



THE STANDARD QUALIFICATIONS  
FRAMEWORK AND NATIONAL  
OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS IN  
TOURISM – A UK PERSPECTIVE

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# Workshop Objectives

- Explain the UK`s Standard Qualifications Framework as it relates to Master`s Degrees
- Provide an example of how the Standard Qualifications Framework has been applied to MSc Responsible Tourism Management
- Explain the development of National Occupational Standards for Tourism in the UK
- Provide an example of how MSc Responsible Tourism Management has been devised to align with the QAA`s expectations for alignment with industry expectations

# Structure of the Workshop

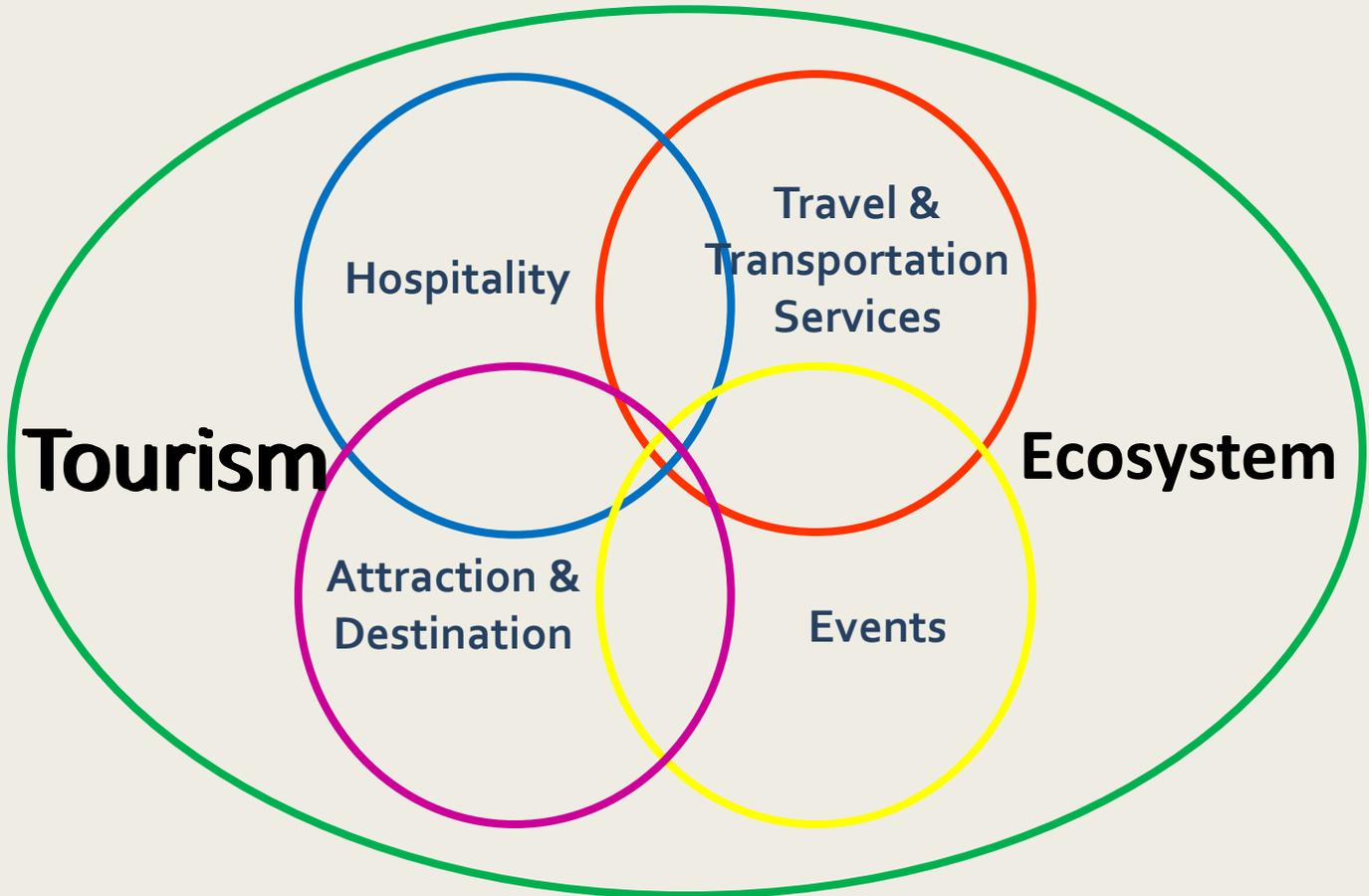
- Explanation of the content for approximately 60 minutes
- Discussion, questions and answers for 30 minutes
- A hard copy short paper is provided that includes the key elements of this workshop



