

FOUNDATION DEGREE In Tourism Park Management



Information on the Foundation Degree in Tourism Park Management

KINGSTON MAURWARD COLLEGE

Validated by

**THE SCHOOL OF CONSERVATION SCIENCES
BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY**

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Structure

The Foundation Degree in Tourism Park Management runs over three and a half years. Each module of study starts with a residential course, usually on a holiday park (Monday lunchtime to Friday lunchtime), then the remainder of the study will be by distance learning once students are back at their park, using email, written and web based material.

Study modules are spread over the duration of the course, with four or five in each of the first three academic years and the final modules will be done in the autumn of the fourth year. A work based learning module will be included, using park experience in day to day work, and an industry project will use each candidate's park knowledge and experience as the basis for applied learning.

The residential weeks give an opportunity to get to know others doing the course, and to work face to face with the course tutors, so that students do not feel isolated when beginning their distance learning. They develop a sense of community, and the tutors can provide any learning support that may be necessary. It is really important that 'returners to study' can get appropriate help – for some students it will be many years since prior formal study. The residential schools on host parks will be chosen at appropriate locations nationally – certain facilities are required, but the geography of any one cohort of students will be taken into account. For example, the majority of students joining the first cohort were from the South of England, so their modules have so far been in Dorset, Devon and Hampshire. The second cohort is geographically wider spread, and they will be visiting Wales and Yorkshire for modules – it would be unfair if the same students always had to travel the furthest distance. Students are encouraged to form working relationships and groups to support each other during their studies, and the study becomes increasingly social as the students progress.

The units are assessed by a combination of participation, multiple choice exam and written assignments. Multiple choice exams are sat during the first eight residential modules and taken on-line, and these lead to the award of the Institute of Hospitality Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management.

At the end of the course (280 credits) students will have achieved the Foundation Degree. If they wish, they can convert this to an Honours Degree by further study in a related subject, either at Bournemouth University or another Higher Education Institution.

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Feedback from students

The nine students who started the first course are from a wide range of parks and working experiences, from work on a small touring park to management within a group, from junior management to company directors. They have all valued this breadth of experience, which has informed their debates on management issues, and developed knowledge amongst the group. They have formed a really supportive group, helping each other and learning together. They have laughed a lot during residential schools, and there is a wealth of contact both on the college conferencing system, and on Facebook! These students have completed their first eight (level C) units, and are two units into level I. They have all also achieved the Institute of Hospitality Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management.

The second cohort of students only began their studies in January 2011 and they are currently working on their third assignments after the 'Managing the Tourism Park Consumer' residential school. Like cohort I they are a diverse group, but have already demonstrated both enthusiasm and a willingness to make the most of this degree opportunity, and have gelled very readily into a mutually supportive group, keen to get the most from the study and to enjoy every step of the way.

The skills and knowledge of the tutors are valued and communicated, and constructive suggestions by students for improvements are welcomed by the college – after all, the course is still in a formative stage. All of the early students are contributing their views as they progress which will help to develop the course and make it even better for the benefit of all future students. Students are the degree's best promoters.

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Course Content

Here is some information about the individual modules for the foundation degree. Each module is worth 20 credits. In each module the aims show what the unit will achieve, and the intended learning outcomes show what the learner should be able to do once they have completed it. Students will take time to learn and time to put the learning into practice. There will be aspects that students are familiar with, and some areas of work that they may not have experienced, but all of it should be useful, now and in the future.

Business Strategy

Aims

This Unit will develop the learner's understanding of the importance of developing a realistic and coherent business strategy for caravan parks, whilst enhancing the learner's understanding of key factors in the business environment and the impact and implications of those factors on business activities. Learners will be introduced to the key concepts of strategy and how it relates to their own business environment. Learners will develop the skills to scan the business environment in relation to the risks and opportunities for their business.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the learner is expected to:

01. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of, and the procedures involved in the strategic planning process;
02. Appreciate the importance of effective resource deployment in achieving business objectives;
03. Assess how the external business environment impacts upon hospitality, tourism and leisure businesses;
04. Demonstrate an understanding of strategic business development methods;
05. Evaluate the nature of the impact the 'micro external' environment has upon the hospitality, tourism and leisure industries;
06. Evaluate the 'macroeconomic' environmental issues upon the hospitality, tourism and leisure industries;
07. Evaluate the political, social, demographic and technological environments and their impacts upon the hospitality, tourism and leisure industries.

