



# **Subject Benchmark Statement**

## **Events, Hospitality, Leisure & Tourism**

### **Draft Version for Consultation**

Consultation version 5 October 2026

# Contents

|                                                                                                          |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>About this Statement.....</b>                                                                         | <b>1</b>  |
| How can I use this document? .....                                                                       | 1         |
| Relationship to legislation .....                                                                        | 1         |
| Additional sector reference points .....                                                                 | 2         |
| <b>1. .... Context and purposes of an Events, Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism Degree .....</b>          | <b>3</b>  |
| Context.....                                                                                             | 3         |
| Purposes .....                                                                                           | 3         |
| Equity, diversity and inclusion .....                                                                    | 5         |
| Accessibility and the needs of disabled students.....                                                    | 6         |
| Education for sustainable development .....                                                              | 7         |
| Employability, entrepreneurship and enterprise education .....                                           | 8         |
| Generative artificial intelligence.....                                                                  | 9         |
| <b>2. .... Distinctive features of an Events, Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism Degree Programme.....</b> | <b>11</b> |
| Design .....                                                                                             | 11        |
| Progression .....                                                                                        | 12        |
| Flexibility .....                                                                                        | 12        |
| Partnership.....                                                                                         | 13        |
| Monitoring and review.....                                                                               | 13        |
| <b>3. Content, structure and delivery .....</b>                                                          | <b>15</b> |
| Content.....                                                                                             | 15        |
| Events.....                                                                                              | 15        |
| Hospitality.....                                                                                         | 17        |
| Leisure.....                                                                                             | 18        |
| Tourism.....                                                                                             | 19        |
| Teaching and learning .....                                                                              | 20        |
| Assessment.....                                                                                          | 22        |
| <b>4. Benchmark standards .....</b>                                                                      | <b>25</b> |
| Introduction .....                                                                                       | 25        |
| Undergraduate Degrees: Threshold, Typical and Excellent Level.....                                       | 25        |
| Subject knowledge and skills.....                                                                        | 26        |
| Professional skills.....                                                                                 | 28        |
| Typical level.....                                                                                       | 28        |
| Excellent level.....                                                                                     | 28        |
| Integrated Master's .....                                                                                | 30        |
| Master's.....                                                                                            | 31        |



## About this Statement

This QAA Subject Benchmark Statement (SBS) for Events, Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism (EHLT) defines what can be expected of a graduate in terms of what they might know, do and understand at the end of their studies. Subject Benchmark Statements are an established part of the quality assurance arrangements in UK higher education. They are sector-owned reference points, developed and written by academics. Subject Benchmark Statements also describe the nature and characteristics of awards in a particular discipline or area. Subject Benchmark Statements are published in QAA's capacity as an expert quality body on behalf of the higher education sector. A summary of the Statement is also available on the QAA website.

Key changes from the previous Subject Benchmark Statement include:

- a revised structure for the Statement, which includes the introduction of cross-cutting themes of:
  - equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)
  - accessibility and the needs of disabled students
  - education for sustainable development (ESD)
  - employability, entrepreneurship and enterprise education (EEE)
  - generative artificial intelligence (GenAI).
- a comprehensive review updating the context and purposes, including programme design and content in order to inform and underpin the revised benchmark standards.

## How can I use this document?

Subject Benchmark Statements are not intended to prescribe any particular approaches to teaching, learning or assessment. Rather, they provide a framework, agreed by the subject community, that forms the basis on which those responsible for curriculum design, approval and update can reflect upon a programme, and its component modules. This allows for flexibility and innovation in programme design while providing a broadly accepted external reference point for that discipline.

They may also be used as a reference point by external examiners when considering whether the design of a programme and the threshold standards of achievement are comparable with those of other higher education providers. Furthermore, Statements can support professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) with their definitions and interpretations of academic standards.

You may want to read this document if you are:

- involved in the design, delivery and review of programmes in EHLT
- a prospective student thinking about undertaking a programme in EHLT
- an employer, to find out about the knowledge and skills generally expected of EHLT graduates.

## Relationship to legislation

The responsibility for academic standards lies with the higher education provider which awards the degree. Higher education providers are responsible for meeting the requirements of legislation and any other regulatory requirements placed upon them by their relevant funding and regulatory bodies. This Statement does not interpret legislation, nor does it incorporate statutory or regulatory requirements.

The status of the Statement will differ depending on the educational jurisdictions of the UK. In England, Subject Benchmark Statements are not [sector-recognised standards](#) as set out under the Office for Students' [regulatory framework](#). However, Subject Benchmark Statements are part of the current quality arrangements in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Because the Statement describes outcomes and attributes expected at the threshold standard of achievement in a UK-wide context, many higher education providers will use them as a tool for programme design and approval, and for subsequent monitoring and review, in addition to helping demonstrate the security of academic standards.

## **Additional sector reference points**

Higher education providers are likely to consider other reference points in addition to this Statement when designing, delivering and reviewing programmes. These may include requirements set out by PSRBs and industry or employer expectations. In 2024 QAA published an update to the [Quality Code](#), which will be helpful when using this Statement.

Explanations of unfamiliar terms used in this Subject Benchmark Statement can be found in [QAA's Glossary](#). Sources of information about other requirements and examples of guidance and good practice are signposted within the Statement where appropriate.

# 1. Context and purposes of an Events, Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism Degree

## Context

1.1 The Events, Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism (EHLT) subject grouping encompasses an interdisciplinary field of study concerned with the leadership, management and delivery of experiences (both designed and lived), services, organisations and places. The subject includes disciplines and areas of study relating to events, hospitality, tourism, leisure, recreation, visitor attractions, sport, culture and associated service industries. EHLT sectors contribute significantly to employment, enterprise, placemaking and cultural exchange, while supporting and engaging with economic, social, cultural and environmental dimensions of contemporary life.

1.2 EHLT sectors operate within rapidly changing economic, technological, environmental and social contexts. Programmes therefore develop graduates who can think critically, adapt to change and make informed professional judgements in complex environments. They equip students to consider environmental responsibility, social justice and economic viability, and to apply these principles through ethical and sustainable professional practice.

1.3 Digital technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), are shaping the design, delivery and evidence-informed evaluation of EHLT experiences. Provision reflects this by developing students' digital and data literacy, and their capacity to engage critically and responsibly with GenAI and related technologies, while recognising the continued centrality of human interaction, communication, relational skills and ethics in technology-enabled service and experience settings.

1.4 EHLT programmes encourage students to understand how inclusion, accessibility, cultural awareness and workforce wellbeing shape leadership and organisational culture, supporting ethical and reflective practice in diverse organisational and community settings.

1.5 Provision aligned to this Subject Benchmark Statement is diverse in structure and delivery and may be located within business schools, arts & social science faculties, or specialist academic units. Programmes frequently involve interdisciplinary study and are delivered through flexible, blended and lifelong learning pathways, including practice-based environments, work-based learning, distance and online provision, and degree apprenticeships.

1.6 EHLT programmes are supported by well-established and internationally recognised research and scholarship that informs policy, professional practice and innovation across the sectors.

## Purposes

1.7 EHLT programmes aim to:

- develop critical understanding of organisations, cultures and structures closely aligned to the service sectors and experience economy, their management and their wider economic, social and cultural impact
- instil an understanding of responsible business and leadership
- prepare students for and support their development within a wide range of careers in the service sectors and experience economy, including in leadership, management,

professional creative and entrepreneurial roles

- foster reflective, employable, independent and inclusive lifelong learners.

1.8 The actual balance will vary among individual higher education providers and programmes and may also reflect the requirements for recognition by professional bodies.

1.9 Throughout this statement the term 'organisations' is used to encompass a wide range of entities of the service sectors and experience economy. These include public, private, non-profit, community-based and social enterprises, together with a comprehensive range of sizes and structures of organisations: start-up entrepreneurial businesses and micro, small, medium and global enterprises. Similarly, the term 'business' is interpreted broadly and is not limited to commercial activity.

