

North East England
Blue Badge Tourist Guide
Training Programme
2019-2020
Prospectus



Training Provider
The British Guild of Tourist Guides
Accredited by
The Institute of Tourist Guiding

Programme Aims: The programme aims to prepare students to enter the tourism industry as professionally qualified and registered, *Blue Badge* Tourist Guides for The North East of England region. Registered Tourist Guides are qualified by examinations set and administered by The Institute of Tourist Guiding, the government-approved standard-setting and registration body for the tourist guiding sector in England, Northern Ireland and Jersey. Those students who are successful in these examinations will be awarded the Institute's *Blue Badge* for the region covering The North East of England. The "*Blue Badge*" is the symbol of this national qualification. The programme forms a foundation for continuing professional development in tourist guiding.

Situated on the borders of Yorkshire, Cumbria and Scotland, the North East region covers 1,936 square miles (5,013 square km) and includes varied terrain from coast to high moorland, cities and villages. It includes the four areas of Durham, Northumberland, Teesside and Tyne and Wear, it and contains a major National Park, a heritage coastline, significant Roman, religious, maritime, railway and Arts heritage together with a major Cruise ship Port and major retail experiences.

Programme Objectives: By the end of the programme students will be able to:

- Present an effective tour commentary
- Select the most appropriate routes, sites and stopping places for that tour
- Demonstrate an understanding of the composition of the area in order to satisfy the interests of visitors
- Maintain an appropriate time schedule
- Have a regard for the health and safety of both the visitors and staff.
- Demonstrate an ability to work both as an individual and as a member or leader of a team
- Demonstrate relevant management skills – dealing with for e.g. late arrivals, bad weather, road closures
- Demonstrate a range of effective and appropriate communication skills

Programme Content: There are four components to a *Blue Badge* Tourist Guide Training Programme.

1. *Background Knowledge* - giving a wide cultural background to Britain.
2. *Local/Regional Knowledge of the North East of England* - giving an in-depth local and regional knowledge of the counties and tourist destinations within the region. Among these are such nationally acknowledged and significant tourism areas and locations as Newcastle, the Angel of the North, Durham Cathedral, Lindisfarne (Holy Island), Alnwick Castle and Gardens, Hadrian's Wall and Kielder Water.
3. *Guiding Techniques* - communication and presentation skills for guiding on foot, in sites and on a moving vehicle (generally a coach).
4. *Business and Marketing Skills* - working as a self-employed guide in tourism.

Subjects include (within a national and regional context): ***Physical Geography & Geology - History - Architecture & Landscape Design - Language & Literature - Visual Arts - Performing Arts - Constitution & Government – Monarchy - Multi-culturalism & Religion - The Economy, Finance and Taxation - Law - Education - Health and Social Services - Sport – Tourism, Cuisine & Hospitality - Countryside - Housing & Environment - Transport - Science & inventions***

North East England regional Knowledge including Town and City Walks, an Art Gallery and a religious site
- **The Professional Guide** (Business management and Marketing for Tourist Guides).

A Student information pack and full syllabus is provided at the start of the programme.

Programme structure: The programme is designed to be part-time, based on a 5-day introductory session and six, intensive, 4 day weekends (from 9:00 am Friday – to 5:00pm on Monday) with lectures and practical training sessions included. In addition, there will be one or more lectures on Wednesday evening each week, throughout the period September 2019 – March 2020. The four components of the Programme Content form an integrated programme of study which includes:

Lectures and Tutorials - lecturers and tutors will cover the topics listed in the Programme Content. Lectures will be provided through a combination of face to face classroom based lectures, together with a series of web based lectures delivered via the internet, direct to learners' devices (desktop, tablet or laptop). The face to face lectures will be delivered during the evenings of the six intensive study weekends.

Lectures will be held in a variety of classrooms and study centres throughout the region. The study centres will be a mixture of commercial study centres and public/private lecture rooms, all of which will be within a short distance of overnight accommodation (hotels, B&Bs etc.) should learners wish to avoid travelling on a daily basis. The cost of this accommodation or travelling to the area is **not included in the programme fee**. The web based on line lectures (for which a demonstration/tutorial will be provided) will be broadcast between 7:00pm and 9:00pm on each Wednesday evening. Each lecture will last for 60 - 90 minutes followed by time for learners' questions.

Practical visits - visits to sites, villages and towns throughout the region. Trained guides and site experts will provide training and in-depth knowledge on these visits; however, programme students will be expected to do a considerable amount of the guiding to practise guiding techniques and skills. These sessions will take place throughout the series of intensive study weekends. They are an essential part of the programme and should not be missed.

