M2 – D1

When looking at the importance of UK visitor attractions for P4, learners should comment generally on why attractions are important to tourism and may wish to use a number of examples in order to illustrate their points. Where examples are used to illustrate and support general explanations, they should be UK attractions and statistics and data must be provided to support the explanations.

To achieve M2, learners should select two different visitor attractions at the same destination or in the same area and compare them in terms of their importance to the popularity and appeal of the destination or area. If appropriate, learners can use the same attractions as those for P1, P2 and P3. Statistics and illustrations must be provided to support the comparisons. For example, one attraction may be significantly more important because it attracts a higher number of visitors and has all-year-round appeal, whereas the other attraction has a smaller number of visitors and a shorter season. Visitors to one attraction may be predominantly school groups and UK families on day trips, whereas the other may attract overseas visitors who spend money on accommodation and in shops and restaurants in the area. The comparisons should cover most of the examples listed in the content under the sub-headings: importance and popularity and appeal.

D1 is a progression from all the criteria for the unit, ie P1, P2, P3, P4, M1 and M2. Learners need to select a destination or an area that has either a significant visitor attraction or a number of visitor attractions – this can be the same destination as selected for M2 if appropriate. They are required to evaluate, by making judgements based on evidence, the contribution made by the visitor attraction/s to the popularity and appeal of the destination or area. An example could be Haworth, where the fame of the Bronte sisters has led many different types of visitors to the town in order to visit the parsonage where the sisters once lived, the church where they worshipped and the surrounding area where they gained inspiration for their novels. The popularity of Haworth has grown worldwide and impacted on the town and surrounding area and has led to various other enterprises, eg restaurants, hotels, guesthouses. This in turn has further increased its popularity with visitors. Learners should expand further on this analysis by identifying the different products and services and the interpretation techniques available and suitable for the wide range of UK and overseas visitors. Learners would need to support their findings and explanations with statistics, data and illustrations.

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	Assignment 1: A Visit to a Built Visitor Attraction	Working for the local authority in their Tourism Department, you are required to visit a built and a natural attraction in order to investigate the products and services offered, the interpretation techniques used and the appeal for different types of visitors	Visits to one built and one natural attraction to gather information for an information file or a presentation. (P1, P2, P3) Analysis of information from surveys or other information gathering methods. Report (M1)
	Assignment 2: A Visit to a Natural Visitor Attraction		
P4, M2, D1	Assignment 3: Visitor Attractions – their popularity and appeal on destinations	Working for the local authority in their Tourism Department, you are to prepare a presentation to explain why visitor attractions are important to UK tourism and explain the impact that attractions in your own area have had on the popularity and appeal of the area	A presentation to the local authority

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 1	Level 2	Level 3
Planning and Participating in a Trip to a Visitor Attraction	Organising a Travel and Tourism Study Visit	Investigating the Travel and Tourism Sector
UK Travel Destinations	UK Tourism Destinations	The UK as a Destination
		Residential Study Visit in Travel and Tourism

Essential resources

For this unit learners need access to the internet to explore visitor attractions, destinations and areas and access to published material such as the travel trade press, newspapers, textbooks, visitor attraction publications and statistics. It is essential that learners are provided with opportunities to visit at least one built or one natural visitor attraction and to look around the surrounding area.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Links with specific visitor attractions would be very beneficial for both visits and for access to guest speakers and information.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

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

Fyall A, Garrod D, Leask A and Wanhill S – *Managing Visitor Attractions* (Butterworth Heinemann, 2008) ISBN 978-0750685450

Holloway C – *The Business of Tourism* (FT Prentice Hall, 2006) ISBN 0273701614

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

Newspapers and Journals

Hospitality and Tourism Management

Travel Trade Gazette

Travel Weekly

Websites

There are a number of websites that provide general information on Visitor Attractions in the UK – here are a selection:

www.uk.visitor-attractions.com

www.alva.org.uk

www.enjoyengland.com

www.tourist-information-uk.com

www.uktouristattractions.co.uk

Nearly every visitor attraction has its own website – here are a selection:

www.albertdock.com

www.chesterzoo.org

www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk

www.hrp.org.uk

www.ingletonwaterfallswalk.co.uk

www.leeds-castle.com

www.royalarmouries.org

www.theblackpooltower.co.uk

www.wookey.co.uk

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS)

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 ...
Creative thinkers	exploring and explaining the appeal of one natural and one built visitor attraction for two different types of visitors [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 products and services provided by one built and one natural visitor attraction
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 and storing information about products and services provided by one built and one natural visitor attraction
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	describing the products and services provided by one built and one natural visitor attraction
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	describing the products and services provided by one built and one natural visitor attraction
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	describing the products and services provided by one built and one natural visitor attraction
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	describing the products and services provided by one built and one natural visitor attraction
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	discussing the appeal of one natural and one built visitor attraction for two different types of visitors
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	exploring the appeal of one natural and one built visitor attraction for two different types of visitors
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions effectively and persuasively	explaining the appeal of one natural and one built visitor attraction for two different types of visitors