

SAGE COURSE COMPANIONS

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR SUCCESS



Travel and Tourism

Richard Sharpley



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part one

introducing your companion




This SAGE Course Companion has been written to help you succeed on your undergraduate travel and tourism course. In fact, it is rather like a travel guide! That is, it is designed to help you find your way around and make sense of the numerous and, perhaps, unfamiliar topics that are included in your course, pointing you towards key issues and concepts as well as directing you towards the most important books and readings. It will also help you undertake and successfully complete coursework assessments, and provide you with essential guidance to revising for exams. In other words, this Companion will help you on your journey towards achieving your degree in travel and tourism.

Of course, a travel guide is, by definition, simply a guide to a place you are visiting; its purpose is to help you make the most of your stay there but it cannot tell you everything you might wish or need to know. Similarly, this Companion is a guide to the study of travel and tourism, not a comprehensive course text. It is not intended to replace your lecture notes, textbooks and wider reading but, rather, to supplement them. Highlighting the important ideas, concepts and issues that you need to know, it will help you organise and structure your thoughts and learning, and it will enable you to make the most of your lecture notes, textbooks and other course materials.

As well as providing a focus for your reading, learning and research in travel and tourism, this book is also intended to guide you in your preparation of coursework and in your revision for exams, helping you to save time and avoid common pitfalls. In particular, it provides guidance and tips on what your examiners will be looking for in terms of key facts, concepts and arguments, enabling you to plan and write assessed coursework or prepare for your exams more effectively.

In addition to the subject specific information in Part Two of this book, you will also find a study, writing and revision skills guide in

Part Three. This is designed to help you learn more efficiently, to be a more effective student. Part of the learning process is attending and contributing to lectures and seminars but of equal, if not greater, importance is your use of textbooks and other course materials and your wider reading around the subject. This Companion will help you navigate this learning process, guiding your study of travel and tourism and helping you succeed on your course.

1	
how to use this book	

The overall aim of this book is to help you make the most of your travel and tourism course by establishing a framework for your learning about the subject and by providing essential help in completing coursework and revising for exams. Therefore, it essentially serves two purposes, namely, to support your learning and act as a revision guide.

To make best use of the book, then, you should use it to supplement your course textbooks and lecture notes by, first of all, making sure that you are familiar with the travel and tourism subject areas included in the book and where these are covered in your course syllabus. This means that you can then read about each topic before the relevant lecture or seminar, equipping yourself with knowledge of the important issues or themes and familiarising yourself with key thinkers or writers on the subject. Importantly, this will also help you to understand the relevance or contribution of any particular topic to the overall study of travel and tourism. As we shall see in a moment, one of the challenges of studying travel and tourism is that it is a broad subject that draws on a variety of academic disciplines. As a result, it is sometimes easy to lose sight of how particular topics fit into the overall travel and tourism picture.

Even if you do not wish to use the book to preview your course, you can use it both as a guide to preparing and writing assessed coursework and as an exam revision guide. It indicates the important elements of each topic covered, thereby helping to focus your reading and revision, and suggesting what issues and arguments should be included (or not included!) in assignments or exam answers.

Depending on how you want to use this Companion, therefore, you can dip in and out of it as your course progresses, you can prepare yourself by reading it in its entirety before starting your course, or you can just refer to it as a revision guide. Whatever use you make of it, however, you are strongly recommended to read the first section on studying travel and tourism. This looks at not only *why* we study travel and tourism but also *how* we should study it. In other words, at an academic level, travel and tourism is a diverse, fascinating subject that attracts interest from, or is explored within the context of, a variety of disciplines. For example, you will undoubtedly read books that look at travel and tourism from the perspective of business strategy, geography, economics, sociology, development or marketing, to name just a few. Conversely, at a practical level, travel and tourism is a vast and dynamic global industry and one in which many readers of this book may hope to work. It is important, therefore, that you can recognise the collective contribution of the different perspectives on travel and tourism to your knowledge and understanding of travel and tourism in the 'real world'. In fact, one of the key things that examiners look for is not only your knowledge of basic concepts and issues, but your ability to apply these to contemporary travel and tourism practice.


