Skills and Knowledge for Service Encounters in the Leisure Industry: Implications for UK Higher Education

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of PhD in the Faculty of Humanities

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Miriam Firth

School of Environment, Education and Development
Manchester Institute of Education
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<table>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CIT</td>
<td>Critical Incident Technique</td>
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<tr>
<td>DLHE</td>
<td>Destinations for Leavers of Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
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<td>HEA</td>
<td>Higher Education Academy</td>
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<td>IS</td>
<td>Intercultural Sensitivity</td>
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<td>ICSE</td>
<td>Intercultural Service Encounter</td>
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<td>KIS</td>
<td>Key Information Set</td>
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<td>NSS</td>
<td>National Student Survey</td>
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<td>PGCE</td>
<td>Post Graduate Certificate in Education</td>
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<td>QAA</td>
<td>Quality Assurance Agency</td>
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<td>SQM</td>
<td>Service Quality Model</td>
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<tr>
<td>SQT</td>
<td>Service Quality Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEF</td>
<td>Teaching Excellence Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>VET</td>
<td>Vocational Education and Training</td>
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Abstract

As a Higher Education (HE) lecturer in the United Kingdom (UK), I have taught Leisure students and supported their transition into placement work and graduate employment. This experience has made it clear to me that some students and graduates are not fully equipped to deal with the extensive customer demands placed on them in the workplace. The aim of this study is to analyse the skills and knowledge needed by graduates from Leisure courses to deal with real-world customer service encounters.

A theoretical framework on skills, knowledge, education frameworks and employer requirements was used to identify what graduates might need in industry work and this was tested by gaining primary data from Leisure graduates. Critical incidents were gathered and interviews were conducted with five recent graduates and one current student from Leisure courses in Manchester. The data includes 57 critical incidents related to customer demands that the participants faced during service encounters in leisure roles; it also includes six semi-structured interviews on whether the participants felt their education prepared them to meet these demands. This study analyses the data using a theoretical framework of current publications and includes the theories of Soft Skills, Co-creation, Co-production, Emotional Labour, Aesthetic Labour, Sexualised Labour, Intercultural Sensitivity and Service Quality Theory.

This study uses an innovative methodology to identify three key findings in support of the research questions. Staffs to staff dynamics and Intercultural Sensitivity are needed in Customer Service Encounter theory to use in Leisure UK Higher Education and fully prepare students for encounters in their graduate employment. These findings offer extensive contributions to current knowledge on theory and leisure education in UK HE to support development of all skills and knowledge needed for customer service encounters. Recommendations are raised to the Quality Assurance Agency (education governing body) and other leisure educators on how they might better educate and prepare their students for customer service encounters in graduate employment.
Declaration of Original Contribution

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Introductory Limerick

There was once a lecturer called Miri,
Who came up with a work based query,
For as she taught,
And sought out new thought,
She saw her Leisure students grow weary.

Their weariness came from a lack of full skills,
(Not due to the lack of their wills)
With each new guest,
Came a new request,
So my study identifies these skills to distil.

Customer service requires a number of hands,
And theory focuses mainly on guests commands,
Are graduates equipped?
Or do they feel whipped?
By the constant and unyielding customer demands.

So please read on about this study to report,
Get to the end before you abort,
For in person I enthuse,
But on paper am subdued,
And ultimately this study aims to inspire and support.
Introduction

This thesis offers a report of my doctoral study. As the limerick notes on the previous page, this study was based on an issue arising from my own professional practice lecturing in Higher Education (HE) in the United Kingdom (UK). This introduction explains the genesis of my study, outlines the structure of the thesis and presents the research questions with which it was focused.

This study grew from my own practice as a lecturer in UK HE. I have lectured variously on Event, Hospitality, Sport, Leisure and Tourism courses in UK HE since 2008. As discussed in Chapter 1, these areas of vocational education are preparatory for similar working roles. For this reason, throughout my study and this thesis reporting it, I used the term Leisure Education as the over-arching term. My lecturing is informed by my experience of working, and managing others in the Leisure Industries. I have also set up and managed my own Event Management staffing company. Going back even further, my own professional experience in the Leisure Industries was supported by my UK-based undergraduate studies in International Hospitality Management. Thus, I had student experience of the type of Leisure education course on which I subsequently became a lecturer, and I had professional experience in the Leisure sectors for which I was preparing students to graduate into.

