

FACTFILE:

GCSE LEISURE, TRAVEL AND TOURISM



Unit 1

UNDERSTANDING THE LEISURE, TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY



The Components of the Leisure Industry

Learning Outcomes

Students should be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the sport and physical recreation component of the leisure industry and the activities that take place in typical facilities;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of arts and entertainment facilities that people visit for enjoyment;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of countryside recreation facilities for outdoor pursuits;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the services and organisations that support home-based leisure activities;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of children's play activities and the special facilities built for children's enjoyment; and
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the range of catering facilities and the services they provide.

The Leisure Industry

The leisure industry provides the facilities, products, services and activities that allow us to enjoy our leisure time. Before studying the components of the leisure industry, you need to understand what each of these terms means.

- **Facilities:** this refers to the physical amenities available at a venue; e.g. football pitches, swimming pool, conference/ meeting rooms and multi-purpose sports halls.
- **Products:** a product is a physical thing that a person pays for and can take away, for example a can of soft drink.
- **Services:** this is a general term for everything other than products that may be provided by a leisure and tourism organisation, for example the hire of footwear when ten-pin bowling.
- **Activities:** this refers to what a visitor can do at a leisure and tourism facility, e.g. playing squash, swimming and picnicking.

Learning Activity

- Your local leisure centre will have its own website. Use the Internet and any first-hand experience that you and your classmates might have to explore the facilities, products, services and activities available.

Components of the Leisure Industry

There are many different organisations within the leisure industry, ranging from theatres to restaurants and children's play parks. They can be put into groups which are referred to as the **components of the leisure industry**.

Sports and Physical Recreation

Sport refers to all forms of physical activity that, through casual or organised participation, aim at improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships, or obtaining results in competition at all levels. Many tourists will travel to a particular destination because they want to visit a sporting venue such as Old Trafford; thousands of people travel to London each summer to watch tennis at Wimbledon.

People are becoming more aware of the health benefits of taking exercise and are increasingly realising that they do not need to be expert at a particular sporting activity. Therefore, the number of people taking up cycling or running has increased considerably.

Sport and recreation also has a social side, many people enjoy being part of a team or meeting other people socially after a game.

Sports venues are also part of Sport and Physical Recreation component; they include a variety of venues from local football and rugby clubs to national stadiums such as Wembley. Clearly, the type of sport that takes place at each sports venue will appeal to those people who are interested in that sport. Some venues may stage a variety of sports to appeal to a wider audience.

Local sports venues are usually provided by local councils and may be part of a leisure centre. The most popular sports need large stadia to accommodate the large number of people who want to watch live games.

- Wembley Stadium: football
- Twickenham: rugby
- Wimbledon: tennis
- Lord's Cricket Ground: cricket
- Principality Stadium: rugby and football

A wide range of people visit leisure centres and health clubs. Leisure centres typically offer a variety of products and services to meet the needs of a wide range of people. One of the newest leisure facilities in Northern Ireland is the Bangor Aurora Aquatic and Leisure Complex that cost £38 million to build and is located at Valentine's Playing Fields in Bangor. The complex has a wide range of facilities offering a choice of sporting and leisure activities including:

- Leisure waters with flumes and sidewinder slider
- Swimming pools
- Health Suite
- Fitness Suite
- Eight court sports hall
- Two squash courts
- Outdoor floodlit synthetic grass pitch for matches and training.



Fig 1: Bangor Aurora Aquatic and Leisure Complex

Image © Sonia McKee, CCEA

The complex also has children's soft adventure play area and themed soft play facility suitable for parties, a children's crèche, two function rooms and a cafeteria. For more information see www.bangoraurora.com.

Arts and Entertainment

The arts and entertainment component of the leisure industry includes art galleries, cinemas, nightclubs, theatres and concert halls and venues. The arts and entertainment industry covers a wide range of types of entertainment from pop concerts to ballet to opera.

