



# Check Into Travel

Supporting new starters to the  
Travel & Tourism Industry

# Introduction

Check into Travel has been designed for all new and inexperienced travel industry staff, whether in retail sales, operations or administration.

Subjects covered include:

- The World of Travel
- Travel Geography
- Air
- Package Holidays
- Non Air Transportation
- Travel Related Services
- Technology
- The Leisure Travel Environment
- Personal Development Skills

The pack is written for both self-study and classroom delivery and has been designed to be fun, interactive and informative and to provide you with exercises that use a variety of travel literature to provide realistic examples to bring the subject alive.

Check into Travel will take the candidate approximately 30 hours to work through and on completion there is an optional validation where you can achieve a pass and a Learn Travel certificate in “Check into Travel”.

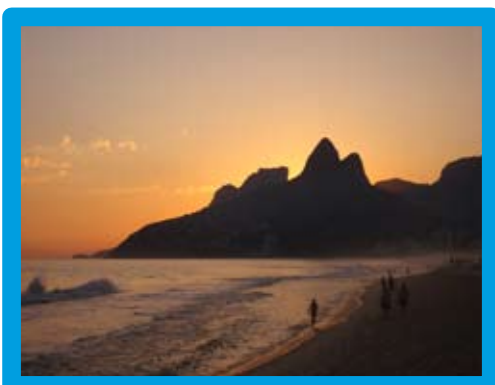


# Contents

**Check into Travel is made up of nine specific modules plus an appendix.**

The nine subjects are:

1. Introduction to the Travel Industry
2. Travel Geography
3. Air Travel
4. Package Holidays
5. Non-Air Transportation
6. Travel Related Services
7. Airline Booking Systems
8. The Leisure Travel Environment
9. Personal Development Skills



# Travel Terminology

Travel uses a lot of specialist terms and it's important to have a good understanding of what these mean. Here are a few; many more are included as you work through the chapters.

**ABTA** is the Association of British Travel Agents

**ATOL** is an Air Travel Organiser's Licence which protects the customer from losing money or being stranded abroad if the tour operator or travel agent ceases to trade

**Allocation** is a block of hotel rooms or airline seats which are made available to a tour operator or travel agent.

**American Plan (AP)** is accommodation with breakfast and two main meals.

**Apex** is a travel ticket which has an advanced purchased agreement

**Budget Airlines:** Also called 'No Frills' or 'Low Cost' airlines. They operate schedules (regular timetables) like the larger airlines, but often with lower fares. They fly on short-haul routes and sometimes in and out of less popular airports.

**Charter** aircraft are commissioned for a specific period of time and usually fly with a full load of passengers to a given destination.

**Check in:** When departing for a journey there is a minimum time by which the passenger needs to let the carrier know they are travelling. Many airlines are now allowing customers to check on-line and print off their Boarding Pass at home.

**Collision Damage Waiver (CDW)** is an extra insurance cover which customers, who are hiring a car, should be advised to take in case of an accident.

**Commission** is a percentage payment made to a travel agent by principals such as tour operators, airlines, ferry companies and car hire firms.

**CRS:** Computer Reservation System

# The UK Travel Industry – A History

Tourism is actually thousands of years old and many of the facilities and amenities demanded by modern tourists were provided then – albeit in basic form - such as travel, accommodation, catering services, guides and souvenir shops. The earliest forms of tourism can be traced back to Egyptian, Greek and Roman times. The Roman Empire in particular aided the growth in travel: first class roads and staging inns led to comparatively safe and convenient travel. The Empire was so large that they were the first to visit friends and relations (VFR). However, with the collapse of the Roman Empire travel became much more dangerous.

**Pre 1670:** Before 1670, holidays played an important role in the life of the public. The term holiday had its origin in ‘holy days’ and from earliest times religion provided the framework within which leisure time was spent. This rarely involved travel from one place to another. More likely a village would, for example, have held a ‘wake’ on the eve of the local saint’s festival days.

**Post 1670: Grand Tour of Europe:** Under the reign of Elizabeth I, young men who sought a position at court were encouraged to travel to visit the major cultural centres of Europe. This was given the term ‘Grand Tour’ and was used as early as 1670. As a result, a number of destinations were opened up to the British traveller such as Avignon and Montpellier, an ideal base for Provence and a staging post for Italy. By the nineteenth century, travelling for pleasure took precedent and this led to the development of the French Riviera as a major destination for British tourists.

