

SQA Advanced Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: International Tourist Destinations

Unit code: HP57 46

Unit purpose: This is a practical Unit which involves the candidate in acquiring and applying knowledge about the principal worldwide tourist destinations and attractions. It is intended for a candidate studying an SQA Advanced course in Travel and Tourism. It is also suitable for employees in airlines, tour operators and travel agencies who wish to improve their working knowledge of destinations. A good working knowledge of tourist destinations is a necessity for candidates seeking employment in all areas of the travel industry. The scope of the Unit is broad with the candidate developing a working knowledge of a range of tourist destinations around the world. Key aspects of tourist destinations are studied including physical features and attractions. Candidates develop their knowledge and skills in researching worldwide tourist destinations through reference materials such as atlases, brochures, tourist guides and the internet. Candidates who successfully complete the Unit will be able to provide resort and destination information to customers of airlines, travel agencies or tour operators in a professional manner.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

1. Identify and locate the most popular international tourist destinations.
2. Describe the key features of the most popular international tourist destinations.
3. Provide information on a range of the most popular international tourist destinations.

Credit points and level: 1 SQA Credit at SCQF level 6: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from National 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: A basic knowledge of geography and the main tourist areas is desirable. This may be evidenced by possession of relevant National 5 NQ Travel and Tourism Units. Competence in communication is required and this may be evidenced by possession of English at Standard Grade band 2 or above or an equivalent Unit in communication. If candidates do not possess this level of experience, they may have difficulty in achieving the Unit in the allotted time.

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Core skills: There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards core skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this Unit.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes. Normally the Unit is taught and delivered within the SQA Advanced Certificate in Travel and the SQA Advanced Diploma in Travel and Tourism framework.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html>).

Assessment: As all the Outcomes in this Unit require the candidate to demonstrate knowledge whose application is likely to be in a vocational context, a practical approach to assessment is desirable. Candidates are required to present sufficient evidence that they have met the Outcomes. Details of recommended assessment tests are given for each Outcome. Two assessment tests are suggested.

The first test is an unseen closed-book test comprising mapping exercises and structured questions. Employees in travel, whether it be in tour operating, planning airline itineraries or discussing holidays in a travel agency, must have the ability to picture places on a mental map and provide instantaneous broad descriptions of tourist destinations. These competences are assessed in this test.

The second test is an open book practical assignment in which the candidate is required to service customer enquiries in more detail. The test gauges the candidate's ability to make recommendations about destinations and to prepare detailed information to meet specific customer requirements.

Centres may choose to develop their own assessment instruments but should note that the standard must reflect SCQF Level 6 and therefore the level of demand must be greater than the assessment instruments specified in relevant SCQF Level 5 Travel and Tourism Units.

SQA Advanced Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment.

Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Identify and locate the most popular international tourist destinations

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ most popular international tourist destinations including countries, cities, and resort areas
- ◆ attractions and well known physical features
- ◆ identifying and locating the most popular tourist destinations and physical features on maps

Evidence requirements

Candidates must produce evidence of the ability to accurately identify international tourist destinations, attractions and physical features on maps of the world or regions of the world. Candidates will also be required to produce evidence of the ability to plot a selection of the best-known destinations, attractions, and physical features on blank maps. The evidence must be generated without access to reference materials and will be produced under normal test conditions.

Assessment guidelines

Please refer to Assessment Guidelines at the end of Outcome 2

Outcome 2

Describe the key features of the most popular international tourist destinations

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ accurate descriptions of locations of tourist destinations
- ◆ describing key features of selected destinations accurately
- ◆ examination of the most important international tourist attractions
- ◆ using industry reference sources to research information

Evidence requirements

Candidates must produce evidence which demonstrates a competence in describing the location and features of tourist destinations. The evidence must be generated without access to reference materials and will be produced in the classroom under normal test conditions.

Assessment guidelines

To achieve Outcomes 1 and 2 it is suggested that candidates complete an unseen closed-book test. The test will be in two parts, the first comprising practical mapping exercises and structured questions. In the mapping section candidates would be required to:

- a) Identify 8 marked countries, 10 marked resorts/resort areas and 8 marked physical features on maps
- b) Locate 8 countries, 10 resorts/resort areas and 8 physical features on blank maps of the world.