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Marketing for Tourism Parks

Aims

This Unit will develop the learner's understanding of the principles of marketing in the service environment. Learners will understand the basic marketing principles and their application in relation to the service sector and how these can be applied within Caravan Parks. The Unit will provide the learner with an understanding of the importance of marketing communications and the channels of distribution. Learners will develop a range of skills in identifying and using the most appropriate communications across a range of business settings in the hospitality, leisure and tourism industries.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the learner is expected to:

01. Appreciate the nature of service and service industries;
02. Distinguish between the service offering and the tangible product;
03. Identify the unique characteristics of Services Marketing;
04. Appreciate the framework for successful service marketing within the hospitality, tourism and leisure industries;
05. Evaluate the nature of marketing communications strategy;
06. Appreciate the process and components of a market communication campaign;
07. Assess the influence of macro/micro external influences on the communication process.

Managing the Tourism Park Consumer

Aims

This Unit will develop the learner's understanding of the complexities and considerations in managing the consumer and consumer expectations, including the importance of customer relationship management (CRM) as a method of establishing positive relationships with customers in the competitive business environment. The learner will develop a range of skills in identifying the key variables in managing the consumer and the consumer experience in the hospitality, leisure and tourism Industries, recognizing the differences between CRM and the more traditional marketing approaches and be able to apply some basic concepts to their own business in the Caravan Park industry.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the learner is expected to:

01. Develop an appreciation of the importance of quality and customer satisfaction in the exchange process, particularly in a service encounter;
02. Have an understanding of the different types of customer, and the differences between the customer and consumer;

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03. Develop knowledge of the variety and level of customer information available for analysis;
04. Understand the many ways that a business can influence the customer through internal systems and structures;
05. Evaluate key aspects of managing the customer experience;
06. Evaluate the difficulties and understand the differences in encouraging loyalty rather than frequency.

Managing Finance and Business Performance

Aims

This Unit will develop the learner's understanding of the management of business performance from both a financial and an operational position, including the tools and techniques involved in the effective financial planning and control of a business. The learner will develop a range of skills to critically analyse business performance, apply planning and control techniques in their own business and will be able to recognize the key performance indicators that impact on the effective and efficient management of the business function in the Caravan Park Industry.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the learner is expected to:

01. Employ techniques to produce budgeted operating plans;
02. Employ techniques to produce budgeted statements for profit and cash;
03. Utilise techniques to implement principles of budgetary control;
04. Develop knowledge and understanding of the behavioural aspects of budgeting;
05. Recognize the significance and interpret the meaning of the key company statements;
06. Critically analyse business performance from financial statements.

Leadership and Management

Aims

This Unit will facilitate the learner's understanding of effective leaders and managers and will enable them to recognise and bring into practice the key components and distinctive characteristics of effective leadership and management, whilst showing an appreciation of current legislation as it relates to the management of human resources within the hospitality, leisure and tourism industries for both the United Kingdom and the European Union. Learners will enhance their knowledge of the role of the effective leader and manager in maintaining and improving business performance. Learners will develop a range of skills that will assist in understanding the context of the legislation, its interpretation and impact on their own business and businesses within the European Union.

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Intended Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the learner is expected to:

01. Create a vision for a business department or area;
02. Develop an understanding of management behaviours and approaches;
03. Develop an understanding organisational culture;
04. Understand and develop the skills involved in providing leadership;
05. Develop the ability to plan and implementing change;
06. Recognise and identify current UK and European Union legislation relevant to Human Resources (HR) and understand how to update knowledge and awareness on a regular basis.

