



General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Subsidiary Examination  
June 2011

## Travel and Tourism

**TT05/PM**

Unit 5 Marketing in Travel and Tourism

### Preliminary material

To be issued to candidates on or after 1 May 2011

#### Instructions

- This material **must** be kept unmarked for use in the forthcoming examination.
- You **must** take this material with you into the examination.
- Do **not** contact the destinations and facilities mentioned in this material for more information.

#### Advice

- You should read the information contained in this booklet and become familiar with the data provided.

## MARKETING A BUS TOUR OPERATOR

The Big Bus Company has been providing tours of London by open-top bus for twenty years.

The sightseeing tours take passengers to all the important landmarks and attractions in London. With live commentary in English, or digitally-recorded commentary in a choice of 8 languages, passengers hear about the capital city's history and culture from an expert guide.

One of the best ways to photograph the historic sights of London is from the added height of the top deck of a Big Bus and the guides know the best vantage points to take a picture.

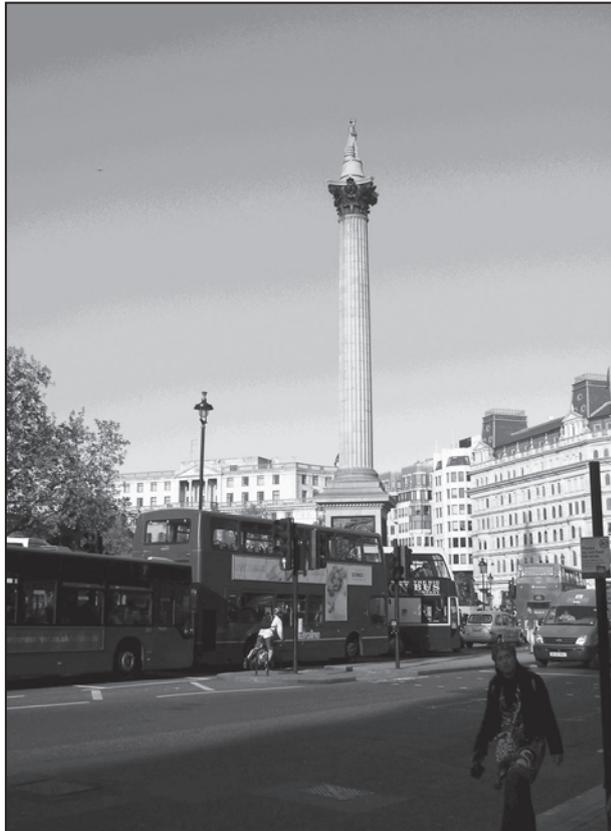
Tickets are valid for 24 hours so that passengers may join or leave the tour at any point. There is a choice of 3 routes: red, blue and green. Each route serves some, but not all, of the stops shown on the map on page 4. In addition to the 'hop-on hop-off' service, extras such as river cruises and walking tours may be included. The Big Bus Company is always looking for strategies to encourage repeat custom.



All the buses are decked out in the corporate colours of brown and cream. They are a familiar sight on the London streets. The Big Bus Tour won three times at the Visit London annual awards ceremonies and was nominated for Best Tourism Experience in 2007.