The countries, areas and physical features in b) would be different to those in a). In both a) and b) 6 countries, 8 resort/resort areas and 6 physical features must be answered correctly. The second part of this assessment will consist of 20 structured questions covering a sample of resorts, attractions and physical features studied in the Unit. The candidate should answer at least 15 questions correctly.

These tasks should be carried out within acceptable industry timescales. The test should be completed with one hour.

Outcome 3

Provide information on a range of the most popular international tourist destinations

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ using brochures, featuring inclusive arrangements, effectively to provide information appropriate to customer needs
- ◆ using other trade sources to provide supplementary information on selected destinations
- ◆ accurate descriptions of key features of tourist destinations including climatic conditions, time zones, languages, gateways, transfer times, appeal, attractions and notable amenities
- ◆ presenting information to a standard acceptable in industry

Evidence requirements

Candidates must produce evidence which demonstrates a competence in presenting information to customers. Two different arrangements featuring different types of destination should be presented to demonstrate competence to a standard acceptable in industry.

Assessment guidelines

The second test is an open book practical assignment in which the candidate would be required to present information in response to customer enquiries. A variety of products should be researched in order to identify suitable inclusive arrangements which include tourist destinations and attractions. The key features of the arrangements must be described accurately and this could take the form of a presentation.

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To avoid a repetitive experience for candidates, different modes could be applied for each destination, eg written report, PowerPoint, role play or interpretative poster. The quality of the presentation is key to satisfactory performance and professional standards must be observed. Access to information sources is necessary. These tasks should be carried out within acceptable industry timescales. It would be appropriate to give candidates advance information of customer requirements but to ensure that the assignment reports are completed in the classroom in front of the assessor to ensure authenticity.

Administrative information

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SQA Advanced Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: International Tourist Destinations

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit aims to provide the knowledge and skills required to provide information on tourist destinations and attractions and to develop geographical skills. It is essential that preparation for this Unit takes account of current industry practice. The environment and resources of a model travel agency are recommended for candidates undertaking the Unit in a college. Industry reference material including access to appropriate electronic (GDS, Internet) and audio visual (Television, radio, teletext, DVD) sources will also be required. The candidate is required to study a range of destinations and attractions and to use a variety of reference sources in order to provide accurate information.

The Unit covers a selection of the most popular international holiday destinations, particularly long haul, visited by citizens of the United Kingdom. These have been determined using available statistics and will be reviewed when necessary.

The recommended destinations are:

- ◆ Canada – general travel geography with focus on holidays to Toronto and Canadian Rockies (Calgary to Vancouver)
- ◆ The United States – general travel geography with focus on New York, Washington, Florida and California.
- ◆ The Caribbean – general travel geography with focus on Cuba, Barbados, Antigua, St Lucia and Jamaica
- ◆ Latin America – general travel geography with a focus on Mexico
- ◆ Africa – general travel geography with a focus on Egypt, Kenya and South Africa
- ◆ India and Indian Ocean islands – general travel geography with a focus on the Golden Triangle (Delhi, Agra, Jaipur), Sri Lanka, Mauritius, The Maldives
- ◆ The Far East – general travel geography with a focus on Singapore, Hong Kong and Thailand
- ◆ Australia and New Zealand
- ◆ General travel geography of European destinations is also recommended.

Corresponding to Outcomes:

Outcome 1

General travel geography: Atlas/map skills, locating principal worldwide tourist receiving countries, principal tourist destinations and areas: principal physical features – continents, hemispheres, oceans, seas, rivers, mountains/ranges.

Outcome 2

Introduction to industry reference materials and sources; examination of a range of international tourist destinations (resorts, cities, areas, islands/groups); location of destination and description of destination; description of key features.

Examination of a range of the most iconic international tourist attractions (natural, man-made and events) eg Pyramids, Taj Mahal, Great Wall of China, Niagara Falls, Victoria Falls, Rio de Janeiro Carnival, Great Barrier Reef, Grand Canyon, Statue of Liberty, Disneyland, Eiffel Tower, The Parthenon, the Colosseum.