1.10 An understanding of 'responsible leadership' incorporates inclusive, ethical, sustainable, systemic and transformative leadership which considers the interests and perspectives of different stakeholders, both now and for the future, and to address significant global challenges, including climate change. This includes leading towards net zero and other sustainability goals.

1.11 The EHLT sectors make a significant contribution to economic prosperity, societal wellbeing and cultural life. EHLT programmes therefore prepare graduates to operate within complex and dynamic service environments by developing appropriate knowledge, skills, behaviours and professional judgement. Graduates are equipped for employment, enterprise, leadership and further study through the development of transferable capabilities, reflective practice, adaptability and a commitment to lifelong learning. These attributes and skills are relevant both within EHLT and across a wide range of professional contexts.

1.12 EHLT degree programmes are characterised by their diversity in terms of content, drawing on a range of disciplinary perspectives to examine events, hospitality, leisure and tourism in different contexts. They provide students with opportunities to explore the factors that shape organisations, services, experiences and destinations, and to apply this understanding across a variety of settings.

1.13 The subject area is inter- and multi-disciplinary, drawing on knowledge and approaches from the social sciences, business and management, and related fields. EHLT programmes develop understanding of both operational and strategic issues, while fostering critical thinking, problem-solving and professional competence. A defining characteristic is the integration of academic study with industry-informed and practice-based learning.

1.14 While approaches vary between different providers, EHLT programmes contain theoretical understanding and practical application. Students are supported to analyse complex issues, evaluate evidence and apply knowledge to address real world problems and opportunities.

1.15 EHLT programmes operate within dynamic economic, technological, environmental and social contexts, and are designed to remain responsive to emerging developments. They provide a broad foundation for a range of future careers and roles in a wide range of organisations. They may also provide a starting point for further postgraduate taught and postgraduate research programmes in a wide range of specialisms.

1.16 The cross-cutting themes of Equality, diversity and inclusion, Accessibility and the needs of disabled students, Education for sustainable development, Employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship education, and Generative artificial intelligence, are complementary to each other and to the wider context and purpose of EHLT programmes.

## Equity, diversity and inclusion

1.17 Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are fundamental to the study and practice of EHLT. EHLT sectors are shaped by global mobility, diverse workforces, intercultural exchange and high levels of interpersonal interaction, which operate within complex social, cultural and economic systems. As a result, EHLT programmes prepare students for responsible and ethical professional practice within complex, dynamic and unequal social and business contexts. Graduates who understand the impact of their professional decisions on individuals, communities and organisations can proactively contribute to more inclusive, equitable and sustainable practices.

1.18 Within EHLT, EDI extends beyond legal compliance to include consideration of how individuals and groups enter education and employment from different contexts shaped by historical, structural and socio-economic disadvantage. They consider inclusivity within curriculum content, assessment, teaching and learning practices and the broader student experience design.

1.19 EHLT programmes encourage students to engage critically with EDI, examining how sector practices, policies and norms may advantage or disadvantage different groups, and how inclusive approaches can be embedded to address these imbalances.

1.20 Examples of how EHLT curricula can meaningfully engage students with EDI topics include:

- designing services and experiences that are accessible and inclusive for diverse users, customers and communities
- considering guests' cultural and other backgrounds, ensuring language and behaviours used by staff influence individuals' sense of belonging and inclusion
- encouraging transparency around pay and career progression and achievement for diverse groups of staff in EHLT sectors
- building awareness of barriers to participation and progression, and the opportunities created through inclusion, for individuals and groups with diverse characteristics, backgrounds and lived experiences across EHLT sectors
- developing cross-cultural competence and consideration of the wider socio-economic, legal and geo-political contexts in which EHLT operates, with an understanding of how these sectors can contribute to building social equity and social justice.

1.21 Embedding EDI within curriculum content, pedagogical approaches and assessment and feedback practices enables all students to engage meaningfully, develop a sense of belonging and achieve their potential. Programmes also benefit from using inclusive curriculum toolkits or checklists to support their curriculum design and pedagogy.

1.22 Self-reflection is a strong lever programmes can use to ensure positive engagement of all students with EDI. This is done by:

- focusing on creating safe curricular spaces which support students and staff to reflect critically on their own identities, values and biases and to consider how these shape professional behaviour and decision making
- being intentional in how EDI is presented to both students and staff, both within the

curriculum and within the broader learning environment

- being explicit with students about how language can impact outcomes of discussions about sensitive EDI-related topics, which naturally foster a wide spectrum of viewpoints
- acknowledging the complexity of EDI in the EHLT sectors and the self-awareness, sensitivity and compassion required to have productive conversations in relation to this.

## Accessibility and the needs of disabled students

1.23 Accessibility in EHLT is concerned with creating learning environment, curricula and assessment practices that enable all students to participate fully and demonstrate their achievement. This includes consideration of disabled students and those who are neurodivergent, recognising that students may experience barriers in different ways.

1.24 EHLT programmes typically adopt an anticipatory approach to curriculum and programme design, that acknowledges the diversity of student backgrounds, prior learning and support needs. Reference may be made to sector guidance such as the [Disabled Student Commitment](#) to inform practice where relevant.

1.25 Admissions, enrolment and progression processes typically operate within relevant legislative frameworks, including the Equality Act 2010. In this context, processes are designed to support equitable access and participation, with a focus on applicants' potential to succeed within the programme.

1.26 Accessible curriculum design in EHLT reflects the applied and experiential nature of the subject areas. Consideration is given to how students can participate in a range of learning environments, including live events, simulations, placements, fieldwork and site-based activities. Programme design seeks to ensure that students are able to engage meaningfully with these learning experiences while maintaining academic and professional standards.

1.27 Inclusive pedagogical approaches, including [Universal Design for Learning](#) (UDL) approaches can support equitable participation in learning, teaching and assessment for a diverse student population. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments and individual support arrangements may complement inclusive curriculum design to enable equitable participation in learning, teaching and assessment while maintaining academic standards.

1.28 Assessment approaches within the subject areas often reflect authentic and practice-based contexts, allowing students to demonstrate achievement through a range of methods aligned with industry practice. Consideration of diverse student needs, including sensory, mobility and cognitive factors form part of the design of inclusive learning environments.

1.29 EHLT programmes reflect the diversity of contemporary industry and society contexts, including a range of perspectives, roles and experiences. Engagement with case studies, guest speakers, live briefs and industry-informed learning supports understanding of accessibility and inclusion as aspects of professional practice.

1.30 Critical engagement with equity, inclusion and social responsibility within the curriculum supports students in developing awareness of how accessibility relates to professional roles and sector practice.

## Education for sustainable development

1.31 Sustainable development is a driving force in the advancement of the EHLT disciplines and is essential in preparing graduates to contribute to a more sustainable future, positioning them as changemakers.

1.32 The depth and breadth of EHLT programmes provide a compelling framework for understanding sustainability beyond environmental and climate concerns. In the EHLT disciplines, this enables students to:

- recognise sustainability as a multidimensional issue spanning social, economic and operational realities and the impacts on the EHLT environments
- develop knowledge on why sustainability matters, the impacts on EHLT communities and the relationship to guest behaviours in enabling real change
- understand the connectivity and dependencies of sustainable development at the local, national, regional and international levels and how this relationship changes over time
- prioritise responsible decision making, considering the trade-offs between economic, cultural and environmental factors to enable a just transition, and strengthen long term resilience for both businesses and the communities they serve.

1.33 Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) supports the development of the knowledge, skills and attributes and values required to enact, establish and envision a sustainable future. EHLT programmes have a deep commitment to equal opportunities, diversity, and addressing social, environmental and economic challenges, enabling graduates to make informed decisions that take account of current and future generations.

1.34 EHLT programmes develop students' sustainability competencies through engagement with internationally recognised frameworks and principles, including the pre and post 2030 United Nations Global Sustainable Development Agenda, and the [Education for Sustainable Development](#) guidance published by QAA and Advance HE. Graduates exhibit an understanding of sustainable resourcing, fair and inclusive employment practices, sustainable economic contribution, social, cultural and enviro-ecological regeneration, environmental stewardship, social equity and collaborative approaches to global challenges.

