
BTEC Travel & Tourism

Transition Pack



BTEC Extended Certificate Travel and Tourism

Transition Pack

About your course

What do you know already?

If someone asks you about your course, could you give a short, accurate description? If you can, you have a good understanding of what your course is about. This has several benefits.

Four benefits of understanding your course

- You will be better prepared and organised.
- You can make links between the course and the world around you.
- You can check how your personal interests and hobbies relate to the course.
- You will be alert to information that relates to topics you are studying, whether it's from conversations with family and friends, watching television or at a part-time job.

There are four units that need to be completed for you to complete the course

Unit 1 - The world of Travel and tourism (year 1) (exam)

Unit 2 - Global destinations (year 2) (controlled assessment)

Unit 3 - Marketing in Travel and tourism (year 1)

Unit 9 - Visitor attractions (year 2)

Units 1 and 2 are externally assessed units. Unit 1 is an exam and unit 2 is a controlled assessment. Units 1, 2 and 3 are all mandatory units.

Top tip

If you have a part-time job, you're likely to be involved in helping customers and colleagues. These are important skills for any BTEC Travel and tourism student.

Try this

Write down your interests and hobbies and identify those that relate to your studies in any way.

Interest/hobby	How this relates to my studies

Case study: course decisions

Gina is 16 and has chosen to study for a BTEC Extended certificate in Travel and Tourism at sixth form. She thinks she would like to work in the travel industry but has decided that it would be sensible to keep her options open so she will study for the BTEC alongside another subject. She is going to continue with her Business A level because these could be useful if she did work in travel and tourism in the future.

Her cousin Isaac is 16 and has joined a BTEC extended certificate in Travel and Tourism. Isaac did reasonably well in his GCSEs but could have done better in some subjects. He is also going to re-sit his Maths GCSE to try and improve his grade.

Gina and Isaac get together to compare the courses they are taking. They find that the units are exactly the same and that Isaac will be studying Maths and English alongside his course. They have the classes each week for his travel and tourism course and his deadlines are the same.

Gina likes working with people and is interested in the customer service side which involves working with people. Isaac knows this is important and he will also complete a customer service unit but his real interest is in the operational side of the business and he is looking forward to learning about different destinations and planning holidays.

What are you most looking forward to on your BTEC Extended certificate in Travel and Tourism?

Activity: How well do you know your course?

Complete the activity below to check that you know the main facts. Compare your answers with a friend. You should have similar answers except where you make personal choices, such as about specialist units. Your teacher/tutor can help you complete number 8.

- 1 The correct title of the BTEC I am studying is:
- 2 The length of time it will take me to complete my course is:
- 3 The number of core units I have to study is:
- 4 The titles of my core units are:

5 The main topics I will learn in each core unit include:

Core unit	Main topics

6 The titles of my mandatory and specialist units are:

7 The main topics I will learn in each specialist unit include:

Specialist unit	Main topics

8 Other important aspects of my course are:

Introduction to the travel and tourism sector

Welcome to the dynamic world of travel! The travel and tourism sector have millions of employees around the world and there are many exciting job opportunities to attract people with different skills and qualities.

The BTEC Extended certificate in Travel and Tourism will open up the world of travel to you. You will investigate different destinations at home and abroad, learn how to make routine travel arrangements like coach and rail trips, and also plan holidays. You will see that travel and tourism is made up of many organisations who work together to provide and market a wide range of products and services to meet the needs of different kinds of people.

Excellent customer service is what makes a travel and tourism organisation stand out from its competitors. Employers are keen to recruit staff who put the customer first and your skills will be developed to help to prepare you for working in travel and tourism.

If you have taken a holiday in the past, or taken part in a school or college trip you will have experienced travel and tourism products and services at first hand. For example, have you taken an overseas holiday or do you know someone who has travelled overseas on holiday? You may be surprised to learn how many people will have been involved in making sure holidays are enjoyable and that all of the arrangements run smoothly.

In the space below, make a list of some of the people you think would be involved in an overseas holiday and their main roles:

Did you think of any of these?

Travel agent	Helps you select the right holiday and makes your booking
Airport check-in staff	Checks in your luggage, confirms your seat and checks your documentation
Cabin crew	Looks after you during the flight, serves meals and refreshments
Holiday representative	Meets you at the airport, provides information, sells excursions, sorts out problems
Hotel receptionist	Checks you into your room, provides information, sorts out problems

Your course will introduce you to many career opportunities in the travel and tourism sector.

What types of travel and tourism jobs appeal to you?

Case study: Nathan's introduction to your sector

Nathan completed his BTEC Extended certificate in Travel and Tourism in 2019 and now works as a Travel Consultant for a leading travel organisation.

'There is something about the travel industry that just appealed to me. Whenever I went on holiday and saw the holiday representatives in action I would think, "That's the job for me". I took my first step towards this goal by signing up for the BTEC extended certificate in Travel and Tourism. This gave me an excellent overview of the travel and tourism industry and made me realise that it is much bigger than I had thought.

During the course I had the chance to develop many skills and gain valuable experience of visitor attractions and marketing in the Travel and tourism industry

I took part in day trips and residential visits and began to realise what goes on behind the scenes. All of these things gave me confidence and confirmed to me that I wanted to pursue a career in travel and tourism.

After completing the BTEC level 3 course I decided to progress into a job in the travel and tourism industry. I am currently working as a Travel Consultant and am putting my studies to good use. I feel that this is a good career move; I am only 18 and think that a year or two of building up my knowledge and further developing my customer service skills will be a great addition to my travel and tourism qualifications.

The organisation I work for has many opportunities both here and in the UK and will actively help me to achieve my goal of working overseas as a holiday representative in a year or two. They have opportunities for cabin crew and tour operations too. Overall I think this is a great start to my career in travel and tourism.'