Managing the Changing Legislation for Tourism Parks

Aims

This Core Unit will develop the learner's understanding of the way in which the hospitality, leisure or tourism business needs to maintain awareness of legal developments and implement change on a regular basis. Learners will be able to recognise and evaluate the implications of legislative changes for their own business activities and consider the implications and mechanisms required to ensure compliance. The Unit will develop the learner's ability to consider and apply relevant risk management strategies within their own business environment. Learners will be introduced to a range of risk assessment techniques and learn how these can be applied in the management of risk in their own business within the Caravan Park Industry.

Intending Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the learner is expected to:

01. Understand the external factors that lead to changes in legislation;
02. Assess the consequences of changes to legislation upon an organisation;
03. Evaluate the gaps that exist between the existing situation in an organisation and the situation as required by new legislation;
04. Propose changes to organisational structure, policy and procedures to ensure compliance with new legislation;
05. Devise action plans that ensure compliance with new legislation is achieved;
06. Understand and identify the types of risks that could pose difficulties to a business and its environment; examine the difficulties and problems that may occur;
07. Evaluate and identify the risk management tools needed to prevent or minimise damage to a business through risk;
08. Discuss and evaluate how businesses can best adopt risk assessment techniques.

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Managing Tourism Parks through Technology

Aims

This Unit will facilitate the learner's understanding of the ways in which technology can be used to manage the business product in the hospitality, leisure and tourism industries. The unit will focus on the key elements of technological change and ensure that learners maintain currency in the skills required to effectively use technology in delivering products to their customers. Learners will also study the role and importance of efficient and effective business information systems in managing the business and wider business relationships. The learner will develop an understanding of core business information systems and their ability to use and improve systems within their own business in the Caravan Park Industry.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the learner is expected to:

01. Identify key concepts regarding using technology in hospitality management;
02. Understand how technology supports the Back Office;
03. Explore how technology supports the Front Office;
04. Appreciate the challenges to hospitality management through technology;
05. Explore the main challenges in business information systems.

Tourism Park Business Development

Aims

This Unit will develop the learner's understanding of business ethics and corporate social responsibility in the hospitality, leisure and tourism industries. Learners will be introduced to ethical constructs as they affect the behaviour of individuals and organisations and review how these behaviours impact on all stakeholders within the business environment.

This Unit also integrates the knowledge and understanding gained throughout Level C. The learner will identify how that knowledge gained in key business areas within the hospitality, leisure and tourism industries can contribute to the success of strategic business development.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the learner is expected to:

01. Understand how good leadership skills are integral with understanding organisational culture;
02. Appreciate the importance of effective resource deployment in achieving business objectives, and its place in business strategy;
03. Develop knowledge and understanding of the significance of the disclosure of information and recognise the significance of the key company statements;
04. Identify the unique characteristics of Service Marketing, and their place in the service industry;

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05. Develop an appreciation of the importance of quality and customer satisfaction in the exchange process and understand how the business can influence the customer through internal systems and structures;
06. Consider and evaluate current strategic ethical issues and the potential impact they have on Caravan Park businesses.

Managing Biodiversity and Conservation

Aims

This unit aims to provide learners with a broad based awareness and understanding of ecological principles, environmental issues and biological diversity. Against this underpinning knowledge the unit aims to develop learner understanding of current threats and controls in relation to habitats and resident species. Key concepts of conservation, habitat restoration and legislation will be introduced which will be particularly relevant to the Caravan Park Industry.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the student is expected to:

01. Understand, in appropriate detail, the evolutionary and scientific principles of ecosystems, their levels of organisation and the interactions of biotic and abiotic factors
02. Develop an awareness of the significance of biodiversity
03. Analyse the human impacts on habitats and species that can lead to extinction
04. Discuss the ecosystem approach to habitat management and restoration
05. Discuss the roles of Conservation Organisations and Legislation which pertain to the management of Caravan Parks

Research Skills

Aims

This unit aims to provide learners with the necessary framework of research skills required to undertake the Level I programme. It covers essential academic research techniques whilst allowing learners to begin to develop their research ideas using appropriate techniques in preparation for undertaking unit KM I/I Specialist Research Project at Level I, Year 4.