My goal in my teaching is to ensure students are equipped with the professional and transferable skills for employment in the Leisure industries. Whilst seeking to do so, I have become aware of the difficulties many students (and former students) have identified in their ability to deal with, and meet the expectations of the range of guests present in Customer Service Encounters. Reflecting on this situation, there seemed to me to be a mismatch between the education provision (on courses such as the ones on which I lectured) and the knowledge and skills required by my students in their roles after graduation in the leisure industry. Placement students\(^1\) and graduates alike have identified difficulties in dealing with the various customer demands placed on them. Some felt unprepared for the communication with tourists,

\(^1\) Students whom complete work experience during their UK HE Leisure Education
others identified their shock in the types of demands placed on them, and others found the rigid training from their managers hindered their ability to show individuality in their communication with customers. These are just three examples of the types of difficulties seen and communicated by my students to me. These situations suggested to me that students were not equipped with the necessary skills to effectively deal with customer demands in the Leisure industries. As an Educator I felt it was important to explore this further and ascertain what knowledge and skills were needed, how students perceived the demands experienced in the Customer Service Encounters, and how Leisure education courses might better prepare them for such demands.

My doctoral study sought to explore this possible mismatch. In it, I focused on the face-to-face Customer Service Encounters that some of my students and graduates have experienced in their industry roles. The aim of this study is to identify the skills and knowledge needed by UK Higher Education Leisure graduates for completing Customer Service Encounters.

Objectives:
1. To explore any potential mis-matches between employer requirements and theory published on skills and knowledge for customer service encounters;
2. To identify a theoretical framework of skills and knowledge for Leisure students completing Customer Service Encounters;
3. To examine critical incidents offered from recent students or graduates on customer service encounters and identify skills and knowledge used by these participants;
4. To offer recommendations to educators and industry on the skills and knowledge graduates need in order to complete successful Customer Service Encounters.

Research Questions:
1. What skills and knowledge are currently needed by graduates completing a Customer Service Encounter?
2. How do the skills and knowledge needed by graduates compare to my theoretical framework of skills and knowledge?
3. Is the current training and education provision for Leisure students in UK universities adequate for graduates completing Customer Service Encounters in graduate employment?

This thesis is organised as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the study by highlighting the contexts present;
- Chapter 2 offers a literature review of the theories which underpin the thesis, culminating in identification of the research questions;
- Chapter 3 presents the research design for my study and outlines the planned methods for obtaining and analysing data presented in this thesis;
- Chapter 4 explains the specific data gathered and offers examples of the data and analysis completed;
- Chapter 5 offers a comprehensive and detailed outline of the analysis and findings from the study discussion;
- Chapter 6 concludes the study through answering each research question based on the analysis and discussion offered, identifies how the study contributes to knowledge, and offers recommendations as a result of the study.
Chapter 1

Study Contexts

Introduction
This chapter provides an introduction to the study by highlighting the contexts present. These contexts are UK University Education, Leisure Education in UK HE, Leisure Graduate roles in industry, and the city of Manchester in the UK. A broad perspective of UK HE is firstly required, as it identifies the current issues and priorities present in all universities. Vocational Education and Training (VET) is then defined to clarify and situate the type of education completed by Leisure students. Students’ Leisure Education is explored through specific benchmark statements (as governed by the awarding body the QAA) and learning outcomes (from one Events Management degree) to identify the key theories and types of teaching and assessment that these students complete within Leisure University Education. I will also note my own experiences and roles within University contexts to identify the lens through which these issues have been examined. Following on from this, the context of Leisure graduate industry roles is examined via definition of the industries associated with Leisure, and then through specific Leisure roles available to these graduates. The city of Manchester and its education and employment context are explored to offer the geographical context in which the study was carried out. Finally, the intended theoretical contribution is noted to clarify how this study aimed to support Leisure educators in UKHE.

1.1 Education for leisure students in UK universities
This section contextualises the study in its education foundations. Firstly, establishing the scope and background of UK universities, student satisfaction and graduate employability are high on the agenda of management and lecturing colleagues throughout the sector. Following on from this, Vocational Education and Training is defined, as Leisure students in my classes are seen as vocational, completing vocationally relevant modules. Components of one Events Management degree will then be identified to offer evidence of the typical types of learning and assessment required in this field. Finally, my own roles will be noted to recognise
the lens through which this context is viewed. These contextual factors are integral to
the study, as they evidence the political, procedural and pedagogical factors
surrounding the research.