1.35 Sustainability competencies such as systems thinking, anticipatory and normative competence and collaboration are developed through the interdisciplinary perspectives found within the EHLT sectors. These enable students to address complex and evolving sustainability and regeneration challenges through informed professional decision-making.

1.36 The application of sustainability competencies is embedded across the EHLT curriculum. These typically include:

- sustainable and inclusive design and operation of EHLT, with a focus on resource efficiency, low-carbon approaches and accessibility
- responsible destination management, including community engagement, cultural heritage and the mitigation of environmental and social impacts
- sustainable and regenerative approaches to operations and supply chains, including ethical sourcing, circular practices and resilience

- low-carbon transport and travel systems, including innovations such as sustainable aviation fuels
- governance, policy, and regulatory frameworks shaping sustainable development in EHLT contexts
- measurement and evaluation of sustainability performance, including the use of metrics, data and impact reporting
- collaborative, cross-sector approaches to addressing shared sustainability challenges and driving positive change.

1.37 Through applied learning and engagement with industry and community partners, graduates are prepared to contribute to the advancement of sustainable, inclusive and resilient EHLT sectors.

1.38 The learning environments that support EHLT studies integrate sustainability competencies within programme content, experiences and learning resources.

1.39 Community engagement and co-creation within the curriculum promotes industry-ready graduates, equipped with skills, knowledge and experience to problem solve future world challenges linked to sustainability.

## **Employability, entrepreneurship and enterprise education**

1.40 Employability, entrepreneurship, and enterprise education (EEE) are integral to the study of EHLT. EHLT programmes operate within complex service ecosystems characterised by changing consumer behaviours, regulatory oversight, seasonal labour markets and culturally sensitive environments. Within this context, enterprise capability extends beyond venture creation to encompass opportunity recognition, value creation, adaptability, and professional agency within dynamic service systems.

1.41 Enterprise activity in EHLT intersects with social, cultural, environmental and economic considerations. EEE within these subjects emphasises the creation of social, cultural, environmental and economic value rather than solely profit-oriented venture development.

1.42 EHLT programmes therefore position EEE as an integrated element of the curriculum rather than as a peripheral enhancement activity. This is typically achieved through progressive development across levels of study, alignment with programme learning outcomes, and authentic assessment that connects academic learning within professional contexts.

1.43 Feasibility studies, business and investment plans, experience design portfolios, policy impact evaluations, funding bids, stakeholder engagement strategies, and end-to-end event planning may be used to embed EEE within the curriculum. These approaches strengthen graduate confidence, personal identity formation, and enterprise readiness, while also exposing students to authentic workplace scenarios.

1.44 EHLT sectors operate within volatile and rapidly evolving global environments. Graduates develop the capacity to respond to technological, social and economic change and to work effectively within hybrid and digitally mediated experiences, including technology-enabled service environments.

1.45 EEE supports systems thinking, opportunity recognition, and adaptive strategic

thinking. It equips graduates to contribute strategically within organisational, entrepreneurial, intrapreneurial and community contexts, while developing ethical leadership, collaboration and innovation capabilities.

1.46 Programmes typically foster critical evaluation of EHLT systems, analytical reasoning applied to market feasibility and sustainability challenges, and the creative design of experiences and service innovations. Learning activities might include visitor and event experience design, rural and heritage asset commercialisation, social enterprise in community settings, event strategy and audience development and AI-enabled service innovation.

1.47 Students develop the ability to frame and address complex problems within multi-stakeholder environments and make evidence-informed decisions. Reflective practice, digital competence, research literacy and professional self-evaluation further underpin enterprise capability.

1.48 EEE is frequently developed through authentic, practice-informed learning that connects academic study with real-world contexts. Partnerships with employers, alumni, professional bodies, destination organisations, cultural institutions and community enterprises strengthen the relevance of EEE. These partnerships support graduates in developing a clear understanding of the realities of working within place-based, collaborative, and often regulated sectors. They also enable co-created projects and industry-informed learning experiences.

1.49 Employability is enhanced through work-based placements, industry focused live projects, simulations, volunteering, and through employability-related learning. Graduate skills such as critical and analytical thinking, digital literacy, interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, resilience and adaptability are embedded within teaching and learning.

1.50 Graduates demonstrate resilience in competitive and resource-constrained environments and exercise sound professional judgement in regulated and safeguarding-sensitive contexts. Enterprise capability therefore encompasses integrity in stakeholder engagement, responsible innovation and the ability to balance commercial, cultural and community considerations.

## **Generative artificial intelligence**

1.51 Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), including large language models, chatbots and other related generative technologies, is increasingly shaping practice across EHLT, with implications for organisations, destinations and visitor economies. EHLT programmes help students to understand how these developments are influencing professional practice, service delivery and decision-making across diverse settings.

1.52 GenAI raises important questions about the human, cultural and experiential characteristics of the industry where value and experience are shaped by service, place, culture and human interaction. EHLT programmes encourage students to evaluate the implications of GenAI for authenticity, trust, care, cultural value, inclusion and the quality of visitor and guest experiences, and to recognise the importance of context in its application.

1.53 GenAI is contributing to changes in work, professional roles, organisational practice and skills requirements across the sectors. Its growing use presents ethical, legal, governance and sustainability challenges, including issues relating to data quality, provenance, bias in training data, platform dependency and integration with existing operational systems. EHLT programmes develop students' capacity for informed judgement

and responsible practice in relation to issues such as algorithmic bias, transparency, privacy, accountability and environmental impact.

1.54 Programmes facilitate critical, transparent and appropriate engagement with GenAI while maintaining academic standards and forms of authentic assessment. Curriculum design recognises the abilities of GenAI as supplementary to rather than replacing human creativity, decision-making and judgement, while also exploring how AI tools support accessibility, inclusion and meaningful student learning.

1.55 GenAI intersects with wider concerns relating to justice, inequality and sustainability, while also creating new opportunities for innovation, visibility and emerging business models across EHLT. Programmes encourage students to consider its uneven impacts across communities, workforce, destinations and environments, and to reflect on how GenAI can contribute to more inclusive and responsible futures for EHLT.

## 2. Distinctive features of an Events, Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism Degree Programme

### Design

2.1 EHLT programmes are designed to provide students with theoretical and applied understandings of sectors that shape experiences, destinations, services and consumers across local, national and global contexts. Programmes are designed to enable students to specialise in one or more of these sectors, and to recognise their interconnectedness with others. Programmes are differentiated through the willingness to take an interdisciplinary lens with perspectives drawn from a diverse range of disciplines, including business and management, psychology, design, law, geography, sociology, political science and sustainability.

2.2 EHLT programme design offers a range of models, which are used to support approaches to disciplinarity. Programme design can combine core and elective modules, with compulsory elements being studied alongside options students select to broaden or deepen their learning. EHLT programme designers engage with internal and external reference points to determine intended programme learning outcomes. Consultation typically includes students, external experts, employers and, where relevant, professional, statutory or regulatory bodies (PSRBs).

2.3 EHLT education increasingly supports interdisciplinarity, encouraging students to engage with diverse bodies of knowledge, skills, and practices. Programmes vary from those that focus on a specific sector and those that adopt a multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary approach. A combination of cross-disciplinary programmes and subject-specific study is characteristic of the varied approaches within EHLT. This reflects the subject's constantly evolving nature, embracing developments driven by innovation and industry.

2.4 Curriculum design emphasises student-centred teaching and encourages experiential learning through practice. EHLT curriculum includes live experiential and inquiry-led learning, such as industry focused briefs, live simulations, planning and staging live events, field visits, or collaborating with external partners. These experiences support the development of professional competencies, including teamwork, effective communication (both verbal and/or non-verbal), problem solving and the ability to interact with relevant stakeholders.

2.5 Assessment in EHLT is as varied and wide-ranging as the subject areas it encompasses. Reflecting the dynamic and diverse nature of EHLT, assessment can be designed to enable students to demonstrate their learning, critical thinking and articulation of ideas through a variety of formats and methods.