**UK Spas:** The Roman Empire established the benefits of spas within the UK. The most popular were Bath and Buxton which eventually became important centres of social life for high society as well as royalty during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Not only were spas popular because of the health benefits to be found from the mineral waters that bubbled up out of the ground, they became centres of high fashion, deliberately setting out to create a select and exclusive image. Eventually, in the early nineteenth century, the common characteristics of resorts to go ‘down market’ led to changing clientele, with the landed gentry replaced by wealthy merchants and the professional class. In the mid nineteenth century, spas began to lose their popularity, very much due to the increase in popularity of UK seaside resorts.

## Travel Agent Income and Service Charges

Travel agents receive the majority of their income from commission payments made by tour operators, carriers (such as airlines) and providers of support services (such as travel insurance). The commission is normally a percentage of the value of the booking made and can vary from 1% on traveller's cheques to 30%+ on travel insurance. Tour operator and carrier commission rates vary, but are normally in the range of 7 to 10%. Incentive commission, which is payable at a higher rate, may be offered by some principals and tour operators for high levels of sales.

A recent development in the industry is the withdrawal or a reduction of commission payments by some airlines. This has led to many travel agents introducing a service charge for making such bookings. Additionally, service charges can be made for undertaking an Exercise for a customer that does not create a great deal of income, such as booking theatre tickets, or obtaining visas. The service charge usually covers the cost of telephone calls, couriers, etc.

Some agents have also started selling other products like telephone cards to increase profits. Service charges can be a flat fee, e.g. £10, or a percentage of the cost of the tickets etc.



# CAA - Civil Aviation Authority



- Formed 1971.
- All air carriers in the UK must be approved by the CAA.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is a government regulator with a number of different functions. It consists of four groups:

- **Safety Regulation Group (SRG)** is responsible for UK civil aviation safety standards. Amongst other things SRG ensures standards are set and maintained to a high level; that airlines, flight crew, air traffic controllers and aircraft maintenance engineers are fit and competent, and that airports are safe to use.
- **Consumer Protection Group (CPR)** is responsible for managing the ATOL system, which protects holidaymakers and travellers from the consequences of tour operator failure. CPG also licenses and regulates UK airlines and enforces air consumer protection requirements, including denied boarding and passenger rights.
- **Economic Regulation Group (ERG)** is responsible for the regulation of the UK's air traffic control services (NATS) airports and airlines. Its aim is to secure the best sustainable outcome for users of air transport in terms of fares, competition and services.
- **Directorate of Airspace Policy (DAP)** is primarily responsible for ensuring UK airspace is used safely and efficiently to meet the needs of its users.

[www.caa.co.uk](http://www.caa.co.uk)

# Introduction

**Did you know that the sun rises in the East and sets in the West?  
Do you know where the North and South Pole are?**

These are the basics to knowing your world geography. It is vital for anyone in the travel industry to have a basic knowledge of the subject. You may have covered geography at school, and this could involve learning about cultures and economies of countries such as Russia, China and Tanzania.

Physical geography is all about how the earth was formed, from a huge glacier melting and forming lakes, mountains, oceans, seas and continents (large land masses), as it retreated.

Many of the reasons people travel are related to geographical reasons.  
I will list just a few:

- Scientists exploring countries rich in minerals e.g. Russia, South Africa.
- Tourists wanting to go skiing/walking in the Alps mountain range.
- Tourists wishing to visit Niagara Falls.
- Tourists wishing to mountain climb in the Himalayas.

They are all related to physical attractions, i.e. geographical landscapes such as waterfalls, mountains, lakes and other natural attractions like the Great Barrier Reef and the Grand Canyon.





**Las Vegas, Nevada** offers gambling, glitzy entertainment and unbelievably extravagant architecture. Giant pyramids of glass, multicoloured fantasy castles and replicas of the Eiffel Tower rise out of the Nevada desert. Even if you don't gamble or party, it is worth seeing this flamboyant display of magnificence. In addition, **Las Vegas** is conveniently located near some of the greatest natural scenery in the southwest including the Grand Canyon and Death Valley. It is only a half-day drive from Los Angeles.

