



Tourism Management
Career and Industry Guide



**EMPLOYABILITY
TEAM**

Advancing Careers

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Introduction

“What can I do with a Business and Tourism Management degree?”

“Which companies offer careers with my degree?”

If you're asking yourself these questions then we would advise you to research your career choices as thoroughly and as early as possible, particularly in relation to experience required, different career routes you can explore or where postgraduate study choices can develop future opportunities.

Three ways you will succeed in finding a graduate job:

1. Undertaking paid work whilst at university or in the six months immediately after
2. Focusing your job search exclusively on graduate level jobs and making your applications whilst still studying
3. Having a career plan upon leaving university

I have a degree, now what?

If you don't know what career you want when you graduate, you may have more options than you think. Having a degree opens you up to many graduate level jobs and postgraduate study, which doesn't specifically have to be in Business or Tourism, as many industries are open to graduates from any degree background. So, explore your options!

The below link has some useful guidance for graduates who are still deciding on their career ideas and options; key skills that are gained in each degree and what you can do with them.

<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/career-ideas/i-have-degree-now-what>

Career Decision Making

Your first step should be to bridge the gap between where you are and where you want to be. Exploring your values, interests, and skills will help you find educational and career options that match up with your goals and plan for the future.

As well as being familiar with opportunities you can secure with the degree you are studying or have studied, it may be useful to take a careers assessment or quiz, to get a deep understanding of industries or alternative roles you may be suited to. Examples of these are below:

- **Buzz Quiz** – A short, fun quiz which uses the Myer-Briggs personality factors to determine what careers may suit you (as well as other things).
<https://icould.com/buzz-quiz/>
- **National Careers Service Skills Assessment** – An assessment that supports you in identifying your transferable skills as well as finding out what interests and motivates you.
<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/skills-assessment>
- **Prospects** – Offers a 'Career Planner' which is a detailed career quiz as well as the 'Job Match Beta' which asks questions on interests, as well as what you find purposeful and rewarding, matching your answers with job roles.
<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/planner>

Types of roles to consider

An enthusiasm for the local culture, a desire to help people make the most of the leisure time or a love of travelling are some of the passions you can explore with a job in tourism. Tourism is a global industry, providing a range of opportunities to graduates, both in the UK and abroad.

Jobs directly related to your degree include:

- [TOURISM OFFICER](#) – As a tourism officer, you'll be responsible for key areas such as marketing, visitor management and the development of tourism campaigns, products, services and facilities. You can work for a range of employers, including public and private destination management organisations, public agencies or partnerships and local authorities.
- [TRAVEL AGENCY MANAGER](#) - As a travel agency manager, you may manage a small independent business or a large chain. Some agencies specialise in business travel or offer a detailed knowledge of specific locations or travel products.
- [TOURIST INFORMATION MANAGER](#) – You'll oversee services that promote the local area and provide information to both visitors and local residents. You'll book accommodation, sell tickets for local events, order and sell gifts and souvenirs, run special events and generate marketing opportunities. Your management duties will include the daily running of the centre, networking, staff management and recruitment, and ensuring targets are met.
- [TOUR MANAGER](#) - As a tour manager you'll use your love of travel to organise and accompany groups of holidaymakers on tours to a variety of UK and overseas locations.
- [HOTEL MANAGER](#) - As a hotel manager, you'll be commercially accountable for budgeting and financial management and will need to plan, organise and direct all hotel services, including front-of-house (reception, concierge, and reservations), food and beverage operations and housekeeping.

Jobs where your degree would be useful include:

- [AIR CABIN CREW](#)
- [CONFERENCE CENTRE MANAGER](#)
- [CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER](#)
- [EVENT MANAGER](#)
- [MARKETING EXECUTIVE](#)
- [PASSENGER TRANSPORT MANAGER](#)
- [SALES EXECUTIVE](#)
- [OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES/EDUCATION MANAGER](#)

Remember that many employers accept applications from graduates with any degree subject, so don't restrict your thinking to the jobs listed here.