## Professor David Hind

- Tourism Consultant, Dept Business & Law, London Metropolitan University
- President, Asia Pacific Institute for Events Management
- Chief Executive, Travel Industry Academy Ltd
- Visiting Professor at:
  - Bali Institute of Tourism, Indonesia
  - Bandung Institute of Tourism, Indonesia
  - Chung Hua University, Taiwan
- Over 30 years experience of designing and developing degrees in tourism, hospitality and events management

# THE CONTEXT OF TOURISM EDUCATION IN THE UK



# The Evolution of UK Tourism Degrees

- 1960s – vocational hospitality & tourism diplomas
- 1970s – the first Master`s degree in Tourism Management & the first Bachelor`s degree in Hospitality Management
- 1985 – the first Bachelor`s degree in Travel & Tourism Management
- 1996 – the first Bachelor`s degree in Events Management
- 2000 + - a proliferation of tourism related undergraduate & postgraduate degrees

# UK Tourism Master`s degrees in 2016

- 48 universities offer 73 Masters degrees in Tourism and Travel
- From an MA in the Anthropology of Travel and Tourism to an MSc in Tourism, Heritage and Sustainability
- The most popular title is MSc International Tourism & Hospitality Management
- Specialist degrees include MSc Responsible Tourism Management and MSc Travel Business Leadership
- Students can study full-time and part-time, face-to-face, through blended learning, 100% online and overseas through transnational education initiatives
- Face-to-face degrees can be completed in 12 months of full-time study

# SETTING QUALITY STANDARDS

# The Quality Assurance Agency for H.E. in the UK

- Monitors and advises on standards and quality of H.E. in the UK
- Publishes the UK Quality Code for H.E. – universities have to implement the specifications in the Quality Code when designing and delivering degree programmes
- An independent body that consults widely to produce the Quality Code

# Part A of the UK Quality Code

- Describes the achievements that students have to meet to be awarded with their degree
- Ensures that all universities in the UK design, teach and assess their degrees to a common national standard
- UK national standards for degree programmes are based on an outcomes based approach to learning – the knowledge, understanding and the abilities of students
- Threshold standards are set for each level of a degree programme in terms of analytical and intellectual skills

# The Qualifications Descriptors

- These specify the intended learning outcomes that students will attain upon completing their degree programme
- The qualifications descriptors are written in general terms so that they can be applied across subjects and modes of learning
- The qualifications descriptors specify the learning outcomes that have to be assessed for students to demonstrate that they have met the minimum threshold standards for the degree being studied