**The Grand Canyon National Park** in Arizona is one of the greatest natural wonders of the world. It is a mile deep (1,500 metres) and over 15 miles (20 km) wide by 100 miles (150 km) long. The interior of the Canyon is adorned with a vast maze of cliffs and promontories punctuated by a labyrinth of smaller canyons and gorges. The ever-changing play of sun and shadow on the multicoloured rock layers produces a breathtaking display best seen from the visitor's centre on the south rim. The only access to the interior of the canyon is by hiking or by riding mules down the very steep trails or by helicopter.

**Yosemite National Park, California** contains one of the most beautiful alpine valleys ever seen. 2,000-feethigh vertical granite cliffs with nearly a dozen cascading waterfalls surround the glacially eroded Yosemite Valley. Outside of the hugely popular valley, this immense park contains groves of giant Sequoia trees, alpine meadows and snow-capped peaks. It is a paradise for rock climbers, backpackers, campers, photographers and tourists.

**Orlando, Florida** is the largest centre for family entertainment in the entire world. It offers Disney World, the largest family amusement complex on this planet, plus Sea World, Wet and Wild and many other major attractions.

Universal Studios is a massive attraction and now includes The Wizarding World of Harry Potter which has three themed attractions - Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey, The Flight of the Hippogriff and Dragon Challenge.



## Exercise 6

1. Which two of these cities are located in Canada?

- a) San Francisco
- b) Toronto
- c) Miami
- d) Vancouver

2. Which two of the following are ski destinations in North America?

- a) Denver
- b) Miami
- c) Washington
- d) Vermont

3. Name the world famous waterfall by the Canadian and United States border.

4. Identify the middle word “The \_\_\_\_\_ Canyon” in Arizona.

5. In which city is Hollywood?

6. Which of the following is a famous attraction in San Francisco?

- a) Disneyland
- b) Alcatraz
- c) 5th Avenue

7. New York is the capital of the United States. True or False?

# Exercise 14

Refer to any resources available to answer the following questions on Africa:

1. Identify the names of two cities in Egypt from this list.

- a) Dubai
- b) Luxor
- c) Cairo
- d) Riyadh

2. Which European country does Morocco almost touch?

- a) Italy
- b) Spain
- c) Algeria
- d) Germany

3. Which country would you find the resort of Sun City?

4. What is the name of the large island off the south east coast of Africa?

5. If you were holidaying in the Gambia, which airport would you fly into?

6. Which one of the following countries is located in Africa?

- a) Tibet.
- b) Chile.
- c) The Gambia
- d) Turkey.

7. Complete the sentence:

“We suggest a journey up \_\_\_\_\_ Mountain where the views over Cape Town are amazing.”

8. Robben Island is now a famous tourist attraction. Who was the most famous inmate of the prison on Robben Island?

9. Which mountain range is located in the north of Africa?

10. The Masai Mara National Park is situated in Kenya. True or False?

# Case Study: London Heathrow

Heathrow is the world's busiest international airports as well as being the second busiest cargo port. It

**Number of Terminals:** 5 (Terminals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

**Number of Passengers:** over 68 million

**Number of Airlines:** over 90

**Number of Destinations:** approximately 180

**Number of Runways:** 2 main, plus a cross wind runway

In order to meet the needs of its passengers an airport must:

- Have areas for ticketing, check in and baggage handling
- Be accessible by road and public transport and have plenty of parking available
- Maintain areas for Customs
- Offer food and other amenities
- Ensure the passengers are kept safe

When you first arrive at the airport you will generally be in the area known as the **Concourse**. This is where the check in desks are located as well as airline ticket sales desks and probably shops and restaurants. This area is accessible to both passengers and non-passengers.



## The **Red** 'Something to Declare' Channel

You will need to go to the red channel if you have goods that you have to declare to Customs, or if you are unsure about whether or not you need to declare them. You should follow the signs for the red channel and then follow instructions about how to declare your goods and pay any money owing on them.