1.1.1 Scope and background of UK universities
This section will begin with an overview of UK HE in statistics. This identifies the
scope of the sector and acknowledges that recent changes in regulation of UK HE
have led to a larger UK HE market. Student Satisfaction and Employability will then
be discussed as the key areas of concern for academic staff in UK HE at present.

According to the British Council (2015), there are 160 Universities and Colleges in
the UK that have the power to award degrees in the UK. Although the UK has
offered university education since the 1200s, it was the 1990s that saw the largest
increase in these institutions. The Further and Higher Education Act of 1992 allowed
Polytechnic Colleges to apply for university status. From this point, Universities in
the UK were classified as Russell Group, Other Old (pre-1992) and New
Universities (post-1992) (HESCU, 2012). The increase in institutions brought about
an increase in student numbers. In 1962 there were around 200,000 students in UK
HE (The Dearing Report, 1997) and in 2014/15 there were 2.28 million (UK, 2015).
This increase in the student body from 1992 was followed by widening participation
initiatives throughout the sector to ensure fair and equal access for all. Access to
study and course availability therefore expanded in tandem. In terms of the
segmentation of these students, there are home (including EU) and non-EU students
able to study these courses. In 2015/16, 34% of the student body were non-EU
students (HEFCE, 2015). In 2016/17, only 12% were non-EU students (HEFCE,
2016a). This also identifies fluctuation in the number of home and non-EU students
completing these courses.

After the Further and Higher Education Act of 1992 and the widening participation
initiatives the UK government also re-allocated funding for these courses. In 1992,
courses were funded by the government and students could apply for additional
grants to support them during full-time study (Wyness, 2010). Student fees were
introduced in 2003 and gradually the government reduced funding the universities
directly. At the time of this study, UK HE home fees are set at £9,000.00 per annum
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across all institutions and international (non-EU) fees start from £17,000.00 per annum but range in cost according to the discipline of study. This shift in payment from government funding to student funding has meant that student feedback on their education and graduate employability has engendered more weight and importance. Student feedback and marketing of courses are completed through production of Key Information Sets (KISs) on every course.

After course fees were introduced to students in UK HE, the UK government implemented a national quantitative survey to monitor student satisfaction. The National Student Survey (NSS) was introduced in 2005 to ascertain how students felt about their courses, and these, in turn, are now used to market and benchmark each course against competitors’ courses throughout the sector (HEFCE, 2016b). Benchmarking courses from student feedback received via the NSS is problematic, as they results are not comparable (Williams and Ansfield, 2007). The results are seen as not comparable between institutions, as Williams and Ansfield (2007) suggest that the simplicity of the survey, timing of the survey, and student motivation for completing the form will change the overall result in each institution. This suggests that the NSS is flawed and should not be used as a metric to compare or market courses. Equally, there has been much academic debate on how the NSS has made students appear to be consumers who have to give their own account of customer satisfaction (Naidoo et al., 2011; Little and Williams, 2010). Seeing students as customers is problematic in UK HE, as traditional Old and Russell Group Universities require students to use their own agency and ability to develop knowledge and understanding themselves rather than receive accepted wisdom from academic staff. Furthermore, if a student is dissatisfied with their marks and feedback they may also use this dissatisfaction when reporting in the NSS rather than considering the overall management and opportunities available for support and feedback on their work. This description of how UK HE courses are benchmarked and marketed via the NSS identifies problems in its use to market courses and how it has changed the perception of student feedback.

This shifting landscape in UK Universities since the 1990s has had a huge impact on the sector. It is no longer the elite few who are able to access UK HE, and current students face higher debts as a result of their studies. Fees are managed by the
Student Loans Company, who require students to start paying this money back once they reach specific thresholds of income (Wyness, 2010). As such, students’ employability after completing their studies is now a crucial outcome and benchmark for universities. Employability is included in the KIS data for University courses and is reported through the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey. This study addresses this problem by examining one group of disciplines (Leisure) to ascertain the skills and knowledge needed for students in UK HE in support of their transition into graduate employment (definitions of Skills and Knowledge are offered in Chapter 2). After the increase in UK Universities and courses in the 1990s the Dearing Report considered employer views on graduate skills and employability:

“Roughly half the employers we surveyed are dissatisfied with the current level of skills exhibited by graduates, but there is little commonality in their concerns about particular skills. The largest single expression of dissatisfaction comes from the 25 per cent who would like graduates to have better communication skills.” (The Dearing Report, 1997, p.34)