Understanding the industry and employers

Many graduates consider a career in Travel Consultancy, Sales Management, Events, Human Resources, and a wide range of Marketing positions. You have a variety of choices when deciding where to work within the tourism industry as it covers services such as:

- retail travel
- currency exchange
- tour operators
- tourist boards

Passenger transport including:

- coach
- aviation
- rail
- waterways

Visitor attractions such as:

- museums
- theme parks
- zoos
- heritage sites

Accommodations services including:

- hotels
- hostels
- holiday parks

Employers could include:

- local authorities
- destination management organisations (DMOs) - see Visit Britain and the Scottish Destination Management Association (SDMA) for lists
- national parks
- business improvement districts (BIDs)
- commercial tourist attractions
- wildlife trusts
- Forestry England
- National Trust and the National Trust for Scotland

Associated with accommodation and business operations are also conferences and events, which provide considerable all-year-round employment opportunities. Companies in the Events and Hospitality sector also recruit Tourism graduates to a range of head office functions such as finance, IT, human resources, customer service, sales and marketing, property and legal and general management.

Graduates of a degree specialising in Tourism Management have moved into the following sectors:

- Retail, catering and customer service
- Business, HR and finance
- Clerical, secretarial, administrative
- Marketing, PR, sales

Many of the UK's hotels and restaurants are independently owned small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). You could work for an event management company, a particular venue or an event supplier. Large companies such as hotel chains and contract caterers also recruit event managers, while some major charities have fundraising roles that involve some event planning.

Where and how can I do my research

[Travel and Tourism job profiles](#)

[What can I do with a Tourism management degree?](#)

[Top skills for a tourism career](#)

[Travel and Tourism industry news](#)

Keep up to date with [Eventbrite](#) for industry news

Transferable skills

Tourism graduates gain knowledge about products, structures and operations within the tourism industry, learning about tour operators, airlines, hotels and tourist boards.

Through a combination of vocational and academic study you learn about the relationships between consumers and the providers of tourism services, and about the issues relating to sustainability and social responsibility within tourism.

The course also equips you with a range of transferable skills, including:

- leadership
- teamworking
- problem solving
- communication skills, with a strong customer focus
- IT skills
- the ability to research
- presentation skills
- the ability to work to deadlines

How to gain experience

Whatever career area you're interested in, finding some short-term paid or voluntary work will improve your prospects of getting a graduate job and can give you a valuable insight into how a company or organisation operates. Students who gain relevant work experience while studying secure graduate level employment quicker after graduating.

Please see our '**Ways to gain experience and skills throughout your degree**' resource under 'Employability Resources' on the Employability VLE tile for more ideas and information on gaining experience. Here are some ideas that you may want to consider:

- Volunteering – this can be a great way to gain industry specific skills and knowledge and will give you some great experience to add to your graduate CV.
 - [Do.it](#)
 - [CharityJob](#)
 - [Volunteer Match](#)
 - [Reach volunteering](#)
- Internships – these are work experience opportunities offered by an organisation for a fixed period of time. They are typically undertaken by students and graduates looking to gain relevant skills.
 - [Placements & Internships for Students | RateMyPlacement](#)
 - [Internships | Bright Network](#)
 - [Virtual Internships | The Forage](#)
- Relevant work experience – work shadowing or paid work experience. Can you find a role within a tourism/hospitality/events department? Can you find any administrative or office-based experience? Can you take on any responsibilities in your current role that include the relevant functions for your desired career?
- Networking - this is important and helps you develop contacts in the industry. Many organisations and professional bodies host student events and can provide you with networking opportunities that may support you in finding relevant experience. Explore student membership of other supporting organisations!

Further qualifications and courses

MSc International Hospitality and Tourism Management - ARU London

If you are interested in continuing your studies with us, then we have a great course designed for those looking to move into senior management positions in the Hospitality and Tourism sectors within an international context. As an ARU London Alumni, you will receive a £2,000 scholarship to study a postgraduate degree with us!

The course will enable graduates to develop strategies in these dynamic sectors, taking account of contemporary issues and emergent crises. The course focuses on key themes of sustainability and ethics, both of which are increasingly important to an informed customer base. The course includes core topics around marketing, branding, and the use of digital platforms, along with human capital management issues and the changing patterns of the available talent pool across national boundaries.

You can find out more about the course through the website:

[MSc International Hospitality and Tourism Management](#)

Remember – if you are looking to complete a masters then you will also need some industry relevant experience to help you stand out in the graduate job market! Please come and speak to a member of the employability team and we will be happy to discuss these options with you!