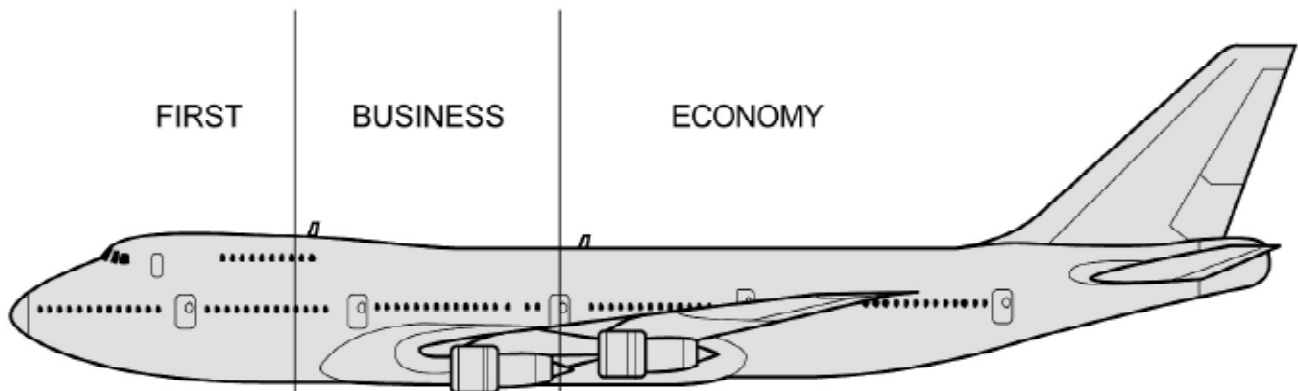
## The **Green** 'Nothing to Declare' Channel

You can pass through the green channel ONLY if you do NOT have any goods to declare to Customs. You should be sure that your goods are strictly within the Customs 'allowances' and that you are not bringing into the UK prohibited (banned) or restricted goods. If you are carrying any commercial goods, or goods belonging to your employer, such as laptop computers, you must declare them in the Red Channel.

## The **Blue** 'EU' Channel

The blue channel is ONLY for travellers arriving in the UK from another EU (European Union) country and who have NOTHING to declare. If you meet both these criteria, and there is a blue channel - ALWAYS use it. The blue channel is there to make your journey from one EU country to another as smooth as possible. The blue channel is part of the European Union's efforts to make it easier for people to travel between EU member states. The UK is a member of the EU.