Employers evidently saw that graduate skills were mismatched with the required skills needed for employment in 1997 and that communication skills were highlighted as a priority. Reporting on employability via employer concerns and skilling needs has continued since the Dearing Report (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2015). From the expansion of UK HE and industry skilling problems it appears that HE market growth has not sufficiently supported the surrounding industry. This could also be due to the shift in traditional studies offered in UK HE. Traditionally, students completed higher education for the fulfilment of knowledge, critical thinking and liberal education (Carr, 2009) rather than vocational work. This shift is explored in Vocational Education and Training in the subsequent section but is important in considering the structure of UK HE since the 1990s, as it is clear that diversification of the market has led to conflicts in graduates’ abilities to gain and succeed in graduate employment:

“While employers report strong demand for graduate talent, they continue to raise concerns about the skills and job readiness of too many in the graduate labour pool.” (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2015, p.8)
This report suggests that graduates were not being fully equipped with the skills for employment and that employers still found skills gaps in their staff that needed support from UK HE. In the government’s Leitch Report of 2006, skills gaps in the UK are further identified. Leitch states that university educators have to place employers at the “heart” of their curricular development (Leitch, 2006, p.25). More recently, the UK Department for Business Innovation and Skills published standards for Universities on Employability within the new Teaching Excellence Framework (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2015), which will affect every university course in the UK. The new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) identified that courses will continue to benchmark institutions on the success of their graduates’ employment (DLHE survey) but the management and collection of this will change. This new framework was implemented in the White Paper of 2016 and identified new governing offices for UK universities (DfE, 2015; Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2016). At the time of submitting this thesis, all UK universities were being monitored and benchmarked on the employability of their graduates via the DLHE survey.

This brief background and scope of UK Universities has identified a recent shift within the landscape. University courses have been offered for 700 years, but in the last 25 years, institutions, courses, access and fees have all increased exponentially. This has resulted in a focus on student satisfaction and graduate employability. This study seeks to understand how well prepared Leisure students are to complete customer service encounters with a range of customers, as this is a key employability skill for these students in these roles. This study therefore not only seeks to investigate a professional work-related query in UK HE, but also answers and supports previous reports on graduate skilling problems already known by the UK HE sector. Thus, the education context is not simply a backdrop, but rather a hotbed of issues surrounding student satisfaction and graduate employability.

1.1.2 Vocational education and training

As this study focuses on Leisure Higher Education, which is part of Vocational Education and Training, it is important to reflect upon this type of education and learning within UK HE. To begin with, Vocational Education is the “social
development of labour” (Clarke and Winch, 2007, p.1). It is referred to as Vocational Education and Training (VET) and, ultimately, prepares a person for work. This differs from liberal or civic education, as it requires students to develop specific skills and competencies for specific employment. This study focuses on UK HE; traditionally, Universities have sought to educate on liberal matters to improve the thinking and understanding that a person has in relation to matters in the world (knowledge and thought rather than skills linked to practical employment skills). The increasing impetus on Employability in Universities seems to have stemmed from the increase in vocational and technical courses taught at Universities. By including vocational and liberal courses in universities, VET has become more visible in UK HE. But what does this mean for Leisure VET in Universities?

“*It is important to have an essence of hospitality in a school. Without it how do students become socialised into the hospitality environment/way of thinking? With it you have the noise, the smells, the deliveries, the refuse, the issues, the customers, the problems. It’s something that you don’t normally get in a business school. It makes us different to other departments.*” (Case 2, Participant 4) (Alexander et al., 2009, p.62)

This quotation from Alexander et al. (2009) exemplifies the difficulties faced when educating Leisure students in UK HE. VET requires work-specific training within working environments in order to develop and assess employment skills fully. When the UK government began reducing funding to Universities, Hospitality course facilities such as kitchens and restaurants were also forced to close (Alexander et al., 2009). Without the ability to practise these skills in university modules it is evident that there will be shortfall when students graduate to industry roles:

“*university graduates may be deficient in the ability to reflect on, and ameliorate industry and management practices*” (Morrison and O’Mahony, 2003, p.39)

This research suggests that UK HE should ensure that students actively participate and solve problems relating to specific incidents in a working environment. For example, Leisure students in Hospitality Management could practise management skills in a working restaurant in University, in work placements as part of their course, or via part-time work completed around their studies. If Leisure academics discuss working problems divorced from student industry experience without asking
for work experience, a graduate could potentially encounter customers for the first time in industry. This study seeks to establish if this is a problem for current graduates and identify the skills and knowledge needed. This, in turn, will support Leisure academics in UK HE, as it will identify the skills and knowledge needed by their students and enhance the VET offered.