Outcome 3

Use of industry reference material and sources including agents' manuals, tourist offices and tourist information centres; study of a range of tour operators' brochures, cruise programmes and airline packages; key features including climatic conditions, time zones and time differences, languages, gateways, transfer times, appeal, attractions, food/drink, souvenirs/best buys, flora/fauna, special events; culture; history identification of inclusive arrangements which satisfy given requirements; any advice on effects of travel to and in chosen destinations e.g. jetlag (causes and symptoms), climate effects (strong sunlight, heat exhaustion, snow, high-altitude illness, areas where dangerous diseases are endemic), culture shock: Foreign Office advice on travel to relevant countries, examination of information; presentation of information to clients within target timescales and to a professional standard.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

A candidate-centred, resource-based learning approach is recommended, supported by direct lecturer exposition of key points, concepts and suggested strategies. The necessity for worldwide coverage will require a broad-based approach, as indicated by the phrase 'general travel geography' in the section above on content/context. However selection of illustrative examples will permit in-depth analysis of selected tourist destinations.

To bring the world into the classroom, extensive use of visual materials is recommended. DVD/video, transparencies and/or PowerPoint slides, maps, atlases and brochures are essential, given the range of information and destinations to be covered.

Many candidate-centred activities can be designed around the task of identifying destinations and physical features. Through a task-orientated approach, skills in selecting and using correct information will be developed, in addition to knowledge of destinations themselves. Individual candidate activities could focus on selected case studies using brochures, travel guides, published maps, and the Internet. Board games, quizzes and roles play may also be used effectively.

Centres may choose to develop their own assessment instruments but should note that the standard must reflect SCQF Level 6 and therefore the level of demand must be greater than the assessment instruments specified in SCQF Level 5 travel and tourism Unit. The main suggested approaches to internal assessment in this Unit are practical exercises, structured questions and assignments based on case studies.

It is recommended that all outcomes should be assessed towards the end of the unit to allow maximum time for candidates to gain and retain knowledge through teaching and learning

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activities. It may also be prudent to leave the first assessment to the last especially where candidates without prior geographic knowledge or understanding are undertaking the Unit.

There is a lot of information to absorb and candidates will be best prepared for assessment by the sustained and consistent use of maps and brochures. In this way they have maximum time to become thoroughly familiar with the locations of the wide range of tourist destinations and physical features which they need to be able to identify. It is further recommended that the suggested instrument for Outcomes 1 and 2 should be set last as these practical exercises demand a familiarity with map locations which is only acquired through time and practice.

Open learning

This Unit is well-suited to delivery by open learning. Materials could be developed in the traditional paper-based way, or online, with links to important industry websites and references to appropriate brochures and travel guides. Candidate progress could be monitored through tutor marked assignments.

Equality and inclusion

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

General information for candidates

Unit title: International Tourist Destinations

The Unit is designed to provide you with a broad knowledge of international tourist destinations. By the end of it you should be able to provide information in response to typical enquiries generated by clients of travel agencies or tour operators.

There are three Outcomes in the Unit. In the first you will develop an ability to identify and locate important tourist destinations and attractions using maps. Then in the next Outcome you will study the key features of these tourist destinations and what visitors can see and do. Finally you will have the opportunity to compile information in response to client requests for particular types of holidays. You will also learn to use the information sources that people working in the travel and tourism industry use to provide information to their customers about worldwide tourist destinations. The Unit is essentially practical and will involve you in acquiring and applying knowledge of the travel destinations through a variety of learning methods.

To demonstrate that you are able to provide information to the standard required in the Unit you will be assessed by your lecturer/tutor. In this Unit there are two assessment tasks to complete. One assessment is unseen and closed-book while in the other you will be able to use relevant travel industry materials which you will have been accustomed to using in class, such as maps, brochures, travel guides and industry websites. The assessment tasks are:

1. In the first test, which covers Outcomes 1 and 2, you have to:
 - a) Mark the locations of countries, tourist destinations and physical features on blank maps of the world/regions of the world.
 - b) Identify marked but unnamed countries, tourist destinations and physical features on blank maps of the world/regions of the world.
 - c) Answer 20 structured questions about destinations, attractions and physical features.

This is a closed-book test, ie you will not have access to a map, atlas, guidebook or any other materials. You will have one hour to complete the test.

2. In the second test covering Outcome 3 you will be given client requirements for two different types of holiday. Using any information sources available, you have to select appropriate destinations and provide comprehensive information to a standard which would be expected in industry. You will be allowed to research the information in advance but will be required to produce your assignment reports in a classroom situation in the presence of the assessor.