Cinemas and theatres aim to attract a wide range of customers by offering a variety of entertainment to meet the needs of different customers. Cinemas will plan carefully the films that they screen at any one time to ensure that there is something for everyone. Cinema complexes, sometimes called 'multiplex' or 'omniplex' have become popular. Each cinema within the complex is quite small and there may be as many as 20 screens in a complex. In this way the cinema offers the customer a wide choice of films and times from matinees to late night screenings.



Fig 2: A cultural show popular with tourists in Beijing

Image © Margaret McMullan, CCEA

Learning Activity

- Use the Internet or a local newspaper to find out what is showing at your nearest multiplex (or omniplex) cinema.
- List all the films being shown and suggest which type of customer, or customers, are likely to go along to see the film.
- What facilities, products, services and activities are provided by the multiplex?

Theatres will also provide different types of live entertainment to appeal to different types of customer. Theatres often stage amateur productions as well as touring productions of plays, musicals and dramas often starring well known established actors. Many theatres stage a pantomime during the Christmas period with matinee and evening shows.

Museums and galleries were often associated in the past with dusty exhibits in glass cabinets. However, the new generation of museums and galleries are state of the art venues using the latest interactive technology to bring their exhibits 'alive'. There is now a wide range of different museums and galleries aimed at different customers.

Some museums have dropped the word 'museum' because they feel it has an old-fashioned image. Instead they often use names such as 'Experience'. Many museums are based on a specific theme, such as the environment, transport or science.

The Science Museum is located on Exhibition Road in South Kensington, London. It was founded in 1857 and is one of London's major visitor attractions attracting 2.7 million visitors each year. To find out more about the Science museum go to www.sciencemuseum.org.uk.

The National Railway Museum opened in York in 1975 and tells the story of rail transport in Britain and its impact on British society. The museum houses the largest collection of railway objects in the world including the only Japanese built bullet train outside Japan. The National Railway Museum won the European Museum of the Year award in 2001. To find out more about the National Railway Museum go to www.nrm.org.uk.

Jorvik Viking Centre is a museum and visitor attraction in York created by the York Archaeological Trust. The centre has welcomed over 17 million visitors since it opened in 1984. Visitors travel around the Viking-age city of Jorvik seated in state-of-the-art time capsules. To find out more about the Jorvik Viking Centre go to www.jorvik-viking-centre.co.uk.

Countryside Recreation

Countryside recreation refers to any recreational activity that takes place in the countryside. There is a very wide range of countryside recreation including:

- activities which take place on land such as hill walking;
- activities which take place on water such as canoeing; and
- activities which take place in the air such as hot air ballooning.



Fig 3: Kayaking is a popular water-based recreation activity

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Any countryside area that has an attractive landscape and scenery is likely to develop as a tourist destination. The UK has many areas of beautiful countryside including forests such as the New Forest in England and Tollymore Forest Park in Northern Ireland; mountain areas such as the Cairngorms in Scotland and the Mourne Mountains in Northern Ireland and lakes such as Kielder Water in England and the Fermanagh Lakeland in Northern Ireland.

National Parks are nationally important areas which are protected by law. They were established by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949) to:

- conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the parks; and
- promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Parks.

There are 15 National Parks in the UK; there are 10 National Parks in England including the Lake District, 2 National Parks in Scotland including Loch Lomond and 3 National Parks in Wales including Snowdonia. Currently there are no National Parks in Northern Ireland.

Countryside areas may also be:

- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) such as the Causeway Coast;
- Heritage Coasts such as the South Devon Heritage Coast;
- Marine and Nature Reserves such as the Strangford Lough Marine Nature Reserve designated in 1995;
- Forest Parks such as Glenariff Forest Park;
- National and Local Nature Reserves such as Murlough National Nature Reserve in Co Down and Lagan Meadows; and
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) such as the North Yorkshire Moors. Binevenagh is an example of an Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) in Northern Ireland.