When coaches are used for practical sessions, the coach will cover a variety of routes, starting from four different locations throughout the region, these being Durham, Alnwick, Hexham and Newcastle.

Communication Seminar (ComSem) This is a two-day seminar concentrating on communication techniques and presentation skills for Tourist Guides. At all times health and safety, customer care and the widest possible access for all are stressed.

Private study - although the programme covers a wide range of topics and visits, students will be expected to do a considerable amount of private study. Project work and research for the practical sessions are an essential part of the programme. Following the introductory session in May 2019 (during which guidance will be given on the personal research required), students will be required to undertake, in their own time, a full regional familiarisation. During this period, they will visit cities, towns, villages, geographical and tourist attractions throughout the whole region. Depending on the approach taken and any existing knowledge, it is anticipated that this familiarisation may require at least two days each week (or blocks of days as an equivalent) throughout the summer of 2019.

We recommend that students share transport, both during the summer familiarisation visits and when preparing for and attending the weekend training sessions. This not only keeps costs down, but such shared experiences provide far more enjoyable visits, and the research work can be shared between students. This training does involve a lot of hard work and commitment but creates lasting memories of the discoveries made and the camaraderie experienced throughout. Attendance during the introductory week provides the opportunity to explore possibilities for such team working throughout the course.

The holiday breaks are intended as study leave. It is expected that students will attend, participate and commit themselves fully in the programme of study. Applicants should note that there will be a wide range of

locations around the North East of England for the practical sessions. This requires prompt morning starts, and late finishes which are typical of the job of a Tourist Guide.

Please Note: It is essential for students to have:

- 1) **Availability of transport for the familiarisation visits, as public transport is, in the main, insufficient to fully cover research visits, which cover a large geographical area.**
- 2) **Regular access to a computer (desktop, laptop or tablet), email and a good printer, as web lectures, hand-outs for lectures and communications regarding changes or additions to the programme are sent out electronically.**

A Student handbook containing the full syllabus and programme is given to all students during the introductory session.

Programme Duration: 1 year – May 2019 – April 2020

Part One -Thursday 16th May to Monday 20th May 2019 - **5-day** Introductory Session.

There will then be a summer break - for private home study, individual research and the extensive regional familiarisation referred to above.

Part Two – September to December 2019

Intensive study weekends, starting on Friday morning and finishing at 5:00pm on Monday will take place on the following dates:

September: Friday 27th to Monday 30th

October: Friday 25th to Monday 28th

November/December: Friday 29th November to Monday 2nd December

Times: (Friday, Saturday, Sunday 09:00 - 19:30 daily) (Monday 09:00 – 17:00)

During the intensive study weekends, the **practical sessions** (coach, walk, religious building and gallery) will take place from 9:00am – 5:00pm on each Friday to-Monday with **classroom based lectures** from 6:00pm to 7:30pm on each Friday – Sunday evening. These training days are necessarily long and do include breaks, but require concentration over a 10½ hour period. We recommend that, to maximise free time, where possible, students share driving duties or consider staying overnight locally to the lecture centres.

During the period 25th September 2019 – December 2019, **web based lectures** (predominantly the Background Knowledge lectures) will be broadcast on every Wednesday evening from 7:00pm to 9:00pm (with the exception of during the Christmas and New Year breaks when there will be no lectures on Wednesday 25th December 2019 and Wednesday 1st January 2020.

A two day ‘Communication Seminar’ will take place during week commencing Monday 7th October 2019. Students will be allocated to two specific dates, which will be confirmed during the introductory sessions in April 2019. Attendance at this seminar is mandatory. Without full attendance on both days, the Blue Badge will not be awarded.

Christmas/New Year break – programme preparation and project work will be required over this period

Projects Deadline. 30th January 2020. Projects to be handed in for marking.

Part Three – January to March 2020 will mirror the Part Two programme. Intensive study weekends will take place on the following dates:

January Friday 10th – Monday 13th

February Friday 7th to Monday 10th

March Friday 6th to Monday 9th

Times: (Friday – Sunday 9:00am to 7:30pm daily) (Monday 9:00am to 5:00pm)

During the study weekends, **practical sessions** (coach, walk, religious building and gallery will take place from 9:00am to 5:00pm on each Friday to Monday with **classroom based lectures** from 6:00pm to 7:30pm on each Friday to Sunday evening.

During the period January 2020 – March 2020, **web based lectures** (Background Knowledge) will be broadcast on every Wednesday from 7:00pm to 9:00pm.

Final Assessment - April 2020

Having completed the programme, including attendance at the Communications Seminar, the Programme Directors will submit students for practical and written assessment, administered by the Institute of Tourist Guiding. To gain the *Blue Badge* qualification, students must pass all of the examinations: The examinations will take place over up to six individual days as follows:

Day 1 Background knowledge written examination.