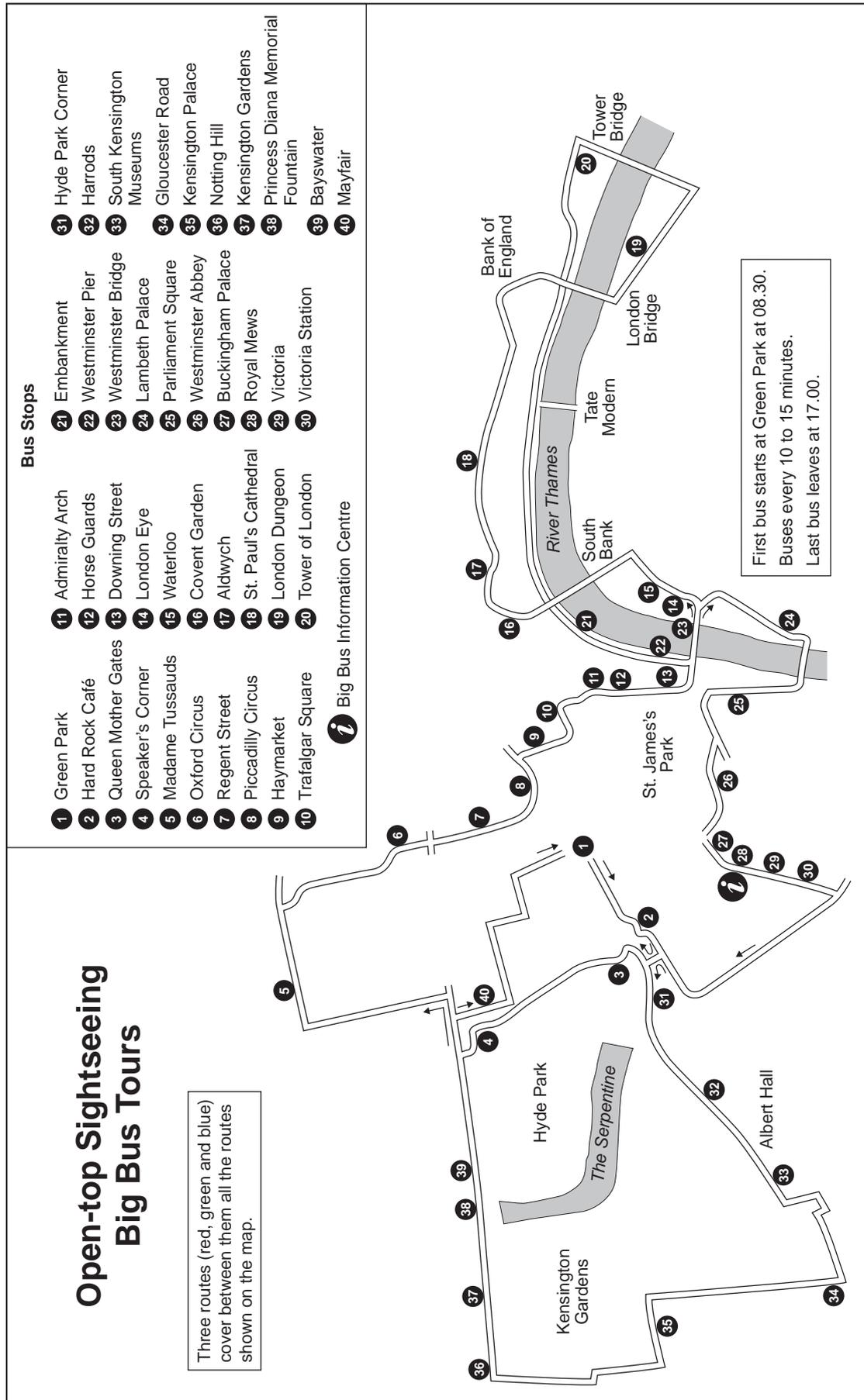
The Big Bus Company was founded in 1991 by the Maybury family who started the business with only two buses. Since then the company has become one of the largest open-top bus operators in the world. It now operates 80 buses in London as well as having operations in Dubai, Hong Kong and Philadelphia, USA.

# BIG BUS TOUR ON SERVICE IN LONDON



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# MAP OF STOPS SERVED BY BIG BUS TOURS



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**OVERSEAS VISITORS TO LONDON**

The information cannot be printed here due to third-party copyright restraints.

The information provides data on the following three areas.

- 1 Overseas visitor nights and spending 1993–2009
- 2 Influences on overseas visitors' decision to visit London
- 3 Age profile of overseas visitors to London

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## 'PLACE': CHANNELS OF DISTRIBUTION OF TICKETS

How the Big Bus Company makes tickets available.

1. **On the internet.** Customers go to the website and use a credit or debit card. They receive a discount for fixed-date purchase.
2. **From the Big Bus Information Centre** in Buckingham Palace Road. Ticket holders may also pick up a free Bonus Card giving discounts in a range of London shops and restaurants.
3. **From any on-street uniformed Big Bus staff.**

4. **On the bus** at any Big Bus stop.

5. **At on-street kiosks.**



6. **From the hotel concierge** at most of the major London hotels.

7. **At a London Travel Information Centre.**



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## AFFILIATIONS

The Big Bus Company has close links with:

- **The Society of the Golden Keys**
- **Visit London**
- **The Confederation of Passenger Transport**
- **Transport for London.**

**The Society of the Golden Keys** was founded in London fifty years ago. It is the professional trade association for hotel concierge staff. Its principal aims were to develop friendship among concierges and to help develop a network of contacts among hotel reception staff. Head hall porters from all the major London hotels meet regularly. They discuss the changing expectations of visitors to London and consider how they could enhance their professional relationships with each other and improve the quality of service to guests.

**Visit London** is the official tourist board and marketing organisation for the capital city. Its main purpose is to promote and sell London to business and leisure visitors, especially from overseas, who spend billions of pounds in the city each year. Visit London works closely with its members and partners to encourage improvements to the tourism infrastructure and services, and to maximise the benefits of tourism for Londoners and the local economy.

**The Confederation of Passenger Transport** is the trade association for the bus, coach and light rail industries. It is there to support its members. It lobbies and makes sure that their voice is heard by policy makers, defends them as need arises and works to enhance their reputation. Through the local and national media, it ensures that successes are publicised and that the bus, coach and light railway industries receive positive media coverage to protect their reputations.