Other Postgraduate courses

Generally, there is no requirement to continue to postgraduate level, as employers in the sector also place great value on experience in this area of work, however many would like to develop higher-level skills. If you wish to study at postgraduate level, master's degrees typically last for 12 months if studied full time or two years if you opt to take the course part time. Entry requirements vary between universities, so always check with the institution. You may need to have a good degree in a related discipline, but in some cases any subject is acceptable. Relevant postgraduate study in this field includes courses with an emphasis on management skills, particularly in areas such as international tourism, hospitality, heritage and sustainability. Postgraduate courses in specialist areas such as ecotourism or rural development may also be helpful. General business topics such as marketing or human resources could be relevant and can be applied across various disciplines.

Professional Development and short courses

This is a sector with clear progression routes, and it is possible to work your way up to management positions with your undergraduate degree, without the need to study a master's degree. You will typically develop your skills and knowledge by working alongside more experienced colleagues in the sector, but there may be opportunities for training depending on your employer. Specific in-house training is likely to be available within the industry and is often encouraged to enhance promotion prospects and increase knowledge of particular issues.

Depending on your area of work, there may be industry-specific professional qualifications to work towards. These may include short courses, run either in-house or externally. Sessions covered could typically include:

- conference and event planning
- customer care
- event marketing and copywriting
- finance
- health and safety
- IT
- project management
- sales and sponsorship
- risk analysis
- visitor attraction management
- local economies
- cultures and sustainability

A professional qualification involves undertaking vocational training that focuses on developing the practical skills required for a specific job role, with these courses widely recognised for their quality within the industry. You could take a professional qualification as a way to complement your undergraduate degree.

The [Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality \(CTH\)](#) offers a range of management, culinary and continuing professional development (CPD) programmes.

Key professional bodies provide industry news, articles and training opportunities. They also have information on activities that count towards continuing professional development (CPD) and information on external courses and events. Membership of these bodies is also useful for keeping up to date with the latest industry news, networking and developing contacts. Relevant organisations include:

- [Tourism Management Institute](#)
- [The Tourism Society](#)

What graduate schemes are available?

Graduate schemes are training programmes at an entry level for those who have obtained an undergraduate or postgraduate degree. These schemes are used by organisations to bring new employees into their departments and support them professionally, and they are designed to give the successful candidates hands-on experience in different departments by allowing them to gain exposure to different roles and tasks.

Below is a list of some companies that offer graduate programmes in the sector:

Travel Graduate Schemes

- [TUI Graduate Programme](#)
- [Flight Centre](#)
- [Expedia Group](#)
- [British Airways](#)
- [Virgin Atlantic](#)
- [Hays Travel](#)
- [Carnival Corporation](#)

Hotel Graduate Schemes

- [Marriott Hotels](#)
- [Hilton Hotels](#)
- [Intercontinental Hotel Group](#)
- [Accor Hotels](#)
- [Leonardo Hotels](#)
- [Whitbread](#)
- [Raddison Group](#)
- [Red Carnation Hotels](#)
- [Travelodge](#)
- [Dorchester Collection](#)
- [PPHE Hotel Group](#)

Leisure and Events Graduate Schemes

- [National Trust](#)
- [Alfa Leisureplex Group](#)
- [Star Tours Trailfinders](#)
- [Merlin Entertainments](#)
- [Sodexo Group](#)
- [Clarion Events](#)
- [RX Global](#)
- [Prestige Venues and Events](#)
- [Live Nation](#)
- [Rockitfish](#)
- [Event Concept](#)

Please note that these are just a few examples of graduate schemes, and there are lots more you can explore, with a wide range of opportunities and schemes available!

Websites that you can search for graduate schemes are:

- [Bright Network](#)
- [Prospects](#)
- [Give a Grad a Go](#)
- [Milkround](#)
- [Target Jobs](#)

Where to look for other graduate jobs and part-time opportunities?

If you are looking for part time or flexible opportunities, please see our '*Finding part-time graduate work*' resource on the 'Employability Resources' tile of the VLE.

Generic job searching websites

Generic job search websites are widely used by organisations to post jobs in any industry or level. Although these websites can be useful to find a range of opportunities, you may find that the same jobs are advertised across many platforms, and because they aren't focused on the graduate market, they can be highly competitive with lots of widely advertised and often duplicated roles.

