

CUMBRIA

BLUE BADGE TOURIST GUIDE TRAINING PROGRAMME

2021-2022



Prospectus

Training Provider:
The British Guild of Tourist Guides

Programme Director:
Tess Pike MITG

Accredited by
The Institute of Tourist Guiding

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE

To prepare candidates to enter the tourist industry as qualified guides for Cumbria. Registered tourist guides are qualified by examinations set and administered by the Institute of Tourist Guiding. Candidates who are successful in these examinations will be awarded the prestigious “Blue Badge” for Cumbria.

PROGRAMME CONTENT

During the programme candidates will study the following:

- Background knowledge - a wide cultural background to Britain as a whole
- Cumbria knowledge - in-depth regional knowledge
- Guiding techniques - communication and presentation skills for guiding on foot, at a site, and from a moving vehicle
- Business skills - learning to work as a self-employed guide within the tourist industry, especially with regard to small business start-up and marketing

A basic knowledge of computers and ICT will be assumed, and candidates should have access to a computer and e-mail, since handouts and communications regarding the programme will be sent out electronically.

Subjects covered will include a:

National overview of history; geography and geology; agriculture; the countryside; English literature; the visual and performing arts; religion; architecture and landscape design; constitution and government; law; multiculturalism and religion; industry and commerce; science and innovation; finance; tourism; sustainable tourism; education; health and social services; sport; current affairs; tour planning and problem solving.

Regional overview of Cumbria - all of the above subjects will then be set in the context of our region. Candidates will study: the major and defining events of British history in terms of their effect on the county; the diverse nature of Cumbria's scenery, both natural and manmade; the varied characteristics of its towns and cities; its architecture - secular and sacred, stately and vernacular, domestic and industrial; its World Heritage Sites; its personalities from sport and the arts; its cultural opportunities; its traditions; what Cumbria had to offer in the past and what it has to offer now.

Visits will include sites in Cumbria and surrounding areas, such as historic houses and gardens; religious buildings; historical sites of archaeological, industrial and cultural importance; visitor centres, galleries and museums.

A student information pack and full syllabus will be provided at the start of the course.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND DATES

The programme will be run over one year and will lead to examinations in 2022. Please note that all proposed dates and the structure of the training programme may be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and any government restrictions in place at the time. The programme has been designed to keep actual contact time to a minimum, with the majority of regional and background knowledge lectures being delivered online.

It is designed to be part time, based on:

- five introductory days held across two weekends in April and May 2021
- four individual summer study days in June, July, August and September
- seven 3-day weekends and one 2-day weekend between September 2021 and January 2022
Lectures, classroom-based student exercises and personal tutorials will be held during the evenings.
- a Communications Seminar in November 2021
- two 2-day and one 4-day examination practice weekends in February and March 2022
- weekly lectures covering Background and Regional Knowledge on Wednesday evenings

Training will include walks, talks and lectures, visits, coach tours and practical sessions at venues and destinations across Cumbria.

Lectures

- Lectures will be provided through a combination of face-to-face lectures and on-line lectures delivered via the internet, direct to students' devices.
- For the purposes of the course, Cumbria has been broken down into eight Distinctive Areas, and lectures on each of these will include: an overview of the geology and geography and how it has influenced the area's character and story; an historical overview; religious sites; industry and commerce; transport routes (toll roads, canals, railways, cross Bay routes); agriculture; visual and performing arts; literary heritage; key personalities; houses and gardens; places of interest; local traditions; food and drink; tourism and leisure activities; vision for the future.
- Face-to-face lectures will be held in a variety of classrooms and study centres throughout the county. The study centres will be a mixture of commercial venues and public/private lecture rooms, all of which will be within a short distance of overnight accommodation (hotels, B&Bs etc.), should students 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.
- On-line regional lectures will be delivered by Zoom. Each lecture will last for 60-90 minutes and there will be an opportunity for discussion afterwards.
- The Background Knowledge lectures will be pre-recorded.

Practical visits to sites, villages and towns throughout Cumbria

- Although experts in their fields and Blue Badge Guide specialists will deliver a certain amount of knowledge during visits, students will be expected to do a considerable amount of research prior to visits and practise guiding techniques and skills during the intensive weekends throughout the duration of the course.
- When coaches are used for practical sessions, a variety of routes will start from various locations throughout the region, including the Ambleside, Grange over Sands, Kendal, Sedbergh, Penrith, Carlisle, Cockermouth areas.

It is essential for students to have their own transport as public transport is, in the main, insufficient to fully cover "reccyng" visits over a large geographical area and early starts/late finishes, which are typical of the job of a Tourist Guide.

Communications Seminar

- This is a two-day seminar concentrating on communication techniques and presentation skills for tourist guides.

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.