Day 2 North East England Regional knowledge written examination.

NB The regional written examination is in two parts. These will be two separate examinations, which may or may not be on the same day.

Days 3/4/5/6 Practical assessments on foot, in sites and on a coach.

The days will not necessarily be consecutive

In addition, a 3,000-word project will be prepared by each student, based on a specified choice of tourism subjects and this will be included in the exam assessments. The choices will be given out in October with a final submission date of late January.

Successful applicants will be awarded the North East England *Blue Badge* and will be issued with the Institute's Certificate and a Registered Guide photo card at an award Ceremony (Date TBC)

The National Background Knowledge paper, once passed, will be transferable to other *Blue Badge* Regions, if the candidate were to follow a programme of study for these.

Further details regarding Examinations can be found in the Examinations Handbook available to download from the Institute of tourist guiding. <https://www.itg.org.uk/media/2162/examinations-handbook-v-20181.pdf>

Progression/Career Opportunities: The *Blue Badge* is the highest level of Tourist Guiding qualification available. However, guides are encouraged to continually update and develop knowledge and skills. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programmes and events are available through the Institute and Regional Associations such as the British Guild of Tourist Guides and the North East England Tourist Guides Association. The programme will include sessions on self-employment and business planning for Tourist Guides.

Cost: The Programme fee is £3,600. Upon acceptance of a place on the programme, if offered, the programme fee is payable by Monday 15th April 2019

The fee includes tuition, admission and supervision on practical visits, coach travel where this is part of the training (but not driver gratuities) and other programme learning materials. Also included is a two-day Communications Seminar on practical presentation skills for Tourist Guides which will take place in October. Excluded from these fees are personal transportation costs, overnight accommodation, guide books or literature specific to subjects contained in the syllabi or linked to historical or cultural sites and attractions.

N.B. This fee does not include the Institute of Tourist Guiding examination fees (see below)

In addition to the Programme Fee, a Registration Fee of £30.00 is payable with the application. This fee will be refunded if a place is offered but is otherwise non-refundable. Students are advised to seek suitable insurance against the cost of their personal withdrawal from the programme for any reason, as no refunds will be given for withdrawal from the programme or any part of it, nor for non-use of any of the services provided. The British Guild of Tourist Guides reserves the right to cancel and refund all fees paid or to offer the programme at a higher fee if insufficient enrolments are received.

Examination Fees

Examination Fees applicable to 2020 are subject to confirmation by the Institute of Tourist Guiding, but, as an indication, these are currently projected at £1,322.00 per person for 2019 and are likely to increase in line with inflation before 2020. The full examination fees will be invoiced by the Institute of Tourist Guiding and will be payable, in one instalment, by 31st January 2020. This sum also includes the issue of a personalised *Blue Badge* and a certificate for successful candidates. There is an additional linguist test fee at a later date (currently approximately £170, increasing annually) for those wishing to qualify to guide in a language other than their first language, unless this is English. If English is not your first language you will not be qualified to guide in English without undertaking the language examination. Your badge will qualify you to guide in your first language only.

Programme Fees – Funding

The British Guild of Tourist Guides is registered with the Learning Skills Council as a Learning Provider. For candidates who have been offered a place on the course, it may be possible to apply for a bursary from the British Guild of Tourist Guides for part of the fees. Details will be made available to those being offered a place. Please note this is not guaranteed and is completely at the discretion of the British Guild of Registered Tourist Guides and is separate and not influenced in any way by the course directors.

Working as a Guide

The role and function of a guide is to organise, inform and entertain. This rewarding work allows excellent opportunities to meet a wide range of people, including both local and visiting tourists arriving by coach, cruise liner or other modes of transport from the UK and the rest of the world, to travel and to manage your own working environment. Guides in Britain are mainly freelance and self-employed. Work is seasonal, involving unsocial hours and is usually obtained by direct contact with tour operators and other agencies. In addition, a guide with good marketing skills can successfully establish a strong client base. Depending on what type of work is being undertaken, Tourist Guides will charge a range of fees. As an example, for 'mainstream' guiding work, in English, in 2018-2019 freelance North East England guides negotiated guiding fees in the range of £150 to £185 per half day and £245 - £285 per full day.

The Institute of Tourist guiding

The Institute of Tourist Guiding is the standard setting body, not only for *Blue Badge* guides but for the whole of the tourist guiding sector. It provides examinations and accredits programmes which meet its standards and provides examinations for Site (White Badge) Town & City (Green Badge) and Blue Badge qualifications. Registration with the Institute of Tourist Guiding signifies that a Guide has achieved an accepted level of professional competence. The Institute of Tourist Guiding does not engage Tourist Guides but promotes the *Blue Badge* in general. Tourist Guides are listed on its web site, from which users of guide services can verify the validity of the qualification.