- [Reed](#)
- [Indeed](#)
- [Total Jobs](#)
- [CV Library](#)

Using industry specific job searching websites may save you time and allow you to find opportunities that best fit your interests, because they specialise in roles that suit your career direction and bespoke for the industry.

Tourism specific job searching websites

- [Aviation Job Search](#)
- [Flight Global](#)
- [Leisure Jobs](#)
- [Local Government Jobs](#)
- [Marketing Week](#)
- [Tourism Management Institute \(TMI\)](#)
- [Visit Britain - Careers](#)
- [Travel Weekly Jobs](#)
- [Design Week Jobs](#)
- [Exhibition News](#)
- [Museum Jobs](#)
- [Museums Association \(MA\)](#)
- [Jobs in Hotels](#)
- [S1 Jobs](#)

Recruitment Agencies

Another way of searching for roles is by using recruitment agencies as they work directly with organisations that are looking to hire. Recruiters are consultants that match candidates to job roles using interviews and

application support. Contacting recruitment agencies is another way of maximising your chances of finding roles, as they contact you if a role that suits your interests, skills, knowledge, and experience becomes available.

General recruitment agencies that support graduates:

- [Hays](#)
- [Adecco](#)
- [Morgan Hunt](#)
- [Tiger Recruitment](#)
- [Huntress](#)

Recruitment agencies specialising in tourism include:

- [Jewels Travel & Hospitality Recruitment](#)
- [Rock Pool Recruitment](#)
- [Audley Careers](#)
- [C&M Recruitment](#)
- [Platinum Travel Recruitment Ltd](#)
- [Lightening Recruitment](#)

Changing Careers

It's never too late to re-train in another field - in fact, having life experience behind you when heading back to university can work to your advantage.

[Make a career change | Prospects.ac.uk](#)

[Career Change Advice | At 30, 40, 50 | Career Consultants](#)

[How to Change Your Career | Guardian Jobs \(theguardian.com\)](#)

[How To Change Careers, According To 50 People Who Made A Pivot \(forbes.com\)](#)

Whilst you are completing your degree, or once you have graduated, you may be looking to make a career change into a different industry or a different role. Consider these points when looking to progress into something new.

1. Stepping Up

- a. Can you progress from your current role into a new role within the company or industry?
- b. Have you spoken to your manager or HR department about the opportunity for progression or taking on further responsibilities?
- c. Can you accept management or supervisory responsibilities?
- d. Can you apply for a role similar to your current role where there is scope for development?

2. Stepping Out

- a. Move into a different sector - have you researched what sectors you are interested in? Can you network with individuals in this sector? Can you gain any relevant work experience?
- b. Look into your transferrable skills and how these can be used in another role or industry
- c. Demonstrate how you can be a great fit and asset to another company

Do you already have considerable experience?

You may already have considerable relatable experience that you have gained prior to studying for a degree. An undergraduate or postgraduate degree in Business and Tourism Management can be a great way to secure your career acceleration and rise into managerial and leadership positions. Having extensive industry experience, alongside a degree, may open the door to career progression opportunities and senior positions.

When searching for senior leadership or managerial positions, you may need to use specialist job searching websites which cater for applicants with extensive industry knowledge and experience. Some of these websites may only list jobs that have a salary of £50,000 or above and are specifically designed to support professionals with extensive experience, so you find these more helpful than the graduate schemes aimed for entry level skills in the sector.

- [Aruba Exec](#)
- [Exec Appointments](#)
- [Executives on The Web](#)
- [Experteer](#)
- [Senior Executive jobs | Guardian Jobs \(theguardian.com\)](#)
- [Executive Opportunities - Search Executive Jobs Online \(stoneexecutive.co.uk\)](#)

Psychometric Testing

Many employers use psychometric tests as part of the recruitment process. They're common in graduate jobs, work placements and internships. Psychometric tests are used to:

- Identify the people best suited to a particular job
- See if you are a good fit for their company culture
- Screen a lot of applicants without having to interview everyone

You'll see tests of things like:

- Verbal reasoning – your ability to understand written information
- Numerical reasoning – how you think using numbers
- Abstract or spatial reasoning – your ability to understand patterns, logical rules or work with shapes
- Personality - questions about how you behave, to predict how you might act in a work situation (there are no right or wrong answers)
- Situational judgement tests - set a scene and ask what you would do in that situation

Psychometric Testing can be quite difficult if you have not had any experience of them in the past. You can practice these tests on Career Zone by going to the 'Aptitude Test' section. You can also find free practice tests on sites like:

- [The Psychometric Test Project](#)
- [The British Psychological Society](#)
- [SHL practice tests](#)

Speculative Applications

A speculative application is when the job seeker conducts research and directly contacts a company they wish to work for to see if there are any employment opportunities. Statistically, almost 60% of jobs are not actively advertised on the open market (UK Careers Fair).