# Terminology used in the Master`s Degree Qualifications Descriptors

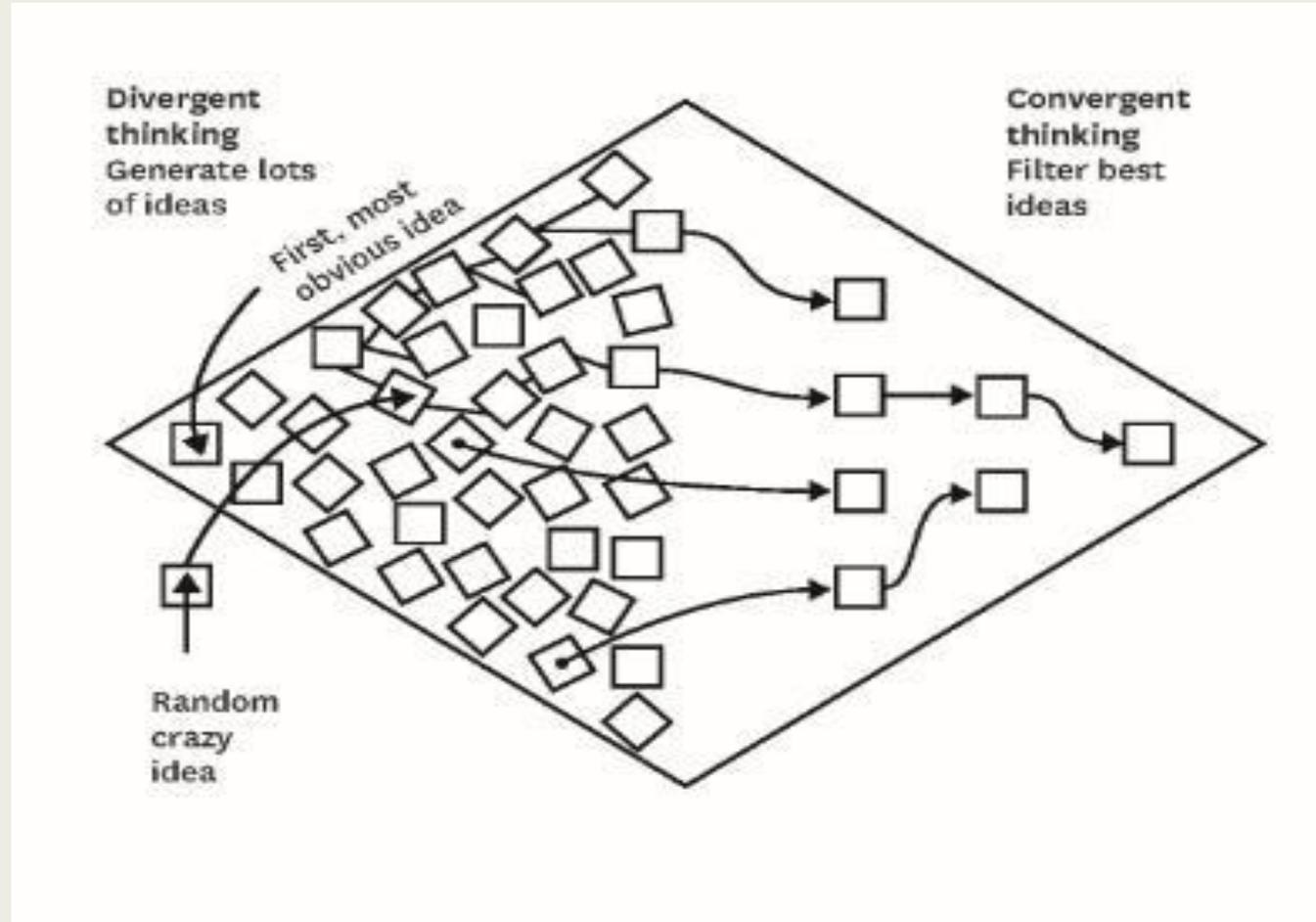
- A systematic understanding of knowledge
- A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights
- Studying at the forefront of their academic discipline
- Comprehensive understanding of research techniques or advanced scholarship
- Originality in the application of knowledge
- Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively
- Make sound judgements in the absence of complete data
- Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems

A Master`s Degree student will be studying at the forefront of their academic subject, will show originality in the application of knowledge and understand how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research. Students will be able to handle complex issues both systematically and creatively and should show originality in tackling and solving problems. They will have developed sound judgement and will be able to take responsibility and initiative when faced with complex and unpredictable situations.