2.6 At undergraduate level, EHLT may be studied as a single honours award or as part of a broader interdisciplinary degree. Where EHLT is combined with other subjects, it often contributes practical and knowledge foundations associated with the specific subject area. Undergraduate curricula are typically classroom based, often underpinned by critical and theoretical perspectives, enabling students to develop professional identities while responding to social, cultural, political, technological and ecological contexts.

2.7 At postgraduate level, EHLT taught provision is often more specialised within a specific subject area, focusing on higher level management perspectives, critical studies and research endeavours. Postgraduate programmes often provide a more specific focus on topics such as heritage, creative design, sustainability, geopolitics, and can offer more specific research informed contexts.

## Progression

2.8 As a discipline, EHLT embraces diversity and recognises students' lived experiences brought to EHLT programmes. Entry onto an EHLT degree can vary considerably, with various entry routes and qualifications, including a broad range of disciplinary and experiential backgrounds.

2.9 Over the programme of a standard undergraduate degree with honours (FHEQ Level 6; SCQF Level 10) or, if available, an Integrated Master's degree (FHEQ Level 7; SCQF Level 11) an EHLT student will progress from one level of study to the next, in line with the regulations and processes for each institution. However, it is expected that each level would see the attainment of knowledge, expertise and experience that builds towards the final achievement of meeting the threshold (and if specified higher-level) subject-specific and generic skills listed in this Statement. This will usually include successful completion and the award of credit for the full range of learning and assessment, including any practical components.

2.10 The wide range of prior experiences of an EHLT applicant leads to the opportunity for recognition of prior learning and entry directly on to a programme at different levels (FHEQ level 5/SCQF Level 8 and FHEQ 6/SCQF Level 10). Individual providers' process for recognition of prior learning can facilitate this, if it is available for entry to programmes.

2.11 Upon graduation from an undergraduate degree, it would be expected that a student who had achieved a second-class degree or higher would be capable of, and equipped for, undertaking postgraduate study in EHLT or a related discipline. Entry requirements to postgraduate taught and doctoral programmes are, however, determined by individual providers and may require specified levels of achievement at undergraduate level.

2.12 Undergraduates studying EHLT programmes as part of a combined or joint degree with other subjects (including programmes that specify major and minor options) will achieve core elements of the specific and generic skills outlined in this Statement and will add others according to the areas covered in the other subject(s) of their degree. Additionally, they may explore the overlap between different disciplines, creating further opportunities for interdisciplinary study.

2.13 Any student enrolled in a standard undergraduate honours degree programme in EHLT, may exit earlier and be eligible for a Certificate of Higher Education (FHEQ level 4; SCQF Level 7), a Diploma of Higher Education (FHEQ level 5; SCQF Level 8), or other awards depending upon the levels of study completed to a satisfactory standard. Please refer to the [Characteristics Statement -Short Cycle Qualifications](#) for more detailed information on 'break points' in degree programmes.

## Flexibility

2.14 EHLT programmes value approaches that incorporate varied and flexible learning and teaching styles, to reflect the diverse learning needs of EHLT students. As such, students can expect to be taught and assessed in a wide variety of ways.

2.15 At providers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the duration of a full-time programme leading to a standard undergraduate degree is typically three years, or four years for a programme involving a year abroad (such as a programme involving languages) or a placement year, or for an integrated master's degree. In Scotland, a bachelor's/ordinary degree is set at three years at Level 9 on the SCQF. A bachelor's degree with honours,

which is the most typical route for students, is designed to include four years of study, and is set at Level 10 of the SCQF. In addition, a number of Scottish universities have a long tradition of labelling certain undergraduate academic degrees as a Master of Arts (MA). This title reflects historic Scottish custom and practice with an MA/ordinary degree at Level 9 and MA with Honours at Level 10 on the SCQF.

2.16 Students following part-time routes accumulate academic credit in proportion to the intensity of their study, and their total study time and credit value would be the equivalent to those achieved on full-time routes.

2.17 Higher education providers structure the programmes they offer to support students' learning and attainment. Depending on the educational mission of the provider, this may include opportunities to engage in learning on site, online, and/or through hybrid learning, arranged in terms, by semester, year-long, block, or other formats. These may be offered in full- and/or part-time modes of study and credit may be accumulated through the completion of [micro-credentials](#), short-accredited learning, recognition of prior learning or accreditation of prior experiential learning.

## Partnership

2.18 Some providers deliver programmes in partnership with other providers through validation and franchising arrangements. Others work with partners who deliver specific elements of the programme through placement learning or as part of a degree apprenticeship. Subject Benchmark Statements, such as this one, play an important role in helping partners design provision that contributes to threshold standards being met in a specific subject area.

2.19 Within EHLT there are sector-specific professional associations and organisations with which providers collaborate with for the accreditation or recognition of their programmes. Providers work closely with these professional associations to inform and deliver EHLT programmes, enriching the student experience.

## Monitoring and review

2.20 Degree-awarding bodies, and their collaborative partnerships, routinely collect and analyse information and undertake periodic programme review according to their own needs. Consideration of the student voice will form part of this, and providers draw on a range of external reference points, including the National Student Survey (NSS), the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), student union support, and this Statement, to ensure that their provision aligns with sector norms. Monitoring and evaluation are a means to periodically review a programme, conducted internally or by external independent evaluators. Evaluation uses information from both current and historic monitoring to develop an understanding of student achievement or inform future programme planning.

2.21 Externality is an essential component of the quality assurance system in the UK. Providers will use external reviewers as part of periodic review to gain an independent perspective on any proposed changes and ensure threshold standards are achieved and content is appropriate for the subject.

2.22 The external examining system currently in use across the UK higher education sector also helps to ensure consistency in the way academic standards are secured by degree-awarding bodies. Typically, external examiners will be asked to comment on the types, principles and purposes of assessments being offered to students. They will consider the types of modules on offer to students, the outcomes of a cohort and how they compare to similar provision offered within other UK higher education providers. External

examiners are asked to produce a report each year and make recommendations for changes to modules and assessments (where appropriate). Subject Benchmark Statements, such as this one, can play an important role in supporting external examiners in advising on whether threshold standards are being met in a specific subject area.

2.23 Programmes with professional and vocational outcomes may also require evaluation and accreditation from professional and regulatory bodies. These are usually done through a combination of site visits and desk-based reviews.

## 3. Content, structure and delivery

### Content

3.1 EHLT degree programmes are typically characterised by their flexibility in structure, offering a range of study pathways and modes of delivery that reflect the diverse nature of the sectors. EHLT programmes are multidisciplinary with some shared themes. In the early stages of study, emphasis is frequently placed upon developing core disciplinary knowledge and skills, with increasing opportunity for students to specialise, apply critical thinking and develop higher-level analytical capabilities as they progress with their studies.

3.2 EHLT programmes typically support the development of critical, analytical and professional capabilities through engagement with complex and real-world contexts. This may include evaluating evidence, interpreting market and visitor data, understanding stakeholder perspectives, communicating effectively with diverse audiences, and applying ethical and sustainable thinking within professional practice.

3.3 Recognising the distinct pedagogical, operational and socio-cultural dimensions of EHLT programmes is essential to maintaining integrity and relevance of EHLT provision. A defining feature of EHLT degree programmes is their applied and practice-based focus, supporting curriculum design that embeds research-informed teaching and meaningful, live engagement with industry. Rather than positioning experiential learning as supplementary, EHLT programmes integrate authentic industry engagement as a core pedagogic strategy. This can be achieved through structured placements, live projects, consultancy activity, fieldwork, simulations and study visits.

3.4 Experiential learning is therefore central to EHLT programme design, with students encouraged to reflect on their experiences and integrate theory with practice. Collaborative working is also emphasised, with group-based activities designed to develop the teamwork, communication and problem-solving skills that are essential for working in dynamic service environments.

3.5 EHLT programmes typically reflect local, national and international perspectives, recognising the global nature of the EHLT sectors, whilst also valuing community-focused approaches. Given their close alignment with industry, EHLT programmes remain responsive to wider societal, economic and environmental change. Increasing emphasis on environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles highlights the need for EHLT programmes to seek to embed ESG within the curriculum.