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Intended Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the learner is expected to:

01. Identify, evaluate and cite appropriate sources of information for research;
02. Demonstrate methods of communicating research;
03. Define and apply qualitative and quantitative approaches to research including introductory statistics;
04. Develop knowledge of experimental design and project planning.

Work Based Learning

Aims

This unit complements the academic experience by providing opportunities for learners to develop the knowledge, skills and work ethic necessary to succeed in industry.

The inter-relationship between WBL and all other units will be emphasised and contextualised through unit delivery. Learners will be encouraged to select appropriate areas of learning for further examination as part of their WBL project and presentation. The selected topic may then form the basis for further study later in the programme, in particular with units KM I/I and TPM14.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the learner is expected to:

01. Select, apply and engage in a period of work based learning appropriate to the programme of study and make justifications in relation to their career plan;
02. Communicate and work effectively within an agreed organisation whilst analysing their own performance;
03. Identify performance management strategies used by the organisation and discuss their effectiveness;
04. Synthesise and critically evaluate information from previous learning to an applied setting within the work-place.

Managing Health & Safety

Aims

This unit aims to provide learners with the knowledge and understanding of Health and Safety law, implementation and management appropriate for those in or aim for supervisory and management positions of caravan parks.

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Intended Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the learner is expected to:

01. Identify, evaluate and cite appropriate sources of health and safety information;
02. State and explain their responsibilities, and those of other workers in their organisation in relation to current health and safety legislation;
03. Evaluate hazards and risks effectively; undertake effective risk assessment activities to control risks and produce clear records for the guidance of others;
04. Investigate, evaluate and report on accidents and incidents; complete relevant documentation, both statutory and best practice;
05. Measure health and safety performance using both reactive and proactive methods.

Specialist Research Project (done on the park)

Aims

This unit will enable learners to choose a topic relevant to their academic and professional development and undertake a sustained investigation in that field. The study will have a significant practical contribution and will be used to encourage and test initiative and independent thought. The learner will take responsibility for the formulation of an investigation plan and an initial survey of relevant information and possible methods of approach. Learners will develop skills of independent enquiry and understand the difference between a research question and hypotheses.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the learner is expected to:

01. Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of project design;
02. Select and implement an appropriate research design;
03. Evaluate and interpret data and apply appropriate statistical tests;
04. Develop and demonstrate an ability to work independently;
05. Make effective use of the literature relevant to the field of study;
06. Produce a substantial written report that displays a coherent and in-depth appreciation of the research topic chosen.

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Practical Business Development

Aims

This unit is the culmination of the Foundation Degree course and closely links to TPM8, TPM9 and TPM12 units. It brings together all of the units previously studied into a business development situation. To complete this unit, the learner will produce a Business Development Plan including the business development concept, an action plan for implementation and a suitable evaluation and review process.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Having completed this unit the learner is expected to:

01. Identify an appropriate concept/area for business development planning, research the level of demand and establish the business case for the development;
02. Plan all logistical and business aspects in relation to the Business Development Plan;
03. Justify the need for the business development through a Business Development Plan;
04. Form an evaluation and review process for the critical measurement of the Business Development Plan.

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Priorities

The course focuses on the development of skills and knowledge appropriate to the caravan parks industry, particularly those that are important for management of a caravan park. Whether learners want to enhance career prospects, to pursue further study, to formalise their experience with a recognised qualification, or to rise to the challenge of taking over a family park from parents or grandparents, this foundation degree will give them valuable knowledge and help them develop their management abilities. The environment is deliberately informal and non-threatening – the challenge of returning to academic learning, sometimes after a long time, is shared by others on the course, and lots of support is provided by the college and the tutors.

The range of units offered will provide the learner with underpinning knowledge and assist them to acknowledge their personal strengths and weaknesses, whilst providing them with a range of transferable skills such as use of IT, conducting research and report writing.