Targeting and reaching out to companies to enquire about opportunities may increase your chances of success in the competitive job market. Being proactive in this way can give you access to a much wider variety of roles and increase your chances of success in the competitive job market.

Speculative applications provide a direct route into the company and contacting recruiters can lead to:

- [Temporary or permanent work](#)
- [Internships or work shadowing opportunities](#)
- [Increased business connections](#)

Even if it turns out there isn't a job available, your positive approach may impress the employer sufficiently that they'll bear you in mind for future vacancies that arise.

To find out more about speculative applications, please see page 5 of our **'Cover Letter writing guide and examples'** under the 'Employability Resources' tile for more information and an example.

Professional Bodies

Professional bodies are organisations who maintain inspection over the conduct, knowledge and key skillset and practices of that profession. These professional bodies offer membership to those working in the sector or profession, so they can have access to labour market information, trends, conferences, workshops, seminars, and exclusive job opportunities. Becoming a member of a professional body gives you full access to these events and vacancies and allows you opportunities to continue your professional development within the industry.

Below are the professional bodies for the Tourism industry:

- [Institute of Travel and Tourism](#)
- [Tourism Management Institute](#)
- [The Tourism Society](#)

CareerZone

Career Zone is a digital platform which provides careers and employability online resources for all our students. CareerZone has great resources to help you explore, understand and decide your career path, and the below sections provide you up to date information on various industries and job roles.

- **'Industry Reports'** – bespoke industry sections with further links to useful websites for further exploration
- **'Labour Market Information'** - explore different roles, with facts about each role, including employment growth, average working hours and salaries, as well as common tasks and required qualifications
- **'Career Pathways'** - videos directly from people who perform various roles, allowing you to get a real sense of what the role is about.

To access Career Zone, log into your VLE platform. On the right side of the screen, you will see 'Services' where you can click on the Career Zone button, which takes you directly into the platform.

Enterprise

You might also want to explore the world of enterprise. If you've got a great idea and you spot a gap in the market and want to earn a living from doing something you're passionate about, if you start your own business, you won't be unemployed.

You might want to help others or make the world a better place, so if you have a product or service that can save people time, or money, or stress, and generally make life better, then this is always a great reason for starting a business.

The Enterprise Hub is an entrepreneurial support service provided to current students and alumni who wish to establish their own businesses. The Enterprise Team is comprised of experts who possess a wide range of specialist business skills and experience. This includes a group of students and alumni entrepreneurs who offer not only their insights to running a successful business but also provide additional guidance as peer mentors. The Hub offers bespoke workshops to those already running businesses as well as those seeking to establish new start-ups. To register your interest or for more information please contact our Enterprise Team via email - Enterprise@london.aru.ac.uk

LinkedIn

It can be hard to stand out in the job market when there are so many other graduates trying to do the same thing. One quick win is to have a LinkedIn account to raise your profile and build up professional contacts while still at university.

Benefits of using LinkedIn:

- Build your personal brand - people will remember you and your brand when they look for someone with your particular skills and expertise. A strong personal brand can lead to new opportunities
- To build a strong network of professional contacts - you never know when a connection will come in handy and the bigger your network, the more chance you have of being referred to a job role
- To prove your dedication - having a LinkedIn account as a student proves that you are dedicated to pursuing a career
- To get job alerts - you can program LinkedIn to send you job alerts for certain companies, industries or specific job titles, so that you'll never miss out on a great opportunity again

Employability Support

If you need any employability support or want to discuss your future career options, you can book a one-to-one appointment with one of our Careers Consultants. So, whether you're looking to prepare for your first graduate role and need advice on your CV or application form, or you're looking for a part-time job to fit around your studies or want to apply for a postgraduate course, then please drop us an email at employability@london.aru.ac.uk or call us 0207 400 6789 and we'll get you booked in as soon as possible.