Would you like to follow in Nathan's footsteps?

Skills you need for the travel and tourism sector

When completing the core, mandatory and specialist units on your BTEC extended certificate in Travel and Tourism course you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills.

Customer service

Keeping the customer happy is very important in travel and tourism and there are many different skills that come together under the umbrella of 'customer service': Travel and tourism has many job roles where the customer is the main focus, therefore customer service skills are very important. Customer-facing roles include:

- cabin crew
- airport check-in staff
- holiday representatives
- retail travel agents
- hotel receptionists
- tourist information officers
- tour guides
- booking office staff
- ride attendants

Communication skills – knowing how to communicate effectively with customers is a valuable skill. This is not just what you say, but how you say it. Providing the right information at the right time and in the right way forms the basis of good communication skills. Face-to-face communication skills might include:

- providing information to visitors
- giving directions
- selling a product or service
- calming people down when something goes wrong
- giving instructions.

Written communication skills – accurate written communications create a positive impression of a company. If letters and written materials are full of mistakes it does not create a good impression, and if they contain inaccurate information they could ruin someone's travel plans. Written communications could include:

- Itineraries
- letters
- emails
- reports
- notice boards and displays.

Telephone skills – many travel and tourism organisations conduct most of their business by telephone. Some have large call centres where hundreds of staff are employed to take sales and provide information by telephone. Poor telephone technique could lose sales and business.

Presentation skills – many roles in travel and tourism are in the public eye. For example, cabin crew make safety announcements and holiday representatives make welcome presentations.

Complaint handling skills – sometimes things go wrong with holidays and other travel and tourism products and services. Being able to deal with complaints effectively is a skill and it can make the difference between a dissatisfied and a satisfied customer.

Listening skills – listening is a very important skill for people working in the travel and tourism sector. For example, sales consultants need to listen to customer requests so that they can suggest products and services to meet their needs.

Selling skills – customers do not always know exactly what they want to buy and it is a skill to turn an enquiry into a sale. There are many areas of the travel and tourism sector where selling skills are important, for example when selling:

- holidays in a travel agency
- tickets for an attraction
- excursions to holidaymakers.

IT skills – most travel and tourism organisations use technology extensively to make bookings, find information, communicate, produce reports and to store data. Being 'computer literate' has become an everyday expectation and using technology will be a necessary skill in many jobs. Business travel agents, for example, will rely heavily on technology for making business travel arrangements.

Language skills – being able to speak another language is not essential, but can be useful for some jobs in travel and tourism. For example, large hotels like to employ multilingual staff, while local tour guides may provide a service in different languages. If you work as a holiday representative, you may find it useful to have some language skills when working overseas.

Administrative skills – not all jobs in travel and tourism involve dealing with the public. There are many jobs behind the scenes where administrative tasks have to be carried out accurately and efficiently, especially in the offices of large organisations like tour operators. These can involve maintaining customer records and files.

Teamwork – being able to work effectively as part of a team is a skill that many employers will look for. Whatever work you do in the travel and tourism sector, you are likely to find teams working together, for example:

- crew on board a flight
- staff in the local travel agency
- representatives on holiday
- ride attendants at a visitor attraction
- different teams of staff in a hotel, for example, reception, bar, restaurant and housekeeping.

Activity: What are my skills?

Review the list of skills given above. Make a list below of what you consider to be your strongest skills.

More about BTEC Extended certificate

What is different about a BTEC Extended certificate?

How you learn

Expect to be 'hands-on'. BTEC Extended certificate courses are practical and focus on the skills and knowledge needed in the workplace. It is equivalent to one A level. You will learn new things, and learn how to apply your knowledge.

As a BTEC student you are expected to take responsibility for your own learning and be keen and well-organised. You should enjoy having more freedom, while knowing you can still ask for help or support if you need it.

How you are assessed

The BTEC level 3 extended certificate course is completed in two years. You will be assessed by completing **assignments** written by your teachers/tutors as well as completing external assessments based around an exam and a controlled assessment. Each unit is based on learning aims and these will be shared and discussed with you during your lessons. Each assignment will have a deadline.

BTEC fact

On a BTEC course you achieve individual criteria at a Pass, Merit or Distinction grade. One of those grades will be awarded for the whole course

Case study: Course assessment

Rhian attended a taster day at the local college and was keen to find out how the assignments worked on the BTEC extended certificate Travel and Tourism programmes. Some of the current learners were on hand as 'buddies' so she asked her buddy if he had found the work hard and if it was very different to things he had done before. This is the response he gave:

'For each of the units we are given assignments and these are broken down into different tasks. We can see clearly what we have to do to gain a Pass, Merit or Distinction grading for each assignment. The first unit we studied where we had assignments was *Unit 3: Marketing in travel and tourism*

For our first assignment we were set a scenario where we were employed by marketing department of a local travel and tourism visitor attraction and had to research how customer service and marketing departments work together to develop a successful company. We had a talk from a marketing director at a local attraction who told us all about the business objectives and how the different departments work together. We also visited a local tourist information centre to find out more about how they work and what sort of customer queries they dealt with.

Next we worked in groups to research the different companies and how they approach marketing. We also began to look at Unit 1 and how the travel and tourism industry works. We learnt about different destinations around the world and why they are popular. We also researched destinations and UK gateways. Using the internet and other sources we found out a lot about the different destinations and the gateways. We also had to find out about road, rail and air travel in and around the UK so that we could provide a customer with these details. Each group chose a different mode of transport so that in the end we knew a lot about different types of travel and felt that we could advise a customer.

Finally we carried out further individual research and produced our own travel plans for customers. I got a Merit grade for my assignment. I might even try an upgrade to a Distinction because I can see from the feedback what more I need to do'.