Delivery is designed to be both flexible and innovative. The industry has strong seasonal variation, therefore professional development has to be timetabled around the needs of both employers and learners. All of the units will be applied to real park situations as a fundamental part of the teaching. Where possible, tutors on units will have experience of park work. We are also finding that students learn a lot from each other – many have specialisms to share, be they in planning, human resources, web design or, social media

In addition to the Work-based Learning unit, employer engagement will be embedded throughout the whole of the programme with emphasis on ‘theory into practice’. Whether learners are nominated by their employers or applying independently, there must be real benefits to parks, as well as to individuals, as a key outcome of the study.

As the majority of learners will be employees within park businesses, the Work Based Learning can be carried out at their existing place of employment.

Cost

The fee level for 2012 has not yet been confirmed – as you will probably be aware, fee levels are in flux due to government funding issues. Like all UK degree courses, the college will be charging tuition fees for the foundation degree - the level of fees is generally set nationally. The cost for the January 2011 intake was £470 per unit, which can be invoiced one or two units at a time; there will be an inflation increase for 2012. The total cost for 2011 starters was £6580, which is exactly the same fees that would be paid for a student over the first two years of an honours degree course at any UK university (although they would have full time accommodation and subsistence above this). Student Loans at inflation-only interest rates can be accessed by eligible students. This college fee does not cover any travel or the accommodation required during residential schools; it is planned to keep this as low as possible by accessing accommodation on the host parks in many cases. Much of the study material is provided but a small number of books may be recommended for purchase.

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“There’s a lot of management mumbo jumbo in the world and lot of so called “tools” which simply don’t translate to life on a busy park! Being jaded by past experiences of training I almost hate to admit that mind maps are a great way for the contents of my disorganised mind to be dumped on a piece of paper. The fact that there are no strict rules in the process of putting them together makes them the perfect brainstorming tool. I even used a mind map to plan a recent fishing holiday so I remembered all my kit. There’s some great iPad apps which means you can work on your mind maps on the go. All in all Mind Maps are a useful tool I picked up thanks to the Foundation Degree.”

Andy Walker, Director Treetops Park (Cohort 3)

“It was really interesting to take the things we had learned and use them at the Park as part of a work based project. I decided to do some work linked to the Bellamy Award, and make the Park a greener and more wildlife friendly environment. The tools from the FD made planning, and delivering the project in time for this year’s assessment visit, so much easier. You should see the new bird boxes I made. And they are all lived in already!”

Gareth Roberts, Bodafon Parks (Cohort 2)

“Although having worked at Sandy Balls for nearly ten years, this year I was given a new role to develop the Outdoor Activities Programme. This meant managing a team, a budget and a department - three things which were new to me.

Starting this department from scratch meant interviewing and recruiting new team members, spending time on training days, running through each new activity that we were going to deliver and building a relationship with each other in a short space of time.

By studying for the Tourism Park Management degree we learnt about personal and professional development, different roles within a team and how to get the most of each team member and ourselves. This has been so valuable for me when faced with my new job role and has given me the confidence to succeed.”

Jen Elkins, Sandy Balls Holiday Centre (Cohort 1)

“The course has so far has been really worthwhile. The Foundation Degree so far has been full of things I can apply to what we are doing. I have already made changes to our business as a direct result. Also, the chance to spend time with other people from the industry and learn from them is proving to be an invaluable experience. I look forward to learning more as the course progresses”

Louise Evans, Llandow Park (Cohort 3)

It was OK learning all the theories on the Degree Course, however I had most of the FUN at Sandy Balls using them! I was tasked to organise the Greener Living Show 2011 from start to finish. This was everything from exhibitors and accommodation tours to visitors and car parking. This was something was beyond anything I have ever done before! I used elements of the knowledge that I learnt from the Degree Course to help me plan, organise and to help me form and run a completely new team. This made the Even run much more smoothly. The feedback from those involved in the Show was extremely positive and well received. I felt a real sense of achievement, both for the company and for myself.”

Chris Evans, Sandy Balls Holiday Centre, (Cohort 1)