# Overview of Fare Types

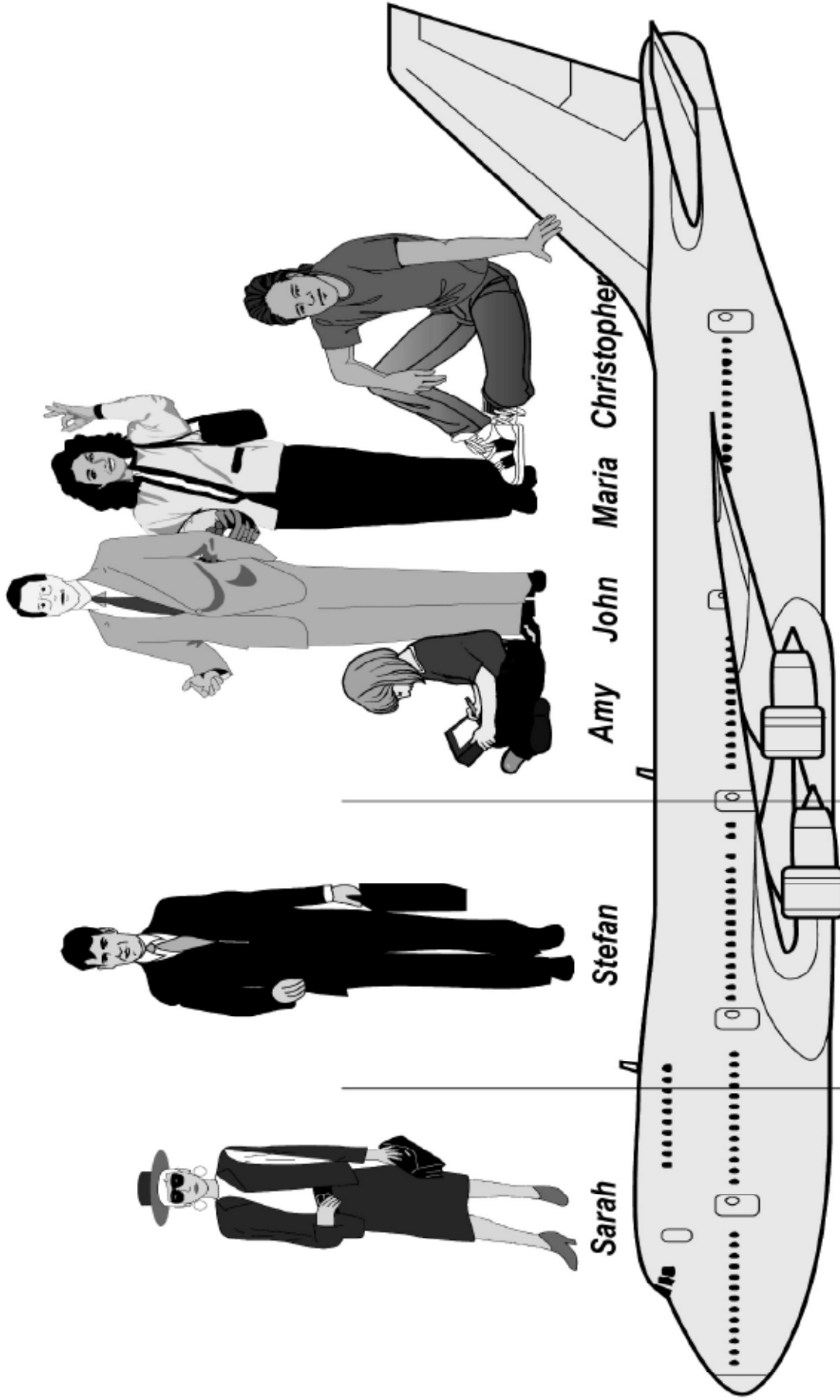


Aircraft are split up into different cabin sections, with different prices charged for the product and service delivered. Imagine you were going to a music concert and there were different prices of tickets on offer. You might just want the cheapest or you might pay more to get a better view!!

The same principle applies for air travel. The passenger chooses where to sit dependent on how much they want to pay, and what service they require. Features of each cabin section:

## Economy

- The largest section of the aircraft on scheduled flights and normally the only service provided on charter flights.
- Adjustable seats.
- Complimentary meal service (depending on length of flight).
- Complimentary drinks service (drinks are chargeable by many airlines) including charter.
- Duty - free shopping on eligible routes (no duty free on flights within European Union anymore).
- In flight entertainment on long distance services.



# What is a Package Holiday?

In 1992, The Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations came into effect. These regulations give a legal definition of the term 'package holiday'. A package holiday includes a minimum of two of the three following elements:

## 1. Transport

## 2. Accommodation

## 3. Other tourist services (not ancillary to transport or accommodation) accounting for a significant proportion of the package, such as a tour guide.

A package holiday must:

- Be sold or offered for sale
- Be sold at an inclusive price
- Be pre-arranged





## Exercise 2

Complete the column on the right below, naming a specialist tour operator in each case.

### Type of holiday

### Specialist tour operators

Ranching in the USA

Sand surfing in the Sahara Desert

Bird-watching in Nepal

Golfing in the Algarve

Walking tour of Majorca

Dog sledding in Canada

Antarctic expeditions

Weddings in Las Vegas

Glacier walking in New Zealand

Pilgrimages to the Holy land

Art tour of Italy

## Skiing Holidays

Another popular type of package holiday during the winter months is of course a skiing or snowboarding holiday. The ski season usually starts mid to late December and runs through to about April time. This varies slightly from resort to resort, depending on their weather conditions, snow records and the location.

There is a vast array of resorts that a customer can choose from. The higher resorts which face north will have snow longer, possibly even into April, but they will also be colder. Many villages in Austria are as low as 2,000 feet but the resorts in France which have been specifically developed for skiing can be over 6,000 feet.

Resorts can generally be categorised into three areas:

**Low:** Those below 4,000 feet

**Medium:** Those below 5,000 feet

**High:** Those above 5,000 feet

A low or medium resort may therefore only have snow once a skier is transported up higher onto the slopes; this is when it's worth checking the highest point of the resort area. By giving your customer this extra piece of advice will help them choose the right resort for them.

# Classes of Rail Travel

There are a number of options available to travellers to make their journey more comfortable. The most obvious is the class that the customer travels in.

Most longer-distance services offer First Class and Standard Class accommodation, whilst local and suburban services are mainly Standard Class only.

So what are the benefits of travelling First Class?