Application and Selection

- Application forms can be downloaded from the Course website www.guidetrainingnortheast.com or by email request to guidetrainingnortheast@gmail.com. These should be returned, together with payment by

bank transfer of the £30 Registration Fee, in accordance with the instructions on the form. **The closing date for applications is 4th March 2019.**

A short-list of applicants will be asked to attend, during March 2019, a knowledge test and interview, which will include making a brief presentation, without notes, on a pre-assigned tourism topic. Selected candidates will be informed in writing following the interview.

- Candidates' acceptance letters, with the programme fee must be received by Monday 15th April 2019 at the latest.
- Candidates, of a minimum age of 18, will need to demonstrate an outgoing personality, smart appearance, physical stamina, good general knowledge, organisational ability, flexibility, a genuine interest in people and the motivation to develop their own business.
- Preference for places on the programme will be given to those fluent in English but whose first language is other than English, English first language speakers who are fluent in other language(s), those already living in the region, those already in the tourism industry, local guides or house guides. Those with existing tourist guiding qualifications from other regions may also apply, but preference in the first instance will be given to those living in the North East of England.

Programme Directors:

The Course will be led by the Programme Director and three Associate Directors.

- Details of Programme Director
 - **David Waite** MBA FITG is a Heart of England and South West *Blue Badge* Tourist Guide, a qualified accountant, and has extensive experience in training, both in Tourist Guiding and other industries. He was Joint Programme Director on the Heart of England *Blue Badge* training programme held in 2006/07, 2015/16 and the currently running 2018/19 course, Programme Director for both the City of Lincoln *Green Badge* training programme in 2003/4, Tamworth *Green Badge* training programme in 2013/14 and Course Tutor for the Leicester Faith Guiding programme in 2012. He is a Fellow, past Director, Company Secretary and Joint President of the Institute of Tourist Guiding.
- Details of the Associate Programme Directors
 - **Laura Rhodes** BA (Hons) MITG is a qualified *Blue Badge* Tourist Guide for the North East of England and Yorkshire regions. As a qualified Further Education teacher, she has taught Travel and Tourism in colleges and has worked with local authorities to develop Tourism training packages such as Welcome to Tyne and Wear, Northumberland Ambassadors and site-specific training. Laura assisted in the delivery of the Blue Badge Training programme in Yorkshire in 2013-14.
 - **Tess Pike** MA (Hons) MITG is a *Blue Badge* Tourist Guide for Cumbria, Yorkshire and Liverpool City Region and has extensive experience of training across the north of England, including as Joint Programme Director on the 2013-14 *Blue Badge* training programme in Yorkshire. Tess is currently Programme Director for the Bridgewater Canal *Green Badge* training programme in Salford. She is a professional linguist, qualified to guide in English

and German. She sits on the Institute of Tourist Guiding Languages Committee and is a former Director of the Institute.

- **Michele Thompson** BSc (Hons) MITG qualified as a *Blue Badge* Tourist Guide for Yorkshire in 2015. She has almost 15 years of experience in the travel industry having worked as a tour manager in Europe and as a sales manager and travel agent. In addition to a PGCE in language teaching for secondary level she has completed part one of the Institute of Tourist Guiding Train the Trainer qualification. Her involvement in this course will allow her to complete her portfolio and become a qualified trainer. She is very interested in enabling the use of modern technology during the course.
- David, Laura and Tess are recognised by the Institute of Tourist Guiding as registered Trainers. Michele is working towards this recognition and as an Associate Course Director, will contribute to the management of the course whilst gaining experience in this role.

Programme Tutors and Lecturers:

- The Programme Director and Associate Directors are all experienced *Blue Badge* Guides. Those Programme Directors who are recognised by the Institute as registered Trainers will fulfil the role of Programme Tutors, supported by Michele Thompson and other experienced *Blue Badge* Guides where appropriate.
- Programme Lecturers will include the Programme Directors, University and College lecturers where appropriate, *Blue Badge* Guides and local experts.

Steering Group: The programme will be monitored by a Steering Committee consisting of representatives of the Tourism industry which will include:

- Representatives of one or more tourism bodies covering the North East England region.
- The Institute of Tourist Guiding Chief Examiner
- A management representative of a regional site or attraction
- A representative – North East England Tourist Guiding Association
- A representative of the British Guild of Tourist Guides
- A management representative - Coach Company, Tour Operator, and/or Cruise Ship Company.
- The Programme Director
- The Associate Programme Directors