Part Two of the Companion looks at the travel and tourism curriculum in more detail, providing you with an overview of the key elements of each topic. Where these topics are taught on your course may vary as, currently, there is no standard travel and tourism curriculum. As a result, travel and tourism courses, in terms of the units or modules that are taught, differ considerably in their focus and design. Nevertheless, many, if not all, the topics introduced in this Companion will be covered at some stage in your course. Remember, though, that this section is not a substitute for your course textbooks – it is designed to give you a head start in learning about travel and tourism, and to provide a quick reference guide to coursework and exam revision.

Each topic covered within the section offers the following features:

- An overview of key concepts and issues, as well as hints and tips on understanding and using them. This will remind you of the main points to include in your coursework and exam answers.
- Running themes. Despite the diverse perspectives on the study of travel and tourism, a number of themes or issues run across the subject as a whole. Frequently, reference can and should be made to these in essays and exam questions.
- The contribution of key thinkers/writers on the subject. The ability to refer to or quote the work of key thinkers/writers in travel and tourism not only conveys a sense of 'authority' in your work but is also likely to impress examiners.

- Ideas for assignment questions. These should help you with the structure and content of typical coursework essay questions.
- Sample exam questions and sample answers. These should help you to anticipate and prepare for likely exam questions.
- Taking it Further sections. These introduce a more critical stance on contemporary and, perhaps, controversial questions or debates that are not normally covered in standard texts. Introducing these into your essays or exam questions is likely to have a positive impact on the quality of your work (and your grades!).
- A short list of key sources to focus your reading on the topic.

Students often have some difficulty in making the most of lectures and seminars, while they also need help with specific study skills, such as writing essays or revising for exams. Part Three of this Companion is a study guide which is designed to help you make the most of your lectures and seminars, and to develop your writing and revision skills. Finally, at the back of the book is a glossary of key terms that are used throughout the book and highlighted in **bold** at the first mention, as well as a comprehensive index.

2	
studying travel and tourism	

Travel and tourism has been the subject of academic interest for well over fifty years. However, it was not until the 1970s, when a number of key academics began to develop a theoretical framework for its study, that it began to achieve more coherence as a recognised academic area. Its popularity as a course of study is even more recent. In fact, it is only ten to fifteen years ago that undergraduate programmes in travel and tourism became more widely available but, since then, the number of courses has, literally, exploded. So too, of course, has the number of students of travel and tourism, both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, while ever more academics have turned their attention to the subject, either as a specialist area or within their own disciplinary 'home'.

It is, then, a popular but relatively young subject, and one that remains contentious. The press, for example, often refer to travel and tourism courses in rather disparaging terms while tourism academics themselves often indulge in a form of academic navel-gazing! At the same time, there is disagreement about the reason for studying travel and tourism. On the one hand, it can be seen as a vocational subject, preparing students for a career in tourism – certainly, many travel and tourism graduates secure jobs in the industry once they have completed their degree. On the other hand, there are powerful reasons for studying it as an academic subject in its own right:


- Travel and tourism is often claimed to be the world's largest industry. Although it is debatable whether the term 'industry' is appropriate, there is no doubting the enormous global economic value of travel and tourism.
- It is a major social phenomenon. As ever-increasing numbers of people become tourists it is important to understand why and how people travel.
- Travel and tourism has significant economic, environmental and socio-cultural consequences for destinations. Not only must these be understood and managed, but also they should be considered within broader global change and development.
- More generally, travel and tourism is an integral part of modern life and, therefore, deserving of academic study.

Despite the ongoing debate about the reasons for studying it, there is general consensus about what the study of travel and tourism is all about. Tourism is, essentially, a social activity; it is about people travelling, for whatever reason, to destinations away from the place where they normally live and work, and their activities during their stay in those destinations. In short, tourism is simply about people who are tourists.