**Transport for London** manages bus services across London. This includes the London bus network, which is known for its famous red buses and double deckers, as well as a range of private operators. Bus services such as sightseeing tour buses are not part of the London bus network. Transport for London issues the licences that allow the Big Bus Company to operate. It is required to consult the police, highway authorities and other bodies about routes, service quality, frequency and bus stopping arrangements before licensing PCV (passenger carrying vehicle) operators with a London Service Permit.

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## PRESS RELEASE

**BIG BUS ADDS TEN NEW BUSES TO ITS LONDON FLEET**

Contact: Press Officer  
The Big Bus Company, London  
www.bigbustours.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A further 10 new buses are due to join the London fleet of the Big Bus Company, marking the company's investment in the future and its commitment to enhancing the London tourism experience.

These 10 new buses will enable the Big Bus Company to operate a more frequent service.

The buses have been custom-built to Big Bus specifications and include the latest in modern technology. They are equipped with both a loudspeaker system for live guided tours and an audio digital language system to provide quality tour commentary in eight different languages. The new vehicles have larger windows, affording better views of London's landmarks and are wheelchair accessible.

EDITORS – for more information contact Press Office, The Big Bus Company

## CUSTOMER COMMENT CARD

THE BIG BUS COMPANY		CUSTOMER COMMENTS		We want you to enjoy London with The Big Bus Company. In order to improve our service we welcome any comments you may have.	
www.bigbustours.com					
When did you travel?	Day	Month	Year		
<b>1 Which of the following best describes your visit?</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Holiday/vacation		<input type="checkbox"/> Day out			
<input type="checkbox"/> Special occasion		<input type="checkbox"/> Business			
<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please state:					
<b>2 How did you hear about Big Bus?</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Big Bus brochure		<input type="checkbox"/> Big Bus Info Centre		<input type="checkbox"/> Web site	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tourist information		<input type="checkbox"/> Travel agent		<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel Concierge	
<input type="checkbox"/> Poster/billboard		<input type="checkbox"/> Magazine		<input type="checkbox"/> Guidebook	
<input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation		<input type="checkbox"/> By chance			
<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please state:					
<b>3 Why did you choose The Big Bus?</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Live commentary		<input type="checkbox"/> Language commentary			
<input type="checkbox"/> Hop on hop off facility		<input type="checkbox"/> Free river cruise			
<input type="checkbox"/> Free walking tours		<input type="checkbox"/> Price			
<input type="checkbox"/> Theatre ticket offers		<input type="checkbox"/> Fast-entry attraction tickets			
<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please state:		<input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation			
<b>4 How would you rate the following?</b>					
<b>1</b> = excellent <b>2</b> = good <b>3</b> = satisfactory <b>4</b> = poor					
Your enjoyment of the service	<input type="checkbox"/>	Walking tours	<input type="checkbox"/>		
The live commentary	<input type="checkbox"/>	River cruise	<input type="checkbox"/>		
The language commentary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Overall value for money	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Frequency of the service	<input type="checkbox"/>	Friendliness of staff	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Big Bus Information Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>				

### ON-STREET MARKETING



↑  
Uniformed staff

← Kiosk

Information centre →

↓  
Display board



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## COMPETITORS

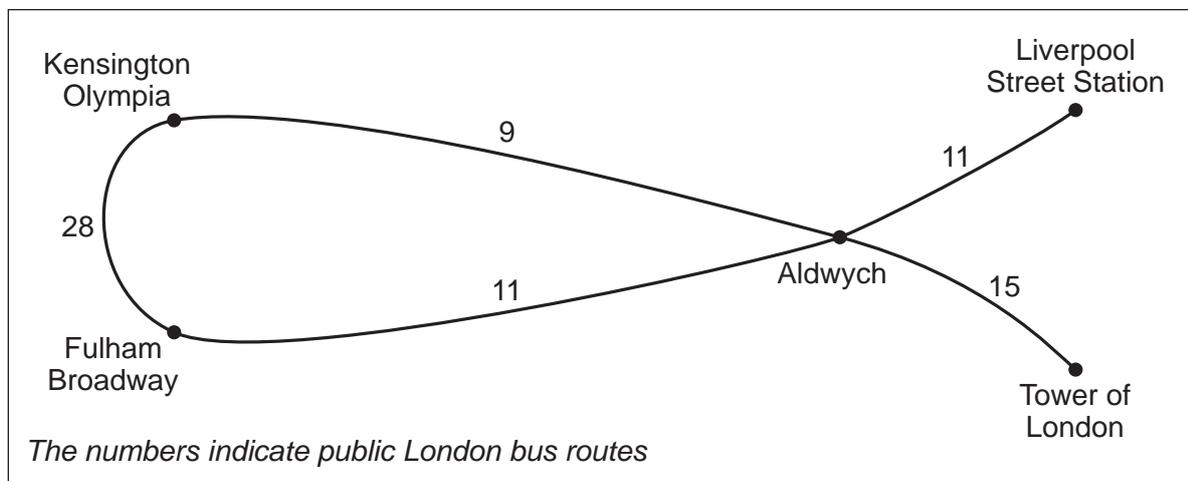
Competition among the London bus tour companies is intense. They all advertise themselves as 'Official Tour Buses' – this means only that they are licensed to do tours. None is officially endorsed.