Contrary to Leisure VET, Teachers and Medical students, who are also considered in VET, have mandatory postgraduate qualifications and placements in order to assess and establish their employer-ready skillset and knowledge. At present there are no mandatory industry or education postgraduate qualifications stipulated for employment in Leisure roles. This noted, there is one Hotel School in the UK offering work-based Leisure courses in Higher Education: the Edge Hotel School. This school offers Foundation- and Degree-level qualifications in Hotel Management, whereby students work and study throughout the week. As with medical postgraduate training, students at the Edge Hotel School complete rotations in the different departments to learn their craft within each hotel department. Unlike other Hospitality degrees, students on these courses can complete their education in two years. It is suggested that this both saves the student money on a third year of study and better prepares them for employment, as they work within the industry on a daily basis.

The Edge Hotel School is the exception. The norm in relation to work experience in Leisure courses is to offer a placement year during which students apply their learning in a working environment. These courses often advertise the programme as a three-year full-time course or a four-year course including a placement year. However, this model will need to change subsequent to the fee increases, as an additional year of fee payments will not be a financially viable option for all students. For example, home students on a four-year placement degree will graduate with £36,000 of debt. It is accepted that graduates do not have to pay back these loans until they earn over the minimum threshold of £17,775, but with the majority of Leisure graduate roles starting above this threshold, they will be paying them back immediately. Moreover, graduate roles in Leisure typically start at £20,000 and rise in management roles to around £30,000, but this is the average peak of their earning potential (average Leisure earning is documented as £20,675 in 2011 and £20,183 in
2013: People 1st 2011 and 2013). With a low average earning potential graduates could be paying back their student loans for more years than other VET counterparts. Other VET courses for Teachers and Doctors result in a higher earning potential for graduates and they have mandatory placements on their courses. Therefore, with a lack of mandatory work experience, postgraduate courses and lower earning potential, it is even more important that Leisure students have the necessary skills and knowledge to move on to management roles quickly and that their University education prepares them well for this.

Evidently, VET is a component of the education delivered in UK HE. Teachers, doctors and Leisure workers all complete VET in UK HE in order to develop and prove their employer readiness. As polytechnic courses were amalgamated into UK HE in the 1990s, university Leisure courses have increased in numbers and graduates significantly. The problem noted, though, is that Leisure VET courses require additional resources and facilities with which to train these students and that without mandatory postgraduate courses such as those that teaching and medical students have, there is cause to question the employer readiness of these students from just this viewpoint. In consideration of UK HE and VET, Leisure Education in UK HE will now be discussed.

1.1.3 Leisure education in UK HE
From the scope of Universities in the UK to the definition of Vocational Education, this section will now move to consider the specific theories, classes and assessment types that Leisure students are expected to complete within their University course. This offers a discursive context to the study, which is then problematised fully in Chapter 2. To begin with, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), who regulates all University courses, separated the courses associated with Leisure into Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, Tourism and Events Management. Any university course with one or more of these titles has to teach students and assess them on specific benchmark statements ascribed by the QAA.

To begin with, current regulation of all UK HE courses can be seen as weak, as it allows for full academic freedom and flexibility in its creation and delivery. The QAA inspects each University and College to check and maintain the education provision to ensure that they are run to acceptable standards. Each group of lecturers
in a programme team at a University is responsible for creating content and assessing students on their skills and knowledge in relation to specific benchmark statements published by the QAA for each area of study. There are no national documents, modules or learning outcomes applied to each programme of study in Universities. As long as the programme team adheres to the benchmark statement criteria, the programme is deemed satisfactory (QAA, 2011a). This means that if two students complete a Tourism Management degree, at two different universities, their subjects, class content and assessments will inevitably be different. I accept that the benchmark statement for each programme is an indicative framework with which to support programme teams and that this is positive in enabling flexibility for the staff present, but this results in different programmes with different graduate skills and knowledge. For example, each programme team will place emphasis on certain benchmark statements when delivering a course, due to the team’s specific academic standing and prowess in certain fields. Therefore, without changing the regulation of university courses, current programmes continue to be loosely regulated and students completing the same-named degree will complete different classes and assessments and graduates entering work with different skill sets and knowledge.