Similarly, the starting point for the *study* of travel and tourism is the tourist, or the social activity of tourism. It is through the process of travelling and staying in destinations that, collectively, tourists spend huge sums of money, making travel and tourism one of the world's largest economic sectors and, for many countries, a vital industry; it is through that process that tourists interact with local people and impact on the local environment; it is through that process that tourists seek satisfying experiences. Therefore, it is through studying and understanding that process that those who cater for tourists – the travel and tourism industry – can better (and profitably!) meet tourists' needs, that the widely publicised problems or impacts of tourism can be better managed, and that destinations can optimise the benefits from tourism.

In other words, the study of travel and tourism is concerned with exploring how, why and where people travel as tourists, how the travel industry can effectively and profitably cater for tourists, and how destinations can harness and manage tourism to their benefit.

As a subject of study, travel and tourism cannot be described as an academic discipline in the traditional sense of the word; rather, it is a subject area that draws on a variety of disciplines that collectively contribute to the overall picture of the subject. In other words, there are a number of ways, or lenses, through which we can look at travel and tourism, and each of these lenses represents a particular discipline which provides a theoretical framework for exploring the subject. Of course, the contribution of each discipline to the study of travel and tourism is important in its own right. For example, not only has sociology provided a basis for studying tourist motivation and behaviour, but sociologists themselves are fascinated by tourism as what they refer to as a 'social institution'. However, the trick is to recognise that each discipline is one piece in the overall jigsaw of travel and tourism. Tourist motivation is a popular and interesting topic, yet of greater importance is its relevance to understanding tourism marketing, product development, destination management and so on. Therefore, your success in studying the subject will depend partly on the extent to which you can draw on and relate your knowledge of particular topics to understanding travel and tourism as a whole.



Inevitably, some topics in travel and tourism will interest you more than others. However, it's important to remember that all the topics on your course are taught for a purpose; they will contribute collectively to your knowledge and understanding of travel and tourism.

As academic interest in travel and tourism has grown over the years, so too has the number of different disciplines that have contributed to the development of a broad-based body of knowledge on the subject. In fact, Jafar Jafari (1989), a leading academic who established one of the first (and now the most respected) tourism academic journals, *Annals of Tourism Research*, suggests that it is only recently that a more complete, multidisciplinary understanding of travel and tourism has evolved. He identifies four stages, or platforms, upon which the study of tourism has been based:

1 The advocacy platform. International **mass tourism** began to increase rapidly from the early 1960s. At this time, tourism was seen primarily as an economic phenomenon, an expanding international business that, as an important source of income and employment, had the potential to generate economic growth in destination areas. Little concern was displayed for the possible impacts of tourism development and, consequently, the study of travel and tourism was focused principally on the **economic impacts** of tourism, including indicators such as the **multiplier effect**.

2 The cautionary platform. As international tourism grew in both scale and scope, so too did awareness of its negative consequences or impacts. As a result, academic attention turned increasingly towards the study of the **social, cultural and environmental impacts** of travel and tourism (still a fundamental element of most tourism courses), with a variety of disciplines, including anthropology, geography and sociology, contributing to the research. Questions were also raised about the role of travel and tourism in **international development**, with a number of key writers whose backgrounds were in development studies and political science arguing for a more cautious approach to the promotion of tourism.

3 The adaptancy platform. During the 1980s, as attention continued to focus on the negative impacts of mass tourism, a principal theme to emerge in the study of travel and tourism was that of **alternative tourism**, preparing the way for the emergence of the topic that was later to dominate tourism studies, namely, **sustainable tourism**. Alternative tourism was concerned with finding, literally, alternatives to mass tourism development that had been so roundly criticised from the 1970s onwards, although, according to some, this represented a somewhat idealistic period in the study of travel and tourism.

4 The knowledge platform. Since the early 1990s, contrasting with the more thematic preceding 'platforms', the study of travel and tourism has become more holistic and rounded, with a variety of disciplines contributing to a more complete knowledge and understanding of the subject.

There is no doubt then that, over the last fifteen years or so, the scope of the subject has expanded enormously, as evidenced by the rapidly growing number of books dealing with increasingly diverse yet specific

issues in travel and tourism. Curiously, in fact, compared with other subjects there are few general travel and tourism textbooks but many that focus on specialist areas. These reflect the large number of topics that comprise travel and tourism, many of which are covered in Part Two of this Companion, and which point to the increasing complexity of the subject. Nevertheless, travel and tourism can be subdivided into a number of broad thematic areas, all of which are included, to a greater or lesser extent, on courses and which indicate the breadth of the subject you will be studying.

