

# Exploring Careers Through Technical Routes

## Travel Agent



### The Industry

The travel industry is exciting! A travel agent helps customers plan and organise travel requirements to ensure they have the best trip, holiday or visit. They spend time consulting customers, suppliers and keeping updated with travel restrictions. They make bookings with travel companies including airlines, car hire companies, cruise lines, hotels, railways, travel insurance companies or package holiday operators.

Travel agents can be offered discounts on travel. Some employers also allow staff to go on educational visits so they can experience products firsthand to improve personal knowledge of the holidays they are organising and selling.

When working in a high street travel agent shop staff usually wear company uniforms to show the professionalism of their service. In a travel call centre dress is often more informal.

Association of British Travel Agents  
[www.abta.com](http://www.abta.com)  
Thomson Retail

[www.tuijobsuk.co.uk/work-at-tui-travel/thomson-retail/apprentices](http://www.tuijobsuk.co.uk/work-at-tui-travel/thomson-retail/apprentices)

### Skills and Requirements

Travel agents spend much of their time communicating with customers and suppliers. They need:

- Active listening skills, taking time to fully understand customer requirements or information from suppliers
- Excellent customer service skills with individual customers and groups
- Strong verbal communication skills with a good telephone manner
- The ability to cope with pressure at busy times
- Commercial awareness and effective sales skills to persuade customers to make bookings
- Confident in the use of technology for using booking reservation systems or for producing customer itineraries
- Attention to detail for checking the accuracy of a customer's booking.

Travel knowledge is an important aspect of the job so it helps if you have a good knowledge of where places are in the world and/or have personal travel experience.

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## Working and Learning as a Travel Agent



### Job Roles & Progression

**Study Programme**  
Levels 2 and 3  
Travel and Tourism.



**Further study**  
HND  
Travel and Tourism.  
FdA  
Tourism Management.  
BA (Hons)  
Tourism Management.  
Travel and Tourism.  
Tourism with Business.



**Apprenticeships**  
Intermediate and Advanced  
Travel Services.  
Retail (Travel shops).



**Career roles**  
Travel Clerk in Travel Agency.  
Call handler in a call centre.  
Travel Agency Manager.  
Area manager for a holiday company.  
Diversify to another sub sector  
e.g. Tour Manager or Cruise  
Director.

### Calculation including problem solving

#### Tasks

1. Use a travel guide to estimate and calculate the elapsed flying time of a long haul flight.
2. Calculate the speed an aircraft will need to travel at to ensure landing on time.
3. Calculate detailed costings for a customer's holiday using at least 2 different travel brochures.
4. Exchange currency for a customer from British Pounds to Euros.
5. Plot temperatures on a graph promoting Greece as a popular destination to show a customer the best month to travel.

#### Links to GCSE Maths

1. **Number** (whole numbers – addition, subtraction; approximation - estimating calculations).
2. **Geometry and measure** (units of measure – speed).
3. **Number** (whole numbers – addition, subtraction).  
**Geometry and measure** (units of measure - unit pricing).
4. **Number** (whole numbers – multiplication; decimals- converting between decimals).
5. **Algebra** (graphs).  
**Statistics** (collecting data - types of data).

### Communication, all forms

#### Tasks

1. Give well informed and appropriate travel advice to a range of different customers.
2. Find out the relevant documents required for a customer's trip e.g. passports and visas.
3. Call a hotel to discuss a customer's booking.
4. Read a travel book on a tourist region to give more detailed and accurate advice to customers
5. Read holiday review sites to see customer feedback and update your knowledge.

#### Links to GCSE English Language

1. **Spoken language** (speaking and listening - audience, context, discussion skills; personal presence - body language; voice).
2. **Analysing non-fiction** (responding to a non-fiction text - understand the questions).
3. **Spoken language** (speaking and listening - discussion skills; voice - pitch and volume, enunciation).
4. **Analysing non-fiction** (non-fiction text type - travel writing; context, - where, when, time; purpose and audience - purpose).
5. **Analysing non-fiction** (non-fiction text type - information).  
**Comparing texts** (comparing by purpose).