Leisure courses were previously part of polytechnic colleges and the 1992 act enabled them to become part of University curricula; therefore, they are a relatively new area of study in UK HE. Leisure education requires students to learn skills and knowledge directly related to industry businesses and roles (e.g. Hotel Management, Restaurant Ownership, and Event Management). Appendix 1 identifies all benchmark statements written by the QAA (2008) to support Leisure UK HE. These have been reissued since 2008 in QAA (2016) but the only change noted was to include Events in the title of the specification. A full critique of the 2008 benchmark statements is offered in Chapter 2, but it is important to note here that although the QAA separates these discipline areas for educators, there are a number of similarities and overlaps between them all. For example, an Events Management student also needs knowledge of food/beverage/accommodation facilities and yet this is only noted in the Hospitality benchmark statements. This is why my study uses the term Leisure to group these areas under one term. Students need to learn about the operational, legal and social aspects of each of these areas to obtain a university
degree, but there is no clarity as to how these should be taught and assessed or any specification on investigating the key theories underpinning them.

Appendix 2 offers cross-tabulation of course learning outcomes and assessment and class contact time from one degree taught in UK HE, Events Management, to identify how these benchmark statements are realised within teaching documentation and delivery. From this cross-tabulation it is evident that the education can be based on modular units, as assessed in traditional methods (coursework and examination) and with standard contact types (Seminars and Lectures). If you were to remove the subject titles and learning outcomes, the assessment and contact time would not enable you to identify this as a vocational course (with the work-related and work-based learning identified as being necessary from the previous section). Only one unit in the Events Management degree reviewed requires assessment of a live demonstration (Live Events) and there is no other mention of an event-specific assessment (e.g. event production or food and beverage). The contact time is also in traditional venues of Seminars and Lectures. This serves as an example of how Leisure-based university courses remain traditional within Higher Education and how the QAA benchmark statements do not specifically require students to complete work-based learning within their studies. This contrasts sharply with other VET, such as medicine and teaching, where there are key professional criteria which must be learned and assessed in the workplace followed with post graduate studies completed using placements.

It is important to note that qualifications completed within Leisure employment have also changed in the last 10 years:

“People 1st has worked with employers to reduce the number of accredited qualifications for the hospitality, Leisure, travel and tourism sector from 305 in 2008 to 167 in 2010, and to develop simplified and robust development pathways for each occupation.”
(People 1st, 2011b, p.96)

Here, People 1st (2011) are referring to the level 4 qualifications taught during employment rather than degree-level qualifications (e.g. apprenticeships and national vocational qualifications). People 1st (2011) also suggest that the majority of workers in Leisure roles have up to level 4 qualifications. University education starts at level
4 and a graduate will have completed level 6 (QAA, 2011a). Therefore, all graduates entering employment in Leisure will have a higher qualification than the average non-graduate applicant entering the industry.

This subsection has identified components of Leisure education in UK HE. The separation of Leisure by the QAA into Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, Tourism and Events Management does not allow for flexible benchmark statements for graduates entering employment in a range of Leisure roles. Teaching teams in these subject areas have freedom in creating the course content, meaning that courses with the same title will develop different student skills and knowledge. An example of an Events Management course offered suggested that academics tend to use traditional forms of teaching and assessment and that skills and knowledge for industry are not fully assessed. As the majority of Leisure workers in industry have level 4 qualifications, it should follow that UK HE leisure graduates are better prepared with the skills and knowledge needed. Analysis is completed on the benchmark statements in Chapter 2, but this section has identified that current Leisure Education frameworks have issues in terms of flexibility and adaptability in preparing students for employment in a range of Leisure roles. This perspective is clarified in the next section through identification of my own UK HE roles completed.

1.1.4 My academic roles completed in UK HE

As this study is based on my own professional practice and reflects the needs of my students and graduates, it is important to offer my own Educational context so as to identify the perspective and experiences which have led to this study. In ascending order, my official roles and titles in UK Universities since 2008 are noted below:

- 2008–2009: Associate Lecturer in Tourism Economics, Manchester Metropolitan University,
- 2009–2011: Events Management Lecturer, Manchester Metropolitan University,
- 2011–2014: Graduate Teaching and Research Assistant lecturing on BA (Hons) Management and Leisure at the University of Manchester,
- 2014–present: Lecturer in Education (teaching on BA (Hons) Management, Leadership and Leisure at the University of Manchester),
2015–2018: Associate Director for Employability and Professional Learning, University of Manchester.