- The business of travel and tourism. This is a large topic and is concerned mainly with the supply of tourism or, more specifically, the **tourism industry**. It embraces the study of different sectors of the industry, such as transport, tour operations, attractions or accommodation, as well as functional elements of business and management as applied to travel and tourism, including marketing, strategic management, finance, quality management and human resource management. The legal aspects of tourism also fall under this heading, while e-commerce or **e.tourism** is a relatively new sub-theme.
- The demand for tourism. Understanding the demand for tourism, or the consumer behaviour of tourists, has long been a concern for academics and is fundamental to the study of travel and tourism. In addition to the analysis of actual trends and flows in travel and tourism, this topic also explores the **tourism demand process, tourist motivation**, the psychology of travel and tourism, **tourist typologies, consumer culture** and changes in the nature of demand.
- Forms of travel and tourism. Much of the study of travel and tourism focuses on different forms of tourism as related to specific destinational categories. In addition to considering specific factors, these inevitably embrace issues relevant to travel and tourism as a whole, such as demand, planning, marketing and development, but in the context of the particular destinations. These include the countryside (**rural tourism**), towns and cities (**urban tourism**), **island tourism** and **marine tourism**.
- Tourism products and markets. Typically, travel and tourism is seen in terms of 'the holiday'. However, a significant proportion of domestic and **international tourism** is related to non-leisure purposes, such as **business travel**, attending conferences/events, or education. Moreover, as both the demand for and supply of tourism has become more sophisticated, an increasing variety of travel and tourism experiences can be identified, such as **adventure tourism, sport tourism, dark tourism, wine tourism, backpacker/youth tourism, religious tourism** or, more generally, **special interest tourism**. As a result, increasing academic attention is being paid to these specific products and markets.
- Tourism, culture and heritage. The relationship between tourism, culture and heritage is a dominant theme in the study of travel and tourism. More specifically, academics have long been concerned with the consequences of

tourism development on destination cultures while, more recently, culture and heritage as a tourism product has become a popular topic. Increasingly, attention has also been paid to travel and tourism as a modern cultural phenomenon.

- Planning and managing travel and tourism. Perhaps the greatest challenge is the effective planning and management of tourism development to ensure that the benefits of travel and tourism are optimised (or the costs minimised) for all stakeholders – that is, for destination communities and environments, for the travel and tourism industry, and for tourists themselves. This broad thematic area includes, therefore, a variety of topics including tourism policy and planning, tourism impacts, tourism and regional/national development, destination or resort management, **tourism development models** (including sustainable tourism) and environmental management, as well as more specific topics such as **visitor management**.

By now, you will have realised that travel and tourism is a broad and complex subject, and perhaps more so than you might have initially imagined. However, it is this diversity that makes it such an interesting subject of study, as does the fact that we are all tourists and, therefore, part of what we are learning about. Moreover, travel and tourism itself is a fascinating, dynamic business, facing ever-new demands and challenges and, as a result, there is always something new to learn about it.

One question you might be asking, therefore, is how do you make sense of the subject? To put it another way, given the variety of disciplinary perspectives and the vast array of topics included in travel and tourism courses, how can a common thread be found or an overall

External influences: economic, political, environmental, technological

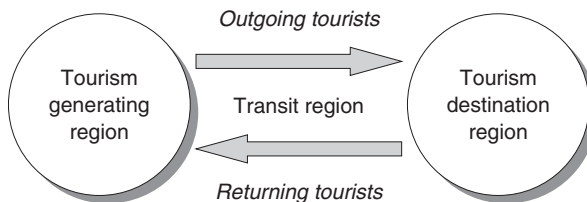


Figure 1.1 Travel and tourism as a system

- The tourism generating region stimulates tourism and is where tour operators and travel agents are located.
- The tourism destination region attracts tourists, experiences the consequences of tourism and is where attractions and facilities, such as hotels, are located.
- The transit region represents the travel sector.

picture of the subject developed? The answer, perhaps, lies in a model of the ‘**tourism system**’ first developed by Neil Leiper in the later 1970s. In this model, there are two main geographic regions, the tourism generating region and the tourism destination region, plus an intermediate transit route region (see Figure 1.1).