Home-based Leisure Activities

A large amount of our leisure time is spent at home. Home based leisure activities include:

- Watching television and films on DVD or Blu-ray;
- Gardening;
- Do-it-yourself (DIY);
- Crafts such as needlecraft;
- Entertaining friends;
- Listening to music, e.g. on the radio or iPod;
- Playing computer games, e.g. PlayStation, Xbox and Wii; and
- Reading: either a book (hard back or paperback) or using an e-Reader such as the Kindle.

One of the main home-based leisure activities is watching television, it is estimated that the average person watches 30 hours of television per week. Many television programmes aim to encourage us to take up other home based activities such as gardening or cooking. There are satellite television channels dedicated to cookery and crafts.

Home-based leisure has always been an important part of how we spend our leisure time. However, the type of activities that are included have changed considerably over the past 60 years. During the 1950s people spent their leisure time at home reading, listening to the radio, playing board games and watching television for those lucky enough to have a TV set. These activities are still popular but a large number of other activities have become available such as playing computer games. Some of the activities themselves have changed, e.g. watching TV. Forty years ago families had a choice of two black and white channels, BBC1 and ITV, that broadcast in the evening only.

Now television programmes are available 24 hours a day in ultra-high definition colour with 4K ultra HD becoming more popular. Viewers can enjoy five terrestrial channels and many satellite channels. Several channels broadcast a +1 channel that runs the same schedule of programmes one hour later. 'Catch up TV' means that you no longer need to have a video or DVD recorder to record your favourite programme when you are out. Catch up TV has expanded to allow customers with smart TVs and internet access to use services such as the BBC iplayer. Most programmes are available for a period of 7 days and can be watched at any time day or night at no extra charge.

The increase in the range of home-based leisure activities has meant that facilities have been created to satisfy customers' needs including:

- Garden centres;
- DIY stores;
- Bookshops;
- Libraries; and
- Shops selling computer games.

Going to the library is seen by many people as a leisure activity. Recently libraries have expanded their services to include DVDs, newspapers and magazines, large print and talking books, public internet access and children's library clubs. Reading has always been a popular home-based activity that is provided for through libraries and bookshops. Books are now increasingly available from a wide range of outlets including garden centres, supermarkets and gift shops at visitor attractions.

Video rental shops have changed over the past 20 years. By the 1990s every high street had a video rental shop such as Blockbuster or Xtravision. At first they offered only videos to buy or rent. However, as they competed for an increased share of the home leisure business they began to offer their customers a wider range of services such as confectionery, soft drinks and ice-cream. Many video rental shops encouraged customers to use them by promoting forthcoming releases through advertising on television and in newspapers or by issuing a monthly magazine.

Watching DVDs and Blu-rays has changed considerably in recent years. The products themselves have become cheaper and are now sold in a wide range of shops including supermarkets. Technology has also helped to change the market and many people now have smart TVs linked to their broadband internet provider or a satellite television provider. This gives access to services such as Netflix, LoveFilm and Sky Store. Customers can now book a film over the internet or download a film to their satellite box. Recently, Sky has introduced a 'buy and keep' scheme which allows their customers to rent a film from the Sky Store, the film is downloaded directly to their Sky box allowing them to watch it at whatever time they want. Sky then sends them the film on DVD. The Sky Store is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Children's Play Activities

Children's play activities and the special facilities built for children's enjoyment includes soft play areas, skate parks and play parks.

Soft play areas are specifically designed areas that offer an ideal environment for children of all ages to practice and improve their communication skills, play and interact in a safe environment with other children and simply have fun. Research has proved that active play helps children to develop better physical, social, mental and emotional skills. Soft play areas have toys and equipment to keep children entertained for hours including ball pools, slides, rope bridges, crawl tubes and more.

Soft play areas are the perfect place for children to meet new friends and get used to socialising with others practicing their communication skills. They are designed specifically for children and therefore, parents do not have to worry about how much noise children make. Facilities are also provided for parents and guardians and typically include a cafeteria.

A skate park, is a purpose-built recreational environment made for skateboarding, BMX biking, scooter, wheelchair, and inline skating. Unlike organized sports, like football, skateboarding has no set rules and skate parks have no standard design template. Each skate park is designed specifically to provide unique challenges to its users.