Most visitors take tours with the open-top *Big Bus Company* or with *The Original Tour Company*. A sightseeing package is offered by *Timebus Tourer* where you hire the bus for your party which works out at £12 a head – but only if you can fill the whole bus. *Ducktours* use amphibious craft called 'DUKWs' that were once used for the D-Day landings. They drive past famous London landmarks such as Big Ben, the Houses of Parliament and Trafalgar Square before a dramatic launch into the River Thames for the waterborne part of the 75 minute tour of London.

*Golden Tours* offer an all-day sightseeing coach tour of London which costs more, but includes entry to the Tower of London, St Paul's Cathedral or other visitor attractions. Rather different is *Fat Tire Bike Tours*, which offers guided cycle tours around the capital.

Any of the bus tours would cost a family £50 or more. However, *The London Guide* recommends that by combining a few scheduled public London bus routes (see below), you can see the same sights. Many visitors buy an Oyster Card or Travelcard, so that you can 'hop on hop off'. All you miss out on is the commentary.

### An example of a bus tour using scheduled services



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**REVIEWS**

Extracts from Reviews of *The Big Bus Company* by members of the public.

**A** ...The tour guide was very professional and took time to talk to everyone on the tour, pointing out special photo ops and including history that I didn't know. We saw all we wanted to see in London and for that reason I would recommend the tour. We had a 3 and 5 year-old who would have been exhausted if we did the same by tube or walk/regular bus.

The only disappointment for all tours like this is you will not drive in front of Buckingham Palace but will only park to the side.

If you want to do London in half a day this is the way to do it...

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**B** ...we had a great time. You see all the major tourist attractions without killing your feet. It was a little pricey at 25 pounds per ticket but we think it was worth it. It also included a river boat tour and some walking tours.

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**C** ...You are given free headphones to listen to the commentary – this was very useful and pointed out lots of interesting places and history that we wouldn't have known about. The commentary is in several different languages. The staff were brilliant and very helpful – we always found staff at the bus stops.

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**D** ...too many annoying stops and technical glitches. We rode the "Blue" line that had tour narration through headphones. Many of the seats upstairs had non-working headphone jacks.

The bus pulled in behind another bus at the Baker Street stop and we were told we all had to get off and get on that one! The stop just happened to be in front of a half-dozen souvenir stores, and they forced you into a 10–15 minute delay for no reason.

For £25 they should have all the electronics working! Try another bus company, or only ride the "Red" route with live commentary.

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**E** ...my wife and I loved the bus line, and thought that it was a great way to see London. We were able to learn about things that we were previously not aware of. The live tours are totally worthwhile, as you are able to ask the guide all of the questions that you would like. We also enjoyed taking the boat to Greenwich. The boat ride is included with the bus tour. You can save money if you book in advance with their web site.

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**F** ...we had to stand because the bus was overflowing with people. Couldn't hear the commentary because had nowhere to plug in headphones. The bus drivers and the people on the bus were not helpful. Plus, the tour took us over 6 hours and we never got off the bus (besides when they made us). Ruined a full day for us. Don't be roped in with their "the ticket is good for 24 hours." You'll never use the ticket again because of the time frame they are open and also because of the routes the buses take.

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**G** ...The good: Lots of stops, you can buy a ticket at most stops, you see a lot, the staff are nice, and the audio is pretty good.

The bad: Buses spend long amounts of time sitting at certain stops with no explanation; it takes way longer than the suggested two hours; and they don't make it clear that even though the brochure says the buses stop running at 6:30, you need to be on the last bus well before that at most of the stops...

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## SWOT ANALYSIS

The table shows an *extract* from a full SWOT analysis for the Big Bus Company.

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links with Visit London, the Society of the Golden Keys, and other affiliations.</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customers need to be on the last bus well before 6.30pm.</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can refer to winning Visit London's "<i>Sightseeing Tour of the Year</i>" award, for marketing purposes.</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not licensed to drive past the front of Buckingham Palace.</li> </ul>

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Page 8 The Big Bus Company

Page 11 Tripadvisor.co.uk