First Class offers:

- Access to dedicated First Class sections of the train, nearly always featuring fewer but larger, more comfortable seats, in a generally more spacious arrangement that provides more personal space, often a table and upgraded decor / carpeting, and in some cases additional amenities (such as power outlets for mobile phones or PCs).
- Access to a lounge (at many principal stations) and additional on-board services, such as food and/or drinks service, complimentary newspapers, etc. Such on-board services vary widely; they can be distributed by TOC, by route, by day of week (weekday or weekend), and by time of day.
- The most complete First Class experience is offered by long-distance train operators, such as First Great Western, National Express East Coast, East Midlands Trains and Virgin Trains, especially on weekday morning and evening trains on high-volume routes.
- First Class is usually located at the London end of the platform (i.e. no long walk at the London Terminal). First Class service is also offered on overnight Sleeper trains between London and Scotland where passengers receive a single occupancy berth.

# Eurotunnel

Eurotunnel's Shuttle train service operates between Folkestone and Calais. This is a cross channel service for cars, coaches and lorries.

Each Shuttle is capable of carrying 120 cars and 12 coaches, departing every fifteen minutes at peak times and providing capacity for 4,000 passengers an hour. The UK terminal is just ten minutes down the M20 from Ashford, Kent.

Both British and French customs and passport controls are cleared before boarding the train. You drive your vehicle directly on to the train and can either stay in your vehicle or stretch your legs in the brightly lit, air-conditioned carriages. Shuttle train services take just 35 minutes, at a maximum speed of 140kph. On arrival in France you drive off the Shuttle and leave the terminal without further formalities to join the motorway network. Don't forget to drive on the right!

Other than toilets, there are no facilities on the shuttle trains but a range of shops and refreshment outlets are provided in both Folkestone and Calais terminals.



# UK & Ireland Ferry Ports



# Exercise 7

Use this module and your own resources to answer the following questions.

## Coach

1. Which coach operator would provide long-distance coach services between Plymouth and Birmingham?

2. How many Megabus destinations have services from London?

## Rail

3. Name the train operating company that provides services on each of the following journeys.

Peterborough to Newcastle \_\_\_\_\_ Sheffield to Luton \_\_\_\_\_

Glasgow to Aberdeen \_\_\_\_\_ Weymouth to London \_\_\_\_\_

London to Cardiff \_\_\_\_\_ Birmingham to Edinburgh \_\_\_\_\_

Name the High-Speed Rail service that links each of the following.

The South of France with Paris \_\_\_\_\_ Hamburg and Munich \_\_\_\_\_

Paris with Brussels, Amsterdam and Cologne \_\_\_\_\_ Madrid and Seville \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is Eurostar and how is this different from Eurotunnel shuttle services?

5. Name the light rail system which operates in the region surrounding the River Tyne.

6. What is the light rail system that serves the eastern part of London called?

# Passports and Visas

All passengers travelling outside of their own country must be in possession of a valid passport, issued by the Governing Authority of the country in which the passenger is a citizen. In the UK, passports are issued by the United Kingdom Passport Service which has seven regional offices throughout the country. These are Belfast, Durham, Glasgow, Liverpool, London\*, Newport and Peterborough. The London Passport Office is for personal callers and by appointment only for those who need their passport urgently.

All other offices can issue passports via the post or by attending the office in person. In the UK now every passenger (including children and infants) must apply for a full standard British passport. For adults these are valid for a period of ten years and for children under 16, five years. Application forms can be picked up from post offices and some travel agents. Applications can take from two weeks upwards and in the peak summer months you should always allow extra time for a passport to be issued.

Two photographs must be sent along with the passport application as well as your birth certificate. The reverse of the photographs must be signed by an eligible person declaring that they are a true likeness of the applicant. Other documents may also need to be sent such as a marriage certificate if a female wishes to have the name on her passport altered following her wedding.

Although the United Kingdom is part of the European Union, you are still required to carry a full 10 year British passport with you every time you travel to a European destination. This includes day trips and travel by Eurostar. Many countries have now abandoned routine passport checks at their land borders but they still expect visitors to be able to produce a valid form of identification. In the case of UK travellers this is the British passport. Your passport will be checked at immigration control on your return to the UK.

# Exercise 9

Let's compare two different car hire quotes for a week's hire in Florida. All prices are quoted in US dollars.

### Quote 1.

Uncle Sam's Car Rental  
 CCMR - Chrysler Grand 1.6  
 Basic price - 430.00

### Quote 2.

Chamcars  
 CCMR - Ford Falcon 1.6  
 Basic price - 310.00

At first glance we would assume that Chamcars is cheaper. But let us look further at what each company include in their basic cost. Remember our quote was for 7 days.