3.6 The development of EHLT programmes often involves a range of stakeholders, including industry partners, professional bodies, employers, destinations, community groups, alumni and students. Co-creation of the EHLT curriculum enhances its relevance, ensures that it remains current and supports graduate employability. Employability, entrepreneurship and enterprise education (EEE) is integral to programme design, seeking to ensure that EHLT graduates are equipped with transferable skills, subject knowledge and practical experience to work within the sectors.

### Events

3.7 Events management is a fast-paced, interdisciplinary field concerned with the design, planning, delivery and evaluation of events, as well as the relationships between event organisers, participants, communities, environments, businesses and governments. The subject draws on critical event studies, which examine power, ethics and social justice, and responsible events management, which emphasises sustainability, accessibility and positive societal impact.

3.8 The subject considers events both as an industry and as social, cultural and political phenomena, exploring how event experiences are created, consumed and contested. It draws on perspectives from business and management, psychology, design, law, geography, sociology, political science and sustainability.

3.9 Events management programmes typically characterise events as planned, temporary, and unique activities designed to meet diverse cultural, economic, social, political, leisure and business needs. Their resource-intensive and time-bound nature requires expertise in coordinating stakeholders, managing resources and designing meaningful experiences. As the subject has evolved, increasing emphasis has been placed on governance, policy, and global political contexts, encouraging critical reflection on the purpose, beneficiaries and impacts of events.

3.10 Events management programmes are typically concerned with:

- concepts, characteristics and the evolving scope of event typologies within interdisciplinary, industry, and global contexts
- event strategy, vision setting, concept and theme development and feasibility analysis
- stakeholder identification, engagement, collaboration and governance
- event consumer and client behaviour, including psychology, co-creation, audience engagement
- creative event design, including content development, curation, programming and sensory staging of event experiences
- event logistics, operations, and technical and production management, incorporating health, safety, risk and crisis management, security, and regulatory compliance
- project management, resource allocation, procurement, supply chains, and human resource management
- financial planning, budgeting and funding models
- legal policy frameworks and governance influencing event delivery
- marketing, branding and communication strategies, including the relationships between events, destinations and place identity
- technology-enabled event delivery, including digital and hybrid formats, data analytics, audience insight and AI applications
- sustainable event management practices, including environmental responsibility, resource efficiency and circular approaches
- the contribution of events to economic development, regeneration, and wider social and community outcomes
- impact measurement, evaluation, and reporting, alongside policy, strategy and legacy planning and analysis
- professional practice, entrepreneurship, career development and employability within

the events industry.

3.11 Contemporary Events management programmes also integrate cross-cutting themes such as equity, diversity, accessibility and inclusion, digital innovation and ethical practice, alongside the development of professional, entrepreneurial and leadership capabilities aligned with a globalised events industry. Overall, by engaging with a range of conceptual, theoretical and professional perspectives, events management programmes aim to equip graduates with the skills, knowledge and adaptability required for successful employment within a complex and evolving events industry, as well as to understand the wider impact of events on society.

### **Hospitality**

3.12 The study of Hospitality is interdisciplinary, multifaceted and dynamic, encompassing both the delivery of exceptional guest experience and the operational excellence needed to support this. It focuses on how hospitality services and experiences are created, delivered, managed and evaluated. By examining how accommodation, food and beverage, facilities, tourism, recreation, events, entertainment, related activities and services are designed and implemented, the study of Hospitality explores how value is created for guests, organisations and communities.

3.13 Hence, Hospitality examines the management and leadership of hospitality operations, from an operational and leadership perspective, as well as from a broader socio-cultural position. It seeks to develop knowledge and skills in service excellence, operations, leadership, marketing, human resources, finance, commercial acumen, sustainability, entrepreneurship, technology, innovation and research within local, regional and global hospitality contexts, drawing on a range of social sciences disciplines.

3.14 Hospitality programmes are typically concerned with:

- appropriate theories to develop an understanding of hospitality as a service-oriented industry
- knowledge of the structure of the hospitality industry, diversity of stakeholders, and its impact on the global economy
- political, technological, social, and economic factors which affect the supply of and demand for hospitality
- key concepts related to understanding and responding to different hospitality customers, delivering outstanding guest satisfaction and service quality, and the implications for the customer and hospitality businesses
- provision of hospitality services and their interrelationship with associated industries such as transport (cruise, railways, aviation), corporate hospitality, events, leisure and tourism
- managerial and leadership capabilities necessary to lead in the hospitality industry
- connecting with the depth and breadth of hospitality provision such as accommodation, food and beverage, catering, wellness and hospitality services in events, leisure, recreation tourism, and transport
- approaches to improving organisational performance and competitiveness within the hospitality industry

- different ownership models and management structures within the industry, including small businesses
- financial management in different types of hospitality organisations considering hospitality investment, asset management, cost control, revenue generation, budgeting and corporate finance
- digital transformation, including emerging technologies and how they shape and transform the hospitality industry
- contextualising sustainable, ethical, and responsible hospitality practices
- importance of facilities management and design in the overall effectiveness of hospitality organisations
- impact of crisis and disasters on the hospitality industry and the approaches to mitigate, manage and recover
- the evolving nature of hospitality as a discipline in understanding wider societal changes and transformations that inform organisational practice and policy-making processes.

3.15 Contemporary hospitality programmes adopt a holistic approach that integrates operational know-how, business acumen, digital aptitude, sustainability, and leadership. This approach equips graduates with the knowledge, skills and critical perspectives needed to address evolving requirements and to support the long-term growth and competitiveness of the global Hospitality industry.

### **Leisure**

3.16 Leisure is broadly defined as the activities and pursuits that individuals engage in during their free time that contribute to wellbeing and quality of life. Leisure programmes typically focus on understanding the increasing role and value of leisure within society, its growing importance and links to health, wellbeing and social inclusion. Whilst Leisure programmes overlap and connect Events, Hospitality and Tourism, they maintain a distinct focus on social, cultural and behavioural dimensions of leisure. This includes how leisure is managed, experienced and represented across different contexts and populations. Leisure programmes generally adopt a multidisciplinary approach, drawing on insights from sociology, psychology, management and environmental studies.

3.17 Leisure programmes are typically concerned with:

- the concepts, meanings and evolving nature of leisure in contemporary societies, including changing patterns of participation, consumption and time use
- the political, economic, environmental and cultural contexts shaping the provision, access, governance and sustainability of leisure
- the historical development of leisure, recreation and cultural consumption, and their relationship to wider societal change
- recreation, outdoor and countryside activities, including the management of natural environments and sustainable access to leisure spaces
- sport, exercise, fitness and active leisure, and their role in supporting physical health, performance and active lifestyles

- health, wellbeing and quality of life, including the role of leisure participation, recreation, and spa and wellness in supporting mental wellbeing, relaxation and broader public health outcomes
- the design, management and evaluation of leisure services, facilities and experiences across public, private and third-sector organisations
- policy, planning and governance of leisure at local, national and international levels, including the role of public agencies and community-based approaches
- stakeholder engagement and community participation in the co-creation and delivery of leisure opportunities and services
- marketing, communication and consumer engagement within leisure contexts, including the use of digital platforms and experience design
- the impact of digital technologies, data and innovation on leisure behaviours, access, and service delivery
- sustainable and responsible leisure practices, including environmental stewardship, social value and wellbeing outcomes
- the contribution of leisure to economic development, place-making, regeneration and community resilience.

3.18 Leisure programmes often place emphasis on developing transferable and applied skills. These may include communication, teamwork, leadership, problem-solving and critical thinking. Curriculum content supports opportunity to integrate practical and experiential learning through placements, field trips, live projects and guest lectures.

### **Tourism**

3.19 Tourism is a dynamic and interdisciplinary field concerned with the movement of people, the development and management of destinations, and the relationships between visitors, communities, environments, businesses and governments within local, national and global contexts. The subject responds to changing social, cultural, economic, environmental and technological conditions, reflecting the evolving nature of tourism systems, visitor behaviours and experience economies.