Summer 2021

- Following the introductory sessions in April/May 2021, which will include sessions on returning to study, research resources, reconnoitring and using maps effectively, and other guidance, students will be encouraged to make the most of the summer by getting to know Cumbria (visiting attractions, enjoying events, reccyng, driving the coach routes that will be covered during the intensive weekends, reading, researching, and sampling their way through Cumbria's tea shops and enjoying regional specialities!). 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 2021.
- The programme includes four summer study days, which are intended to provide an opportunity to keep in touch, but also form an integral part of the course.

Students are encouraged to view breaks during the course as study breaks, and are expected to attend, participate in, and commit themselves fully to the programme of study.

PROGRAMME DATES 2021-2022

Please note: these dates may be subject to change

Introductory Programme: Fri 23rd, Sat 24th, Sun 25th April; Sat 8th, Sun 9th May

Summer study days: Fri 11th June, Fri 16th July, August TBA, Fri 10th September

Intensive study weekends:

September: Friday 24th to Sunday 26th

October: Friday 8th to Sunday 10th and Sunday 17th to Monday 18th

November: Friday 5th to Sunday 7th and Friday 26th to Sunday 28th

December: Friday 3rd to Sunday 5th

January: Friday 14th to Sunday 16th and Friday 28th to Sunday 30th

February: Friday 4th to Saturday 5th and Friday 25th to Saturday 26th

March: Friday 11th to Monday 14th

PLEASE NOTE: The study weekends:

- will normally start at 8:45am on Friday mornings and finish at 5:00pm on Sunday evenings. However, students may sometimes be required to arrive at 8:30am. Please note that the second October weekend runs from Sunday to Monday.
- include classroom-based talks, student exercises or personal tutorials from 6:00-7:30pm in the evenings. These training days are necessarily long and do include breaks. However, they require concentration over a very long period of time. We recommend that, to maximise free time, students share driving or consider staying overnight locally if possible.

Communications Seminar: Students will be allocated two consecutive dates during week commencing Monday 15th November, which will be confirmed during the introductory programme in April/May. Attendance at this seminar is mandatory.

On-line lectures: On-line regional lectures will be delivered by Zoom between 7:00pm and 9:00pm on Wednesday evenings, and all will be made available to view later. Pre-recorded Background Knowledge lectures will be available to view from the time at which they are sent out until completion of the examinations.

OUTLINE OF ASSESSMENT (March – April 2022)

Having completed the programme, including attendance at the Communications Seminar, the Programme Director will submit students for practical and written assessment, administered by the Institute of Tourist Guiding.

Practical assessment will take place:

- 1) on a village, town or city walk
- 2) in a museum or gallery
- 3) in a religious building
- 4) on a coach route

The course will include training on leading low-level rural walks, and candidates will be assessed on this aspect within the context of the practical assessments listed above.

Written assessment will consist of a UK Background Knowledge paper and two Regional Knowledge papers. Candidates will also be required to submit a 3,000-word tour planning project no later than Sunday 16th January, the subject of which will be announced during the training weekend of 17th-18th October.

Your Blue Badge will qualify you to guide in your first language only, which you will be asked to state upon application. Please contact the Institute of Tourist Guiding should you wish to guide in any other language(s).

Successful candidates will have their names added to the Institute of Tourist Guiding Register of Cumbria Blue Badge Guides and will be awarded their Blue Badges at an Awards Ceremony (Date TBA).

To gain the Blue Badge qualification, students must pass all of the examinations, which are scheduled to take place over up to six individual days between 28th March and 14th April 2022.

All modules are required to be completed successfully within 48 months of the date of enrolment onto the course, except in exceptional circumstances. Candidates are entitled to two opportunities to re-sit a failed examination, except in the case of the tour planning project, where candidates will be given only one opportunity to re-sit, and will need to pay a fee as determined by the Treasurer of the Institute of Tourist Guiding for marking of the project. Candidates at all resit examinations, except for the coach, will pay the current fee applicable. Candidates for a coach resit examination will pay an additional 25% of the main fee for the first resit, and will pay an additional 50% of the main fee for the second resit.

COST OF PROGRAMME

The course fee will be £3,600, which will be payable in two instalments:

- 50% within 7 days of accepting the offer of a place
- The balance of 50% within four weeks of the start of the course

The fee includes all tuition, entrance fees, coach travel during the intensive weekends (but not driver gratuities), other course learning materials, and registration with the Institute of Tourist Guiding. Also included are a two-day Communications Seminar and two-day Marketing Seminar. It does not include personal transport costs, overnight accommodation, guide books, literature specific to subjects contained in the syllabi or linked to historical or cultural sites and attractions.

In addition to the course fees, examination fees will be payable directly to the Institute of Tourist Guiding. As an indication, these are currently £1,450 per person for examinations in 2021 and are likely to increase in line with inflation. Please click [here](#) for further details.

A Registration Fee of £30.00 is payable with your 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 thereof, 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.

