



Post-16 Curriculum - Travel & Tourism

Subject Curriculum Overview

Subject	Travel & Tourism
Qualification / Specification	BTEC Extended certificate
Awarding Body	Pearson
Level	3
Curriculum Lead	Nick Binfield
Teaching Staff	Kat Allen & Helen McCarthy
Guided Learning Hours	360
Year(s) Delivered	12 & 13
Last Review Date	June 2026
Next Review Date	June 2027

1. Curriculum Intent

The primary purpose of the Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Travel and Tourism is to provide post-16 learners with a comprehensive and applied introduction to the travel and tourism sector. The curriculum focuses on developing a broad foundation of core sector knowledge alongside fundamental, transferable skills. Learners investigate the scale, scope, and immense economic importance of the UK travel and tourism industry by examining, interpreting, and analysing sector statistics. The subject is designed to unpack the features and appeal of diverse global destinations, explore the principles of marketing within travel and tourism, and analyse the scale, changing trends, and localised or international impacts of events, conferences and exhibitions. By blending cognitive understanding with practical and technical skills, the subject ensures that learners move beyond passive observation to actively engage in realistic vocational scenarios.

The curriculum acts as a flexible framework tailored to support student aspiration, facilitating direct entry into the workforce, an apprenticeship, or progression to higher education. Equivalent in size to one A Level, it seamlessly fits into a broader 16–19 study programme alongside other academic or vocational options. The qualifications within the suite are structured with overlapping units,

giving learners the flexibility to transfer across different sizes—such as moving into a Diploma or Extended Diploma—depending on their developing career goals. The intentional blend of internal and external assessments builds independent research, extended writing and time-management skills. These attributes ensure that students possess the foundation academic and practical skills necessary to succeed in a wide range of undergraduate courses or specialised industry roles.

This curriculum was developed in close consultation with universities, employers, professional bodies, and educational delivery specialists to ensure it addresses current sector standards and modern workforce demands.

Higher education institutions require prospective undergraduates to demonstrate experience with rigorous research, extended written communication, and strict adherence to deadlines, all of which are embedded within the qualification's core design.

Employers seek work-ready professionals who possess a robust grounding in contemporary sector regulations alongside interpersonal skills. The curriculum targets these needs directly by embedding key transferable behaviours such as professional communication, collaborative teamwork, and market analysis into practical vocational tasks. Unit 11 equips learners with practical resource coordination, logistical mapping, subcontracting knowledge, and financial budgeting methodology.

The balance of mandatory content and standardised external assessments guarantees that all qualifying students share a reliable, benchmarked core of technical expertise that satisfies entry requirements across over 150 UK universities and major corporate recruiters.

Learners demonstrate academic success by successfully completing three mandatory and one optional unit. They achieve grades ranging from Pass to Distinction for each unit. Two units are externally examined and two are assessed by internal assignments and external exams.

Successful students can independently conduct primary and secondary market research, interpret industry data, and formulate realistic, well-reasoned promotional or business campaigns for real-world organisations.

Success means that a learner can independently generate a viable, fully costed event proposal and critically utilise peer or client feedback to refine their planning to meet strict operational requirements.

Ultimately, success translates into secure progression, with learners using their qualification as a proven passport to advance directly into relevant employment, higher education degree programmes, or independent entrepreneurial ventures.

2. Foundational Knowledge

Area	Essential Knowledge / Skills	Why It Matters
Industry Structure, Terminology & Economic Scale	Detailed knowledge of standard industry terminology, structural industry components, types of tourism, and public/private sector organisations. Practical skills in reading, interpreting, and analysing primary market sector data and national tourism statistics to track changing growth trends.	Essential for learners to accurately comprehend the true economic scale, organisational interrelationships, and volatile external factors affecting the operation and growth of the UK travel and tourism sector.
Global Geography, Itinerary Design & Destination Appeal	Broad spatial awareness and knowledge of major worldwide travel routes, transport hubs, and multi-modal connection types. Skills in researching consumer trends and assessing physical/cultural destination features against diverse customer profiles.	Vital for travel planners and global operators to match evolving consumer trends and specific holiday requirements with realistic, culturally aware, and seamless international itineraries.
Strategic Marketing Concepts & Market Research	Applied understanding of the core marketing mix elements, commercial principles, and internal/external factors influencing customer choices. Technical execution of primary and secondary business market research, and the synthesis of raw data to inform a business plan.	Equips learners with standard corporate competencies required to independently identify market gaps, pitch competitive travel products, and execute targeted, well-reasoned promotional campaigns.
Event Planning, Budgeting & Logistical Processes (<i>Unit 11</i>)	Mastery of structured timeline planning methods across all core stages (before, during, and after an event, conference, or exhibition). Practical skills in resource mapping, subcontracting coordination, client-brief compliance, formal feedback reviews, and financial costing/budgeting.	Seamlessly bridges foundational tourism theory into the highly lucrative business tourism sector, where financial margins and operational risk demand precise project coordination and strict financial discipline.

3. Powerful Knowledge

Powerful Knowledge Area	Why It Matters	Evidence of Understanding
Socio-Economic Interdependence and Global Volatility	Understanding that travel and tourism does not operate in a vacuum; it is highly sensitive to macro-environmental factors such as political instability, economic recessions, epidemics, and climate change.	Learners can critically evaluate data to explain how a real-world external crisis (e.g. currency fluctuations or legislative shifts) will trigger a ripple effect across multiple sectors of the domestic and global tourism economy.