3.20 The study of Tourism considers tourism both as an industry and as a social and cultural phenomenon. It explores the production, management, and consumption of tourism experiences, alongside the impacts of tourism development on destinations, communities, cultures, and environments. The subject draws upon perspectives from areas including business and management, geography, sociology, economics, cultural studies, marketing, heritage and sustainability.

3.21 Tourism programmes are typically concerned with:

- tourism systems, structures and the visitor economy, including relationships between stakeholders, destinations, markets, and the wider economic contribution of tourism
- tourist behaviour, motivation and experience, exploring how and why people travel and how tourism experiences are designed and evaluated
- destination planning, development and management, focusing on the strategic

planning, operation and long-term competitiveness of tourism destinations

- sustainable, regenerative and responsible tourism, examining approaches that balance economic benefits with environmental protection and community wellbeing
- cultural, heritage, rural, sport and leisure tourism, investigating diverse tourism sectors and their significance for destinations, communities and visitor experiences
- tourism marketing, branding and digital communication, analysing how destinations and organisations engage audiences through traditional and digital channels
- tourism policy, governance and regulation, considering the role of governments, institutions and regulatory frameworks in shaping tourism development
- examining the financial and economic dimensions of tourism and their contribution to destination and business performance
- transport and mobility, exploring the role of aviation, cruise, rail and wider transport systems in facilitating tourism flows and destination connectivity
- entrepreneurship, innovation and enterprise within tourism contexts, exploring business creation, innovation processes and opportunities for growth within the sectors
- ethical, social and environmental dimensions of tourism, assessing the responsibilities and impacts of tourism on people, cultures, and natural environments
- the impacts of emerging technologies, data, and AI on tourism experiences, operations and decision-making, examining how digital innovation is transforming the tourism industry
- resilience, risk and crisis management, considering how destinations and organisations respond to crises, disasters, geopolitical change and other disruptions affecting tourism development.

3.22 In contemporary Tourism education, students are encouraged to critically evaluate tourism's role in economic development, cultural exchange, environmental stewardship and community wellbeing.

3.23 Tourism operates across diverse cultural, environmental, and regulatory contexts, and is shaped by global challenges and transformations, including sustainability, climate change, overtourism, inequalities in access and participation, digital innovation, evolving leisure behaviours, and geopolitical change. Students are able to understand and critically evaluate the complexity and interconnected nature of tourism systems, and recognise the wider social, cultural, economic, and environmental implications of tourism-related decision-making. They are also able to apply professional judgement, demonstrate adaptability, and engage with tourism practices in a responsible, ethical, and inclusive manner.

## Teaching and learning

3.24 Teaching and learning in EHLT subjects are underpinned by the principles of inclusivity, accessibility, and reflexivity for all students, informed by pedagogical, research, and practice-based evidence. EHLT programmes promote fair

access, participation and student-centred learning through curriculum design and delivery, drawing on a wide range of teaching, learning and assessment methods to support the development of competencies, skills, literacies and employability. The importance of historical injustice, social justice, and equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is acknowledged within EHLT curricula through the incorporation of knowledge, research, theories and case studies from diverse global contexts and perspectives, enabling students to develop critical perspectives and apply their learning in a range of settings.

3.25 EHLT programmes engage with sector-wide good practice, pedagogic innovation and scholarly developments to cultivate creative, inclusive and effective approaches to teaching and learning. Teaching and learning methods may be adapted to in-person, online or hybrid modes of delivery and should support students in critically engaging with subject knowledge, contemporary issues, emerging industry practices and the development of professional capabilities. Programmes are designed to ensure student success and experiences by promoting independent learning and reflection, enabling students take responsibility for their own learning, development and achievements. The approaches outlined below are indicative rather than exhaustive and may be combined and tailored to the aims, contexts and level of study of individual programmes.

3.26 EHLT programmes may consider adopting a combination of the following:

- case studies, especially with cross-cultural contexts and laboratory practices
- collaborative and group discussions, debates, project showcasing, and student-led learning
- experiential, practice-based and digitally enabled approaches to learning, including study visits (facilitated and self-directed), fieldwork, expert input and engagement with live briefs, and events and operational environments such as training hotels, kitchens and restaurants, alongside the use of simulations (physical and digital), extended reality (XR), and AI-supported and data-informed scenario modelling
- creative approaches such as artefact elicitation, play, gamification, flipped classroom and storytelling
- digital and technology enhanced learning.
- lectures, workshops, seminars, group and individual tutorials
- other authentic and applied learning, such as internship, practice-based learning, work-integrated learning, or placement learning.

3.27 Collaborative and group-based activities are central to learning, teaching and assessment within EHLT subjects, reflecting the inherently interpersonal, interdisciplinary and service-oriented nature of the industries. Programmes are designed to provide structured intra- and extra-curricular opportunities for students to work effectively as part of diverse teams, developing communication, leadership, autonomy, accountability, cultural awareness and professional behaviours. In doing so, learning and teaching are aligned with the expectations of the contemporary workplace, equipping students with the skills, attributes and professional readiness required to operate effectively in dynamic, complex and international environments.

3.28 The effective, ethical and responsible use of digital technologies can enhance teaching and learning within EHLT subjects, and learning and teaching approaches support students in developing the critical, transparent and appropriate use of GenAI and other

digital tools, while recognising potential challenges relating to bias, privacy, academic integrity, environmental sustainability and the reliability of outputs. EHLT programmes recognise that GenAI can complement, rather than replace, human creativity, critical thinking, complex problem-solving, decision-making and professional judgement. Programmes also explore how digital technologies, including GenAI, can support inclusive, accessible and meaningful learning experiences, while preparing students to engage with evolving digital practices in professional and societal contexts.

## Assessment

3.29 Assessment is a critical part of the learning process and student journey. Assessment takes the form of both summative and formative to support student learning. EHLT assessments mirroring real-world issues can support students to think about how knowledge is applied, while incorporating diverse worldviews, socio-cultural contexts and perspectives. Assessment is accompanied by feedback that is constructive and enables the student to develop both academically and within industry.

3.30 Programmes offer a variety of assessments that capture a wide range of knowledge and skills and align with programme and module learning outcomes. The use of critical and inclusive approaches engages students as partners and co-creators in the assessment process. This enables them to contribute to the design, development and review of assessment tasks, and fosters ownership, authenticity and engagement. Within the bounds of constructive alignment, assessments may also allow creativity and flexibility to reflect the needs, interests and aspirations of a diverse student body. Assessments are varied, innovative and inclusive, undertaken individually and/or in groups, and may take place online, in situ or by other means using appropriate technology.

3.31 Assessment methods typically include, but are not limited to:

- authentic (applied), inclusive, industry-facing and co-created assessments, including live briefs, consultancy projects and employer-partnered challenges, where students develop solutions to current sectoral issues
- digital and live simulations, including crisis management, event delivery, service operations or revenue management scenarios, often informed by real-time or complex datasets
- media-rich and digital content creation, such as vlogs, blogs, podcasts, infographics, posters, social media campaigns, digital storytelling and video production, reflecting contemporary communication practices within the industries
- collaborative and team-based assessments, including group projects, co-created outputs and peer-informed activities, supporting the acquisition of interpersonal, leadership and project management skills
- AI-enabled and adaptive assessments, including the use of generative AI to support scenario-based tasks, iterative submissions and reflective critique of AI outputs, encouraging transparency, ethical practice and critical evaluation
- extended reality (XR) and immersive simulation assessments, enabling students to demonstrate decision-making, operational and leadership capabilities within virtual or augmented contexts.
- entrepreneurial and venture-based assessments, including the design, pitching and

evaluation of new concepts, products or services within simulated or real-world contexts

- portfolio-based and longitudinal assessment, including digital portfolios that evidence skills development, professional competencies and reflective practice over time
- service design and customer experience assessments, incorporating journey mapping, prototyping and design thinking approaches to evaluate user-centred solutions
- global and intercultural collaborative assessments, including virtual exchange projects and cross-institutional group work reflecting international industry contexts
- work-integrated and practice-based assessment, including placements, internships, consultancy projects and applied professional activity
- reflective assessments, including learning journals, critical reflections and evaluative commentaries that support metacognitive development and professional identity formation
- presentations (live and pre-recorded), including pitches, briefings and professional communications
- practical assessments, including the delivery of events, service encounters or operational tasks within simulated or live environments
- coursework, including reports, reviews and essays, supporting critical analysis and disciplinary knowledge
- independent research projects, involving sustained inquiry and research
- examinations, including seen, unseen and open-book formats.