The three regions are, in a sense, linked by the tourist as the ‘actor’ in the system, while the system itself is subject to a number of external influences, such as political, economic or environmental factors, which determine the functioning of the system.



Thinking of travel and tourism as a system will help you to contextualise the individual topics you study, to understand how the different elements of tourism interact, and to relate specific issues to the subject as a whole. It will also remind you that travel and tourism cannot be seen in isolation from the world within which it occurs.

Finally, the dynamic nature of travel and tourism represents both a challenge and an opportunity. It means that you should, ideally, keep up to date with what is happening in the ‘real world’ of travel and tourism, such as following developments in the airline industry or keeping up to date with the impact of the Internet on holiday purchasing, by regularly reading the trade press, newspapers and other sources of information. However, this will not only stimulate your interest in the subject but, perhaps more importantly, you are likely to impress your examiners! That is, the more you are able to relate the theory you are taught in lectures to appropriate examples of contemporary travel and tourism issues and practice, the more likely you are to succeed in your coursework and exams.

part two

core areas of the curriculum



Running themes in travel and tourism



Despite the complex, multidisciplinary nature of travel and tourism, there are a number of themes which run across the subject as a whole. In a sense, these themes are the cement that binds the building blocks of the subject into a cohesive whole, and are relevant to most, if not all topics within travel and tourism. Try to bear them in mind when writing assignments or exam answers – they will help you to focus your ideas and arguments.

1 *Authenticity.* The concept of authentic tourist experiences has been a dominant theme in the study of travel and tourism since the 1970s, and is relevant to a variety of topics including marketing, destination planning and attraction management.

2 *Sustainable development.* The purpose of all tourism development is to achieve broader sustainable development in destination areas.

3 *Globalisation.* Travel and tourism contributes to, and is influenced by, the process of globalisation.

4 *Political economy.* National and international political and economic structures are inevitably linked with travel and tourism flows and development.

5 *The tourism industry.* Travel and tourism cannot occur without those who cater for tourists' needs, providing or facilitating tourism experiences.

6 *The tourism system.* All aspects of travel and tourism are interrelated within the concept of the tourism system.

7 *Sociology of tourism.* Travel and tourism is, first and foremost, a social phenomenon; a sociological understanding is fundamental to its effective planning and management.

8 *Governance.* It is always important to ask the question: who really determines tourism development policy?

You are probably aware that travel and tourism courses come in all shapes and sizes! A quick look at any guide to courses reveals a confusing list of different course names, from straight 'tourism' to 'tourism management', 'international tourism' or more specialist courses, such as 'sport tourism'. This diversity reflects the fact that not only is there is no travel and tourism curriculum as such, but also that different courses often have a specific focus or emphasis. This, in turn, may reflect the particular interests of your lecturers who, inevitably, have favourite topics or perspectives on tourism.

Just because a lecturer favours particular topics, theories or arguments does not mean you have agree to with them or repeat them in your assignments or exams! You will not lose marks (and will probably get better grades) for challenging or 'critiquing' what you have been taught, as long as you can justify your arguments.

At the same time, new specialist units are constantly being developed as a result of lecturers' research interests or themes coming into fashion. However, most travel and tourism courses cover the same core topics to a lesser or greater extent, albeit frequently within differently named units or modules. For example, the impacts of tourism may be taught as a dedicated unit, or within broader units such as 'sustainable tourism' or 'destination management'.

These core topics are introduced in this part of the book. Each section provides you with a brief overview of the important issues, concepts and, where relevant, key writers on the subject, as well as a sample exam question and a guide to the issues you should include in your answers. Try to keep the running themes in mind and don't forget that travel and tourism is a 'real world' phenomenon – using contemporary examples will bring your answers to life.

In certain topics in travel and tourism there are key writers (and their theories or arguments) that your lecturer would expect you to be aware of. Always try to include them in to your assignments or exam answers.