	Uncle Sam's	Chancer's
<b>Basic</b>	430.00	310.00
<b>CDW</b>	Included	27.00 per day =
<b>PAI</b>	Included	7.50 a day =
<b>Airport Service Charge</b>		
<b>TOTAL (excluding tax)</b>		
<b>TAX (on total)</b>	10%	10%
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		



# Global Distribution Systems

Global Distribution Systems were originally known as Computer Reservations Systems or CRSs and were developed by scheduled airlines as an easy means of receiving airline bookings from travel agents. This was revolutionary in its day as all other travel transactions were handled by telephone.

As the years have passed and technology has moved forward in leaps and bounds, their capabilities have increased dramatically. They now provide all types of technology and electronic solutions to the travel industry and with a worldwide network of customers are referred to as Global Distribution Systems or GDS for short.

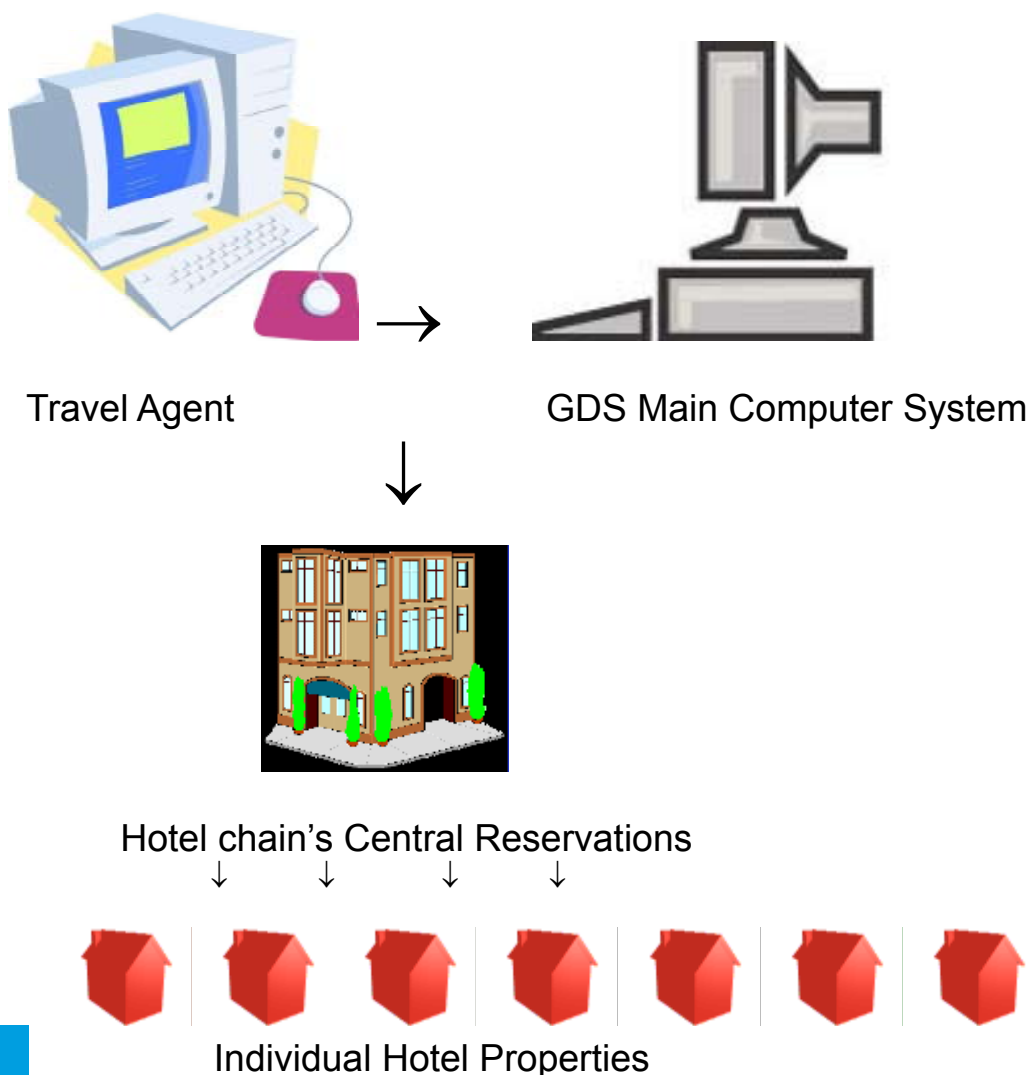
There are four main GDSs:

- **Amadeus**
- **Galileo**
- **Worldspan**
- **Sabre**

**Galileo** is currently used most in the UK market place although Amadeus with it's backing of three major European airlines is becoming increasingly popular. It is already used widely throughout Europe. **Worldspan** is used extensively in retail travel agents whilst **Sabre** has a variety of customers but mainly business travel agents. For the purpose of this course we will refer to the reservation piece of the GDS only.

An agent is able to book air, car hire, hotel, ferries, domestic and international rail, cruise and tour operator holidays through most of the GDSs as well as issuing air and rail tickets and passenger itineraries. They can also be linked to an agency's mid or back office accounting system and produce invoices.

Traditionally, in order to obtain information from a GDS, entries known as formats are typed into the system. The user is not prompted for these entries but types them into a blank screen and therefore must be trained fully on the different formats in order to use them. The responses received on the screen are also in a set format, which require prior knowledge to interpret.



# Exercise 3

Using the Galileo Viewpoint screen a few pages back, please answer the following questions.

1. Which car hire company is the car booked with?

2. Which chain of hotels is used for the hotel booking?

3. What is the rate code of the car booking?

4. What is the name of the airport at Amsterdam?

5. What day of the week is the 15th September according to the booking?

6. At what time does the passenger arrive back at Heathrow?

7. How much is the cost of the hotel room?

8. What type of car is booked?

# A Career in the Travel Industry

## “Why are you interested in the travel industry?”

Surely this will be the first question any future employer will want to know. It is important that you are interested in the industry that you choose to work in. Is it that you are only interested in travelling abroad?

Most employers are interested in individuals who, above all are enthusiastic and have a great attitude. Useful but not essential is anyone who is well travelled, and therefore have good geography knowledge and experience of other cultures.

Alternatively, you may consider a job within the industry which involves travelling, such as cabin crew for an airline or overseas representative for a tour operator. These may not allow you an awful amount of free time to explore, so check before you start.

There are many different jobs within the travel industry, and therefore you can enjoy a long and varied career. Sometimes there may be various paths you could follow, and really the choice will be up to you. You may end up specialising in an area that has not yet crossed your mind.

We have concentrated in length throughout this course on travel agents and to a lesser extent, airlines and tour operators, but even within these organisations there are many positions you could hold. You will probably have to start at the bottom and work your way up, but then that is how many of the most successful people in the travel industry started!

A new starter in a retail travel agency will very likely have to stamp the back of tour operator brochures as well as placing agency stickers promoting their services on the front. A menial task it may seem, however it is very important. It helps the customer remember which agency they collected the brochure from, and therefore they are more likely to go back and book there.

In a Travel Agent there will always be plenty to learn - new destinations, new procedures and new technology.

# Main Acts of Parliament

Whilst it is not necessary to know the fine details of each act, an overall awareness of the legal obligations is required in order to carry out roles and responsibilities accurately and within the law.

The main Acts which affect the travel industry are:

- Trade Descriptions Act (1968)
- Consumer Protection Act (1987)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- Health & Safety at Work Act (1974)
- Supply of Goods and Services Act (1982)
- Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations (1999)
- Competition Act (1998)
- Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
- The Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations (1992)
- Money Laundering Regulations (2003)

Some of these Acts and the impact that they have on the way both clients and other companies are dealt with are shown below.

# Matching Customers Requirements

When dealing with customers in the travel and tourism industry you will tend to find that certain requirements appear in almost every enquiry.

They are:

**Price** – most customers will have a spending budget in mind

**Location** – this could be the location of the accommodation or resort

**Duration** – the number of nights the customer wishes to be away for

**Facilities** – the amenities featured in the accommodation or resort

**Time** - the departure / arrival time of the flights or the time of year they wish to travel

**Departure point** – where they wish to leave from

**Party size** – how many adults, children or senior citizens are travelling

**Purpose** – why they are taking the trip, relax, business, visit family or friends etc

Remembering the above can help you devise some basic questions to establish your customer's wants and needs and match their requirements.