3.32 Assessments consider the social, cultural, and financial realities as well as the diverse lived and authentic experiences of students, rather than assuming cultural neutrality. In assessment development, co-creation or partnership with the students and/or their communities can help recognise and value the knowledge, experiences and perspectives that learners bring, resulting in meaningful engagement that links authentic student lives and learning.

3.33 Future-oriented and ethical, justice-based assessment is encouraged to empower students to engage critically with real-world challenges and collaborate in addressing complex tasks. Such approaches maximise the relevance, educational value, and inclusivity of assessment while ensuring alignment with professional standards, employer expectations, and sector practices. In order to develop career-ready graduates and align with professional and PSRB expectations, programmes may work with industry professionals in assessment design, delivery and feedback.

3.34 Assessment tasks, support and marking criteria are transparent and communicated clearly to students. Both individual and group assessments are utilised within EHLT programmes to support individual thinking alongside teamworking and communication skills, and peer review may be embedded within modules. Where needed, alternative assessments and reasonable adjustments are used to meet specific learner needs. Assessment design can consider elements of creativity, innovation and flexibility to anticipate the diverse needs of students. Effective

assessment planning and design considers student wellbeing throughout, including student workload.

3.35 Assessment feedback may be both formative and summative and can take a range of forms, including written, verbal and digital formats. Feedback incorporates feedforward to support students' ongoing academic development and employability. Feedback is provided in a timely, clear, fair and accessible manner, and programmes consider appropriate moderation processes to promote consistency. Feedback also provides opportunities for students to reflect on their learning and identify areas for further development.

## 4. Benchmark standards

### Introduction

4.1 This Subject Benchmark Statement sets out the threshold, typical and excellent standards that a student will have demonstrated when they are awarded an honours degree in an EHLT programme. Demonstrating these standards over time will show that a student has achieved the range of knowledge, understanding and skills expected of graduates in EHLT programmes.

4.2 The vast majority of students will perform significantly better than the minimum threshold standards. Each higher education provider has its own method of determining what appropriate evidence of this achievement will be and should refer to [Annex D in The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#). This Annex sets out common descriptions of the four main degree outcome classifications for bachelor's degrees with honours - 1st, 2.1, 2.2 and 3<sup>rd</sup>.

4.3 Please note that minimum threshold standards are not intended to specify universal competence standards for a discipline. If a provider chooses to develop competence standards (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) as part of a programme specification these can be informed by the relevant Benchmark Statement along with any PSRB requirements. In these circumstances providers should follow the most recent guidance from the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#).

### Undergraduate Degrees: Threshold, Typical and Excellent Level

4.4 The benchmark standards set out the achievement expected of a graduate with a degree in EHLT. However, it is recognised that many students studying EHLT will be doing so in the context of a joint honours or wider business management degree. In line with the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies, EHLT graduates are expected to:

- have developed an understanding of the complexity and interrelatedness of EHLT disciplines
- have honed their analytical thinking and problem-solving skills and are able to apply them in a range of contexts, both practical and theoretical
- have developed confidence and expertise in working effectively with others, in a collaborative, sustainable and inclusive way
- be able to use critical thinking to form sound judgements and communicate them effectively in ways which are appropriate for the intended purpose.

4.5 The benchmark standards which set out the characteristics expected of undergraduate students are not a checklist and should not be viewed as exclusionary or restrictive. They are intended to provide a broad indication of the level of knowledge and competence expected of EHLT students, either on discipline-specific degrees, or on selected EHLT modules within broader degree programmes.

4.6 On graduating with an honours degree in EHLT, students should be able to evidence the following subject knowledge, understanding and skills:

## Subject knowledge and skills

| Attribute / Skill                                  | Threshold (3rd class)                                                                                                                         | Typical (2nd class)                                                                                                                                                                        | Excellent (1st class)                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND SKILLS</b> |                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| EHLT knowledge                                     | Demonstrate knowledge of key concepts, terminology and facts in EHLT, sufficient to describe core principles accurately in familiar contexts. | Demonstrate sound, broad knowledge of EHLT, with the ability to explain and apply concepts across a range of contexts and begin to show critical insight and the ability to connect ideas. | Demonstrate comprehensive, in-depth knowledge across a wide range of EHLT contexts and issues, applying concepts confidently and independently to complex or unfamiliar situations, and synthesising ideas across perspectives. |
| Sustainability                                     | Recognise the key sustainability challenges in EHLT, and identify priority areas, dependent on context.                                       | Use own awareness of sustainability principles and practices to actively address sustainability challenges in EHLT settings, with regard for the impact on key stakeholder groups.         | Integrate sustainability as a core value in planning and decision-making within EHLT, and focus the practical application of learning on generating and retaining long-term value for a range of stakeholders.                  |
| Project management                                 | Apply simple project management tools and techniques in a range of EHLT contexts.                                                             | Effectively apply project management tools and techniques that bring about success in a range of EHLT contexts.                                                                            | Critically evaluate a wide range of project management tools and techniques, and select and apply those appropriate for the scope, scale and complexity of the project.                                                         |
| EDI literacy                                       | Identify the key EDI principles and recognise how they impact practice in EHLT settings.                                                      | Effectively select, apply and evaluate relevant EDI principles that underpin practice in EHLT settings.                                                                                    | Critically apply a broad range of EDI principles to embed inclusive practice in a wide range of complex EHLT contexts, evaluating impact and identifying avenues for further development.                                       |

|                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Engagement with contemporary discourse | Identify contemporary issues and debates relevant to EHLT.                                                                                                                       | Engage with relevant debates and ideas to inform own thinking, practice and critical reflection.                                                                      | Apply a critical lens in setting a position and building an original argument that furthers contemporary discourse related to EHLT.                                                                                  |
| Cultural competence                    | Understand and explain how diverse cultures and subcultures influence EHLT product, service and experience design.                                                               | Analyses the importance and impact of considering the cultural needs of a group in the delivery of EHLT products, services and experiences.                           | Critically evaluates the importance and impact of drawing on cultural contexts in the design and delivery of EHLT products, services and experiences.                                                                |
| Contextual awareness                   | Recognises key historical and current theoretical and practical contexts in EHLT.                                                                                                | Use contextual understanding to apply a range of appropriate practical concepts to shape convincing arguments and/or sound creative solutions to existing challenges. | Integrate deep contextual understanding into the application of a wide range of theoretical and practical concepts, showcasing innovative thinking and development of an original argument and/or creative solution. |
| Ethical decision making                | Demonstrate awareness of the importance of ethics in EHLT decision-making, and articulate the impact decisions can have on individual, team, organisational and societal levels. | Actively engage and utilise ethical principles, inclusivity, accessibility and social considerations in own decision-making in EHLT contexts.                         | Integrate ethics as a core pillar in decision-making, especially in ambiguous and/or complex EHLT contexts, proactively managing the impact of decisions made on a wide range of stakeholders.                       |