Play parks are specifically designed for children and are usually provided by local councils. Many towns will have at least one local play park. They contain a combination of swings, roundabouts, slides, spring mobiles, interactive play units and climbing frames / nets. Many play parks will provide facilities for a range of age groups and allows them a safe, fun and challenging environment in which to play.



Fig 4: A typical children's play park.

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Catering

As a nation our eating habits have changed considerably since the 1950s. We are eating out more and the range of food outlets has increased, e.g. Chinese, Italian, Indian, Thai, Mexican, Nepalese and Vietnamese restaurants and/or take-aways are all now popular.



Fig 5: A range of options for eating out.

Images © Sonia McKee, CCEA

Catering outlets include:

- Restaurants, including hotel restaurants;
- Cafes;
- Take-aways; and
- Pop-up restaurants.

Restaurants range from small, family run establishments to global chains such as Planet Hollywood. Restaurants have also become more aware of the family market and so many target families by providing children's menus and play areas; some have dedicated areas for family dining.

While there are many independent catering outlets, the catering industry is dominated by large restaurant chains such as TGI Friday's, KFC, Cafe Nero and Harry Ramsden's. In most cases, catering is the main or only product being offered, e.g. customers would go to Pizza Hut just for a meal. However, famous international restaurant chains such as Hard Rock Cafe and Planet Hollywood often also sell merchandising including clothing.

Catering services are also an important part of many leisure and tourism organisations. Visitors to a visitor attraction such as a stately home or museum will expect to be able to buy food and beverages during their visit. This means that a coffee shop or cafe is now a popular feature of leisure organisations ranging from garden centres to castles, and local main or high streets.

Take-away food outlets can be found throughout the UK. The range includes fish and chip shops, burger bars, Chinese, Indian, Italian take-aways and kebab shops. The first fish and chip shop is thought to have opened in the UK at Yeadon in 1819. Ethnic take-aways such as Chinese take-aways began to appear in the 1950s. McDonalds opened its first UK outlet in 1974 at Woolwich in London. Since the 1990s there has been rapid expansion of ethnic take-aways including Mexican and Nepalese.



Fig 6: Planet Hollywood in Honolulu, Hawaii

Image © Margaret McMullan, CCEA

Many take-aways now offer a home delivery service. Customers can ring in their order and have it delivered to their door ready to serve. Many also offer meal deals giving customers the opportunity to buy a selection of starters and main courses with accompaniments for 2 or 4 people; this is a popular choice for families or for a group of friends who want to share a meal at home without someone having to cook.

A recent development has been the use of technology such as apps and the internet to make ordering take-away food even easier. Websites such as just-eat.co.uk allow customers to find restaurants in their area, view menus, select and order food, confirm the order and pay online. The order may then be collected or delivered.

Pop-up restaurants as the name implies, are temporary restaurants opened only for a short period of time. They can operate from private homes, rented indoor or outdoor spaces or at an event or a festival. During a major event such as the NW200 or Glastonbury Music festival pop-up restaurants will open to provide for the people attending.

Catering outlets are a major part of many people's leisure time and have therefore become very competitive. They all try to identify the needs of specific customers and provide products and services that meet these needs.

Learning Activity

- Identify organisations in your local area for each component of the leisure industry.
- Select a leisure based organisation you are familiar with; list examples of products, facilities, services and activities.
- Which home-based leisure activities might a teenager participate in? Justify your choices.

Resources

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King, C., Kerr, A, and Jeffries, M. (2006) Travel and Tourism, Heinemann

Rickerby, S. (2009) Leisure and Tourism, Nelson Thornes

James, E., Thirlway, J. and Woodhouse, U. (2007) Travel and Tourism, Hodder Arnold

Past examination papers

GCSE Leisure and Tourism Summer 2016: Q2, Q5 (b) & (c)

GCSE Leisure and Tourism Summer 2015: Q2, Q3, Q4

GCSE Leisure and Tourism Summer 2014: Q4

GCSE Leisure and Tourism Summer 2014: Q1, Q3