1

introducing travel and tourism



The study of travel and tourism inevitably begins with an overview of the subject as a modern social and economic phenomenon. Many textbooks begin by expressing its global significance in terms of **international tourist arrivals** and **international tourism receipts**, but three topics are of particular importance in introducing travel and tourism. These are, first, definitions, which attempt to clarify what travel and tourism is; second, the evolution of modern mass tourism, which explains how and why travel and tourism has become such a significant and widespread activity; and, third, the tourism system, which provides a framework for studying the subject.

Normally, attempts to define travel and tourism focus on the *demand* for tourism; definitions of the *supply* of travel and tourism are concerned with the nature and scope of the travel and tourism industry (see Section 4 below). It is, therefore, important to remember the sociology of tourism as a running theme here as the demand side of travel and tourism is concerned primarily with the tourist. There are two ways of attempting to define travel and tourism demand:

1 Technical definitions. Most commonly, definitions of travel and tourism are concerned with *who* is (or isn't) a tourist rather than *what* travel and tourism is. That is, they classify the tourist according to various criteria, such as length of stay, purpose of trip or distance travelled, and are used to distinguish tourism from other forms of travel for statistical or measurement purposes. Rather confusingly, distinctions are made between tourists, '**excursionists**' and '**day trippers**'; it is most useful to simply consider them all as tourists, remembering that day trips are usually a subcategory of **domestic tourism**'. The important point to grasp, however, is that tourism, as measured in numerous statistical sources, is a broad activity; tourists are not only people on holiday, but may be on business, students studying abroad, religious tourists (pilgrims), and so on.

2 Conceptual definitions. In contrast, these attempt to define the meaning or function of travel and tourism as a social activity. They draw attention to the fact that tourism involves a

change of location and, frequently, a change from the routine or the ordinary. However, given the enormous variety of purposes and activities measured as 'tourism', it is virtually impossible to define it conceptually – in fact, much of what you will cover on your course is concerned with what travel and tourism is.

Although it is useful to be able to quote the definitions you might find in textbooks, it is more important to recognise the contribution or limitations of different types of definition to an understanding of what travel and tourism is.

The evolution or history of tourism is a fascinating subject in its own right (and an example of how particular disciplines can contribute to our understanding of travel and tourism). Given the increasing incidence of travel and tourism in modern societies, it is also an important topic in the social history of many countries. The main purpose of looking at how travel and tourism has evolved, however, is to identify the main factors that have influenced, and continue to drive, the growth and spread of tourism around the world. Thus, if you are investigating the growth of travel and tourism either generally or in specific countries/regions, it is likely that you will always be able to refer to these factors.

The principal issue to focus upon is the transformation of travel and tourism, particularly international travel and tourism, from an activity that was once largely the preserve of the privileged minority (the wealthy or upper classes) to one enjoyed by the great majority of people, at least in the wealthier, developed countries. In other words, the principal issue is the emergence of mass tourism, a process that is described by one key writer, John Urry, as the 'democratisation' of tourism. The main question to think about is, how has this **democratisation of tourism** come about?

On the one hand, an historical analysis of tourism development identifies three main periods within which specific forms of tourism can be identified:

1 1600–1800: a period which witnessed the rise and fall of the 'Grand Tour', as well as the popularity of spas as the first example of resort-based tourism.

2 1800–1900: during this period, seaside resorts emerged and grew rapidly. The latter half of the 19th century also saw the birth and development of the 'package tour', with Thomas Cook being widely considered as the originator of the concept.

3 1900 onwards: a period initially defined by increasing domestic tourism but, since the 1960s, by the rapid growth of international mass tourism.

Importantly, a common theme or trend throughout all these periods, and one that continues to reflect the development of contemporary travel and tourism, is the so-called 'aristocratic model' of tourism development. The upper classes or aristocracy initially favoured particular destinations or types of tourism, only to find their leisure space and time being increasingly invaded by the middle/lower classes or less well-to-do. In other words, travel and tourism has long been a status symbol and one to which people increasingly aspire. This can be used to explain many current trends in tourism – bear this in mind when you are studying tourism demand or the consumption of tourism.