## Professional skills

4.7 On graduating with an honour's degree in EHLT, students should be able to evidence the following professional skills:

| Attribute / Skill   | Threshold Level                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Typical Level                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Excellent Level                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inquiry             | Gather and synthesise information from contextual sources to generate ideas.                                                                                                                                                    | Effectively utilise skills of synthesis and analysis in evaluating a range of sources to inform arguments or creative solutions.                                                                                      | Engage critically with a wide range of diverse sources, demonstrating how this informs the development of an original argument or creative solution.                                                                               |
| Digital competence  | Demonstrate awareness of how prescribed existing digital tools and techniques, including prescribed guidance for the application of generative artificial intelligence, can be applied for specified purposes in EHLT contexts. | Effectively use a consolidated range of digital tools and techniques, including generative artificial intelligence tools, appropriately applying these for a range of purposes and in a range of EHLT contexts.       | Fluently curate a wide range of existing and emerging digital tools and techniques, including competent, independent and critical use of generative artificial intelligence tools in a wide range of EHLT contexts.                |
| Creativity          | Recognise the range of creative approaches that can be employed to create engaging EHLT experiences.                                                                                                                            | Demonstrate a high level of creativity and originality throughout their work in EHLT experiences.                                                                                                                     | Consistently demonstrate exceptional creative flair and originality in their work in EHLT experiences.                                                                                                                             |
| Communication       | Utilise a range of written, verbal and non-verbal communication methods effectively, as appropriate to the task and audience, and supported with a range of digital tools and techniques.                                       | Analyse a range of written, verbal and non-verbal communication methods, and effectively selects appropriate mediums suited to audience need.                                                                         | Coherently articulate complex arguments and presents these effectively using appropriate formats (written, verbal and non-verbal) relevant to a specific audience and supports this with appropriate digital tools and techniques. |
| Working with others | Demonstrate a capability of making useful contributions to group discussions and/or project work.                                                                                                                               | Engage constructively with others within a group, maintaining oversight of own and team objectives and fostering team spirit required to ensure these are achieved in a timely manner and to a professional standard. | Effectively engage with others within a group, demonstrating exceptional initiative, empathy and leadership skills that bring about the achievement of objectives, whilst fostering team cohesion and decisive decision making.    |

|                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Self-direction                     | Identify areas for own skill and knowledge improvement, and plan, organise and prioritise own activities accordingly to meet deadlines set.                                                               | Demonstrate agency, consistency and systematic judgement in a range of defined contexts that contribute to the successful completion of projects.                                         | Freely exercise independent judgement to proactively lead on various aspects of project design, implementation and evaluation in certain and uncertain contexts.                                                                                                 |
| Data collection and manipulation   | Devise and undertake a research project with supervisory support, including planning, collecting and analysing primary and secondary data, employing a set range of analysis techniques.                  | Undertake research employing appropriate methods drawn from a broad spectrum of sources and present research findings thoroughly, perceptively and appropriate to the audience.           | Independently plan, undertake and evaluate own research activity at all levels, evidencing contextual judgements relevant and appropriate to the project. Present research findings perceptively, convincingly and in a way that is appropriate to the audience. |
| Argument, evidence and referencing | Build a simple logical argument, supported by a limited range of evidence which is accurately referenced using a specified referencing technique.                                                         | Build a robust argument supported by a guided range of evidence which is referenced accurately.                                                                                           | Build a sophisticated, original argument from a broad evidence base, which has been independently selected, and is accurately and consistently referenced.                                                                                                       |
| Reflection                         | Apply established reflective models in a basic way.                                                                                                                                                       | Develop a coherent and authentic reflective voice, supported by independent use of self-selected reflective models.                                                                       | Demonstrate deep reflection supported with appropriate evidence and referencing a range of appropriate literature.                                                                                                                                               |
| Professional Development           | Recognise and articulate individual strengths and areas for development, and use specified tools and techniques to plan own professional development path and achieve short-term professional objectives. | Utilise analytical skills and sector-wide auditing tools to identify strengths and areas for improvement within own development pathway. Seek to gather input from professional networks. | Employ a critical lens and a growth mindset in establishing own professional identity, setting short- and long-term professional goals, and proactively building own professional networks to sustain professional development over the long-term.               |

## Integrated Master's

4.8 Integrated master's programmes in EHLT are expected to meet relevant FHEQ Level 7/SCQF Level 11 expectations for master's-level study while providing a coherent developmental route from undergraduate-level learning. They typically enable students to progress from broad and applied understanding of EHLT contexts towards advanced, independent, research-informed and professionally oriented judgement.

4.9 Students develop these capabilities through scaffolded learning across the programme and demonstrate them through substantial Level 7/11 work, such as a dissertation, capstone, consultancy project, applied research project, enterprise project, professional practice output or equivalent. Final outcomes are comparable with other master's-level EHLT awards, while recognising that integrated routes may achieve these outcomes through a distinctive combination of bachelor's-level and master's-level study.

4.10 Integrated Master's programmes in EHLT typically enable students to:

- critically evaluate the interconnected nature of EHLT systems, stakeholders and places, integrating social, cultural, environmental, political and economic perspectives to make reasoned judgements about complex and changing contexts
- critically interrogate how globalisation, mobility, culture, geopolitics, power and unequal development shape EHLT organisations, destinations, communities and experiences, including where evidenced, interests and interpretations are contested
- apply advanced disciplinary, theoretical and professional knowledge with originality to complex, unfamiliar and potentially unpredictable experience, service, visitor, guest and community contexts
- design and undertake ethical independent enquiry, critically selecting and evaluating appropriate methodologies, data sources and forms of evidence, and demonstrating originality in the interpretation and application of findings, normally through substantial Level 7/11 work such as a dissertation, capstone, consultancy, enterprise or applied research project
- critically appraise sustainability responsibilities and competing priorities within EHLT systems, including environmental stewardship, social justice, wellbeing and long-term viability, and formulate reasoned judgements in conditions of complexity and uncertainty
- critically evaluate the implications of digital technologies, data practices, artificial intelligence, including generative AI, and innovation for EHLT organisations, communities and experiences, including their ethical, societal, professional and strategic consequences
- exercise leadership, collaboration and strategic judgement in complex and unpredictable contexts through project, crisis, change-management, stakeholder or professional practice activity
- critically interrogate ethical, legal, policy, governance and regulatory dimensions of EHLT practice, including power, equity, accessibility, accountability and inclusion, and formulate responsible and evidence-informed judgements
- communicate complex ideas, evidence, conclusions and their underpinning rationale

clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences through appropriate and accessible formats, demonstrating reflexivity, adaptability, self-direction and professional autonomy.

## Master's

4.11 Master's programmes in EHLT meet relevant FHEQ Level 7/SCQF Level 11 expectations and to enable students to develop advanced, critically informed, research-informed and professionally oriented understanding and judgement across complex and changing EHLT contexts. These capabilities may be developed and demonstrated through a range of advanced academic, professional and applied activities, including dissertations, capstone projects, consultancy projects, applied research, enterprise activity, professional practice outputs or equivalent forms of substantial Level 7/11 work. The precise balance will vary according to programme purpose, disciplinary emphasis and mode of study.

4.12 Master's programmes in event, hospitality, leisure and tourism typically enable students to:

- critically evaluate the interconnected nature of EHLT systems, stakeholders and places across social, cultural, environmental, political and economic contexts, and make reasoned judgements about complex and changing conditions
- critically interrogate how globalisation, mobility, culture, geopolitics, power and unequal patterns of development shape EHLT contexts, including where evidence, interests and interpretations are contested
- assess challenges, risks, crises and uncertainties affecting EHLT sectors, and formulate evidence-informed responses to resilience and adaptation
- apply advanced disciplinary, theoretical and professional knowledge with originality to complex and potentially unfamiliar experience, service, visitor, guest and community contexts
- design and undertake ethical independent enquiry using appropriate methodologies, data sources and evidence to investigate complex EHLT questions
- appraise sustainability challenges and responsibilities within EHLT systems, recognising tensions between environmental stewardship, social justice, wellbeing and long-term viability
- critically evaluate the implications of digital technologies, data practices, artificial intelligence, including generative AI, and innovation for EHLT organisations, consumers, workers and destinations, including their ethical, societal, professional and strategic consequences
- exercise leadership, collaboration and strategic judgement in complex and dynamic environments, applying project, crisis and change-management approaches
- interrogate ethical, legal, policy, governance and regulatory dimensions of EHLT practice, including power, equity, representation, accessibility, accountability and inclusion
- communicate complex ideas, evidence and arguments effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences through appropriate and accessible formats, demonstrating reflexivity, adaptability and professional autonomy.



Fifth Edition

Published – 5 October 2026

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2026  
Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1UB  
Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786

[www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)