Cultural Literacy and Sustainable Destination Management	Moving beyond basic geography to understand the delicate balance between commercial destination appeal, environmental carrying capacities, and ethical responsibility toward host communities.	Learners can contrast different global destinations and pitch detailed itineraries that demonstrate deep cultural awareness while successfully minimising negative socio-environmental impacts.
Strategic Market Positioning and Consumer Psychology	Grasping how organisations manipulate the marketing mix and utilise demographic, psychographic, and socio-economic profiling to influence human behaviour and capture market share.	Learners can analyse an existing travel organisation's market position, accurately diagnose a weakness in their current strategy, and synthesise raw market research to construct a fully justified promotional campaign.
Risk Mitigation, Project Governance and Resource Scalability	Understanding the hidden complexities of business tourism operations, where project success hinges on risk assessment, regulatory compliance (health and safety, licensing), and managing complex stakeholder relationships.	Learners can design a comprehensive, realistic project proposal for a corporate event or exhibition, including contingency planning, full costings, and a critical review of strategic feedback to refine operational feasibility.

4. Curriculum Implementation

Term / Unit	Key Content	Foundational Knowledge	Powerful Knowledge	Assessment Opportunities
Year 12: Autumn Term Unit 1: The World of Travel and Tourism (External)	• Types of tourism, travel, and organisations. • Scale, scope, and economic importance. • Factors affecting the industry and responses to them. • Impacts of tourism.	• Industry terminology, cross-sector working partnerships, and public/private classification. • Interpreting and data-handling primary sector statistics.	• Systems thinking: Analysing how global macro-environmental volatility (e.g. climate/conflict) disrupts local operations. • Evaluating sustainable development limits.	Formative: Past exam paper question banks on industry sectors and data interpretation tasks. • Summative: Pearson set external written examination (1.5 hours).
Year 12: Spring and Summer Term	• Role of marketing and market research methods.	• Understanding the customer decision-making process.	• Consumer psychology: Evaluating how travel brands manipulate marketing variables to influence travel trends and capture market share.	• Formative: Mock pitch presentations and practice market segmentation case studies.

Unit 3: Principles of Marketing in Travel and Tourism <i>(Internal)</i>	• Marketing mix (4 Ps) and market segmentation. • Producing a promotional campaign to a brief.	• Gathering, organising, and processing primary and secondary business data.		• Summative: Internal Pearson-set assignment brief (written report and formal campaign proposal).
Year 13: Autumn Term Unit 2: Global Destinations <i>(External)</i>	• Geographical locations, features, and appeal. • Transport hubs, multi-modal routes, and itineraries. • Factors affecting popularity and travel options.	• Spatial awareness of international maps, major flight corridors, and transport networks. • Matching complex holiday requirements to diverse customer profiles.	• Cultural literacy and environmental ethics: Evaluating the conflict between commercial destination scaling and local community sustainability.	• Formative: Timed case-study mapping exercises based on pre-released material templates. Past papers. Exam questions • Summative: Pearson set external task controlled assessment (3 hours over a specified window).
Year 13: Spring and Summer Term Unit 11: Events, Conferences and Exhibitions <i>(Internal)</i>	• Size, scale, and types of business tourism events. • Event planning processes and	• Sequential timeline mapping (pre-event, live execution, post-event).	• Project governance and accountability: Balancing commercial viability and strict regulatory compliance with creative stakeholder briefs.	• Formative: Peer-reviewed elevator pitches of event concepts and draft budget reviews. • Summative: Internal centre-devised assignment brief (comprehensive project portfolio and feasibility review).

	logistics management. • Producing and reviewing a fully costed event proposal.	• Budgeting, resource allocation, and risk mitigation.		
--	--	---	--	--

5. Assessment Strategy

Assessment Type	Purpose	Frequency
Diagnostic	• To identify initial gaps in student knowledge regarding world geography, basic spatial awareness, and numerical data literacy at the start of the course. • To pinpoint specific individual needs regarding extended essay writing and structured business report formatting before launching into internal assignments.	• Completed at the start of Year 12 (induction week). • Utilised at the start of new units to benchmark prior contextual awareness.
Formative	• To assess student understanding of core concepts dynamically without impacting their final grade (e.g. assessing the application of the 4 Ps in marketing or timeline sequencing in event planning). • To provide targeted, low-stakes feedback that addresses misconceptions and builds exam/coursework confidence.	• Weekly via retrieval quizzes, short exam-style practice questions, and peer-reviewed presentation pitches. • Mid-term milestone checks during coursework drafting phases.

Summative	• To formally measure student attainment against Pearson national standards to calculate the final qualification grade. • To validate technical competency, data synthesis, and individual research capabilities under controlled and formal conditions.	• Unit 1 Written Exam: Set by Pearson (January with June resit opportunity). • Unit 2 Controlled Task: Set by Pearson based on pre-released material templates. (January with June resit opportunity). • Units 3 & 11 Coursework Portfolios: Completed at the end of their respective teaching blocks.
Synoptic	• To require learners to seamlessly combine, connect, and apply knowledge from multiple units to resolve a single complex industry scenario. • For example, linking the market segmentation data from Unit 3 and the global trends from Unit 1 to accurately construct a viable corporate itinerary in Unit 2 or an event proposal in Unit 11.	• Maintained continuously through synoptic themes embedded in Unit 2 (Global Destinations) and Unit 11 (Events, Conferences and Exhibitions). • Culminates during the final assessment windows in Year 13.