# THE CHALLENGE FOR A COURSE TEAM



# Divergent & Convergent Thinking.



# A Course Team when designing a UK Master`s Degree should Ensure

- The Master`s degree aligns with the QAA Qualifications Descriptors
- The learning outcomes can be assessed
- The key threshold concepts the students need to understand are clear
- The subject content reflects current boundaries of knowledge
- There is horizontal integration of the modules being studied
- The teaching and learning methods will foster deep learning
- The teaching and learning methods will develop the students` ability to be critical and evaluative thinkers

# MSc Responsible Tourism Management

- Offered through face-to-face and online learning
- Has received UNWTO TedQual accreditation
- Evolved from the academic, research and consultancy expertise of the teaching team
- Attracts practising tourism managers as well as students who have recently graduated from a Bachelor`s programme

# MSc Responsible Tourism Management

## Course Learning Outcomes

- Critically understand the development of knowledge in responsible tourism and explain the key academic concepts inherent in responsible tourism
- Apply key academic responsible, sustainable, pro-poor tourism concepts to the management of resources and firms
- Understand and analyse specific issues of responsible tourism to protected area management and cultural heritage management
- Analyse complex strategic issues and management choices faced in introducing market led responsible tourism practices
- Evaluate in practice the management of responsible tourism in an applied way in a destination context

# MSc Responsible Tourism Management

## teaching, learning and assessment strategies

- Module content is informed by the research and consultancy of the teaching team
- Field study opportunities are provided for the students in the UK and in West Africa
- Company case studies are delivered in situ eg. at TUI, Hilton Hotels
- Assessments are work base related and require the students to analyse, synthesise and critically evaluate

# ENSURING RELEVANT CONTENT FOR EMPLOYMENT

# UK National Occupation Standards for Tourism

- In the early years of the C21st Sector Skills Councils took the lead on creating National Occupation Standards for sectors of the economy
- The Sector Skills Council for the service industries was called People 1st
- Due to the 2008 financial crisis Sector Skills ceased to receive government funding
- The National Occupation Standards for Tourism were not fully completed
  - Organise & Implement Travel & Tourism Promotional Activities
  - Collect & maintain Travel & Tourism Information & Data
  - Analyse, Evaluate & Present Travel & Tourism Data
  - Research Travel & Destination Information

# The QAA Requirement for Degrees to meet Industry Needs

- The QAA publishes `Benchmark Statements` that specify the content that undergraduate degrees have to include in order for the degree to be approved
- There are no specific Benchmark Statements for Master`s Degrees
- Master`s Degrees do have to reflect and include content that is relevant to employers

# QAA Tourism Management Benchmark Themes

- Concepts and characteristics of tourism as an area of study
- Products, structure and interactions in the tourism industry
- Role of tourism in communities and environments
- Nature and characteristics of tourists
- Marketing, HRM, Finance & Strategic Management

# MSc Responsible Tourism Management`s alignment with Industry Needs

- An advisory board was created to receive the views of senior tourism professionals
- Reference was made to the undergraduate Tourism Benchmark Statements
- The degree was cross-referenced to the Business and Management Benchmark Statements

# U.K. Professional Tourism Bodies

- Institute of Travel & Tourism
- Tourism Society
- Tourism Management Institute

# Tourism Management Institute – required subject content

- Destination Management Contexts
- Destination Marketing
- Cultural Tourism
- Business and Conference Tourism
- Governance
- Structure of the Tourism Industry
- Sustainability
- Visitor Management
- Business and Management Processes

# Conclusion

- The QAA is the body responsible for setting and monitoring quality standards in UK Higher Education
- UK universities have to comply with all Quality Codes of the QAA
- UK Master`s degrees are designed through outcome based learning objectives
- Careful attention is paid by course teams to align their degree with the QAA Quality Codes
- National Occupation Standards for tourism in the UK are incomplete
- All degrees have to demonstrate how their content is relevant to employers

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

ANY QUESTIONS??????????

# Bibliography

Hind, D.W.G. (2016) *The Standard Qualifications Framework and National Occupational Standards in the UK*, London Metropolitan University