On the other hand, the democratisation of tourism can be explained by a number of key drivers that have underpinned the growth of mass tourism. In particular, four factors, all of which deserve to be explored in some detail, have contributed to this process:

1 Technological developments. Advances in transport technology have been fundamental to the growth in travel and tourism, both in increasing peoples' access to various forms of transport and in extending the distance that they can travel. More recently, information technology has also facilitated the growth in travel and tourism.

2 Increases in personal wealth and time. Quite evidently, people require sufficient amounts of both money and free time to participate in travel and tourism.

3 Social transformations. Social, economic and political change continues to be an important factor in the encouragement of travel and tourism.

4 The emergence of a sophisticated travel industry. While travel and tourism is, essentially, a social phenomenon, its growth has been dependent upon an expanding, integrated and innovative industry catering to (and, perhaps, creating) tourists' needs.

The history of travel and tourism has not yet run its course. New destinations, generating regions, products and markets are constantly evolving and these can be explained or even predicted by referring to the factors that have historically influenced the evolution of tourism.

A simple way of thinking about travel and tourism is that it comprises three basic elements:

- 1 **Tourists:** their demands, expectations, motivations and behaviour.
- 2 **The destination:** where the tourist experience occurs and where the benefits and costs of tourism development are felt.
- 3 **The travel and tourism industry:** innumerable businesses and organisations that collectively cater for the needs of tourists.

Although these are often studied as independent topics, in reality they are anything but independent. Indeed, one of the defining characteristics of tourism is that, for destinations, it is an export industry – the destination is the ‘product’ that is sold to overseas customers (or, in the case of domestic tourism, to visitors from other regions). Uniquely, that product is consumed where it is produced, pointing to an interrelationship between the destination, tourists and the travel industry which, frequently, both carries tourists to and provides for their needs within the destination. Thus, travel and tourism can be thought of as an inter-related system.

Reference has already been made in the first part of this book to the model of the tourism system developed by Neil Lieper (see Figure 1.1). There are three elements of this system:

- 1 **Tourists.** Tourism is, first and foremost, a human activity and it is around the tourist and tourism experiences that the model is built.
- 2 **Geographical areas.** There are three constituent regions in tourism – the generating region, where tourists come from, the destination region, where they travel to and stay, and an intermediate transit region, which represents both travel to the destination and short stays en route. Each of these regions is interrelated with tourists and the tourism industry.
- 3 **The travel and tourism industry.** The businesses and organisations which cater for tourists’ needs can be located in each of the three regions.

The benefit of the tourism system model is that it provides a particular way of looking at travel and tourism, both generally and in the context of

specific forms of tourism. Thus, specific destinations or types of tourism development, such as **ecotourism**, can be analysed within the model. It also provides a unifying framework for exploring and understanding the interaction between all the stakeholders in travel and tourism.

The model of the tourism system is just that – a model. While it is useful to understand it as a concept, its real value lies in its application as a framework for analysing specific tourism contexts or issues.

Taking it **FURTHER**



Most travel and tourism courses and textbooks typically begin by addressing the question: what is tourism? They then go on to consider the different definitions of tourism and highlight the diversity of tourist types. Beyond technically defining tourism for measurement purposes, however, is there any value in attempting to define it? Or, is it actually possible to define it? Travel and tourism has become an ubiquitous part of modern life, something that most of us do in some form or another. It has, in a sense, become a mass phenomenon, an activity in which the masses participate. Does this then imply that we are all, in effect, mass tourists?

Exam questions related to introductory sessions in travel and tourism are most likely to focus on two of the three themes outlined here: definitions, and the evolution of travel and tourism. A typical 'definitions' question would be:

“Why is it difficult to define travel and tourism succinctly?”

At a basic level, this requires you to demonstrate your knowledge of the different definitions of travel and tourism, in particular the distinction between and contributions of the demand/supply side and technical/conceptual definitions. Reference to the diverse categories of tourist would also be expected. However, the question also demands a more critical analysis of what tourism is as a social activity, its democratisation and its subsequent position in modern, social life. Indeed, so ingrained is travel and tourism in modern societies that there is,