BURSARIES

For candidates who have been offered a place on the course, it may be possible to apply to the British Guild of Tourist Guides for a bursary for part of the fees through their '2020 Project'. Please click [here](#) for further details. This is not guaranteed and is completely at the discretion of the British Guild of Tourist Guides.

BLUE BADGE TOURIST GUIDE CANDIDATES (BBTGCs)

Applications are welcomed from existing Blue Badge Guides already qualified for another region, who are encouraged to participate in the full training course.

However, it is recognised that some Blue Badge Guides who have already successfully completed a full training course will primarily be looking to acquire regional knowledge associated with a new region. If you fall into this category and choose to accept a place (subject to interview), you will be attached to the course as a Blue Badge Tourist Guide Candidate (BBTGC), and will be expected to enrol with the Institute of Tourist Guiding in the same way as students on the main course, and to sit the exams and pay the fees accordingly.

All BBTGCs are expected to attend the final (four-day) exam practice weekend and attend a Communication Seminar. A Tour Planning Project will also need to be completed, if not submitted for a previous Blue Badge qualification after 2002. Against payment of an additional fee, BBTGCs will be able to subscribe to on-line Background Knowledge or Regional lectures, tour planning project support, recommendations of books, podcasts and other research resources.

The offer of a place to BBTGCs will be based on selection by interview and priority will be given to applicants living in the area. For further details of the application procedure for existing Blue Badge Tourist Guides, please contact the Programme Director.

WORKING AS A PROFESSIONAL TOURIST GUIDE

The role and function of a tourist guide is to welcome, organise, inform and entertain. This rewarding work allows great opportunities for successful candidates to meet a wide range of people, travel and manage their working environment. Tourist guides in Britain are mainly freelance and self-employed. Work is seasonal, often 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. However, it takes time to build up a network of clients and achieve referrals, and candidates should not expect to undertake a lot of work in the first year or so of guiding. The more flexible you are in terms of availability and types of work the more work you will get.

Depending on what type of work is being undertaken, tourist guides will charge a range of fees. For 'mainstream' guiding work in English, in 2020 freelance Blue Badge guides in Cumbria are negotiating guiding fees in the region of £175 to £212 per half day and £280 to £315 per full day. Driver guides and those with second languages can command higher fees.

INSTITUTE OF TOURIST GUIDING

The Institute of Tourist Guiding is the standard setting body. It provides examinations and accredits programmes which meet its standards. 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 website, from which users of guide services can verify the validity of the qualification.

TRAINING PROVIDER

The British Guild of Tourist Guides is the national membership organisation for Blue Badge Tourist Guides throughout Britain, and provides support and advice to its members. All members are listed on its website, which is widely used by users of guide services. The Guild is registered with the Learning Skills Council as a Learning Provider. During training students will be covered by the Guild's PLI during training-related activities.

STEERING GROUP

The programme will be monitored by a Steering Committee made up of representatives of the tourism industry. These include the Programme Director; the Chair of Cumbria Tourist Guides; a representative of the British Guild of Tourist Guides training committee, the Institute of Tourist Guiding Chief Examiner; an academic; a representative from Cumbria Tourism; a user of guides or representative from a site.

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

Tess Pike MA(Hons), MITG, DipTrans.

Tess is an Institute of Tourist Guiding Accredited Trainer and Examiner, and Blue Badge Guide for Cumbria (1995), Liverpool City Region (2013), and Yorkshire (2015). She has extensive experience of training across the north, including as Joint Programme Director on the 2014/15 Blue Badge training programme in Yorkshire and the 2019/20 programme in the Northeast. She was Programme Director for the Green Badge Guide course for the Bridgewater Canal in Salford in 2018/19. She is a professional linguist, qualified to guide in English and German, a former Director of the Institute and past Chair of the Language Committee.

PROGRAMME TUTORS AND LECTURERS

All of the tutors on the programme work as Blue Badge Guides in the North of England. Lecturers and speakers will include Blue Badge Guides and specialists in their fields.

DETAILS OF APPLICATION PROCEDURE

An application form can be downloaded from the Institute of Tourist Guiding or by email request to cumbriabbtraining@btinternet.com. This 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 Monday 8th March.**

A short-list of applicants will be asked to attend a knowledge test and interview. Interviews will be held during week commencing 22nd March. Successful candidates are requested to send a letter of acceptance by Friday 2nd April, and payment of 50% of the fee will be due on Friday 9th April.

Selected candidates will be informed in writing following the interview.

All fees must be paid by one week prior to the introductory week, so by 16th April.

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 and concern for people, and the motivation to develop their own business and work as freelance professionals.

Applications will be especially welcome from candidates who are fluent in a language other than English, those already living in the area, those already working in the tourism industry, local guides or house guides.

Those with existing Blue Badge qualifications from other regions may also apply, but preference in the first instance will be given to those living in the local area. For further details of the application procedure for existing Blue Badge Tourist Guides, please click Institute of Tourist Guiding.