Within these academic roles I have developed new courses (e.g. Employability and Research Methods) and have led a range of management and strategic units for Leisure students (e.g. Tourism Economics, Events Strategy and Human Resources for Hospitality). I have been a Programme Leader, Recruitment and Admissions Manager, Personal Tutor, Placement Link Tutor, and Dissertation Supervisor. I have witnessed government changes in fees and university funding and seen the closure of working kitchens and restaurants in Universities across the country. I have also supported Masters Qualifications and supervised research in the UK and abroad at partner universities in Hospitality and Events Management. When the Higher National Diplomas changed to Foundation Degrees and were outsourced to local colleges I also aided academic colleagues in university and colleges in this transition with programme development, and supported students coming to university from college courses to top up their qualifications to a degree. Although my roles have been located in Manchester, I have also completed the following external examiner roles:

- University of Greenwich 2013–2016: undergraduate units on employability and professional learning in the business school, encompassing Leisure degrees and Professional Relations.

I am a fellow of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and am currently applying for principal membership of the HEA due to my management roles in Universities.

In 2015 I took on the role of Associate Director for Employability and Professional Learning for the School of Environment, Education and Development at the University of Manchester. This role means that I now have responsibility to support Employability and Professional Learning across a large school of programmes at the
University of Manchester. I am required to track and meet operational goals for the DLHE survey across a large school and am working on new placement provisions for the Faculty of Humanities. This role has provided me with access to management reports and I have written strategic reports for my school and faculty. I have also studied Department for Business Innovation and Skills reports at institution and UK-wide levels on Employability, which have provided me with further evidence of the need for employer-ready graduates in all degrees.

Through identifying my own roles in Universities in the UK, it is evident that I have worked with a range of academics throughout the UK. This means that I have not only developed courses in different institutions but also had access to Leisure students and courses across UK HE. As noted previously, my priority in teaching is to ensure that students are equipped with the professional and transferable skills for employment. Comments drawn on the regulation, content and employability of these courses are therefore not only seen from current publications but also witnessed through my own direct contact and experience in UK HE. As a needs assessment the study also offers a founding account of any potential mis-matches between the skills and knowledge taught and needed by students. In this way the study was based only in Manchester on current students or graduates to serve as an indicative example of the sector. From my own experience of external examining in UK HE Manchester also serves as a good indicator of what is happening in the sector.

1.2 Leisure graduate industry roles
This chapter has offered an overview of UK HE and identified current problems in its regulation and monitoring and followed this with a review of VET and Leisure course requirements. It is now important to consider the requirements of Leisure graduates entering industry in order to understand the working context into which these students transition.

1.2.1 Businesses and roles associated with leisure graduates
Leisure as a term has already been noted in this chapter as incorporating Hospitality, Leisure, Sports, Events and Tourism. Through studying one of these courses, graduates are most likely to seek employment in the following businesses:
Table 1 Graduate leisure businesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leisure Business</th>
<th>Hospitality Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>Hospitality services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist services</td>
<td>Youth/backpacker hostels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>Membership clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>Holiday centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pubs and nightclubs</td>
<td>Travel services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambling</td>
<td>Self-catering accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and service management</td>
<td>Visitor attractions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(People 1st, 2011a)

The table above uses information from People 1st, who are the Sector Skills Council for Hospitality, Leisure, Sports, Events and Tourism, but this is not an exhaustive list of Leisure businesses. For example, graduates may find an advert for an Event Manager within a Town Hall, Hospital or School. Therefore, each graduate from a Leisure-based degree can apply and work as a manager, supervisor, producer, marketer, office worker or business owner in an array of business contexts. Likewise, students with pure Business Management degrees can apply for these without Leisure-specific accreditation. For the purpose of this study, the graduate destination is seen as it is intended by People 1st: Leisure roles in Leisure businesses for Leisure Graduates.

When considering the vacancies available in the general Leisure labour market in the UK, the majority of roles are needed in Hotels and Restaurants, with Chefs and Catering providers being the primary positions available. For Leisure graduates requiring supervisory or management roles, the following table identifies the competition for these positions:

Table 2 Leisure industry graduate roles and applications per role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Role</th>
<th>Advertisements</th>
<th>Applications</th>
<th>Applicants per position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Events Manager</td>
<td>1,271</td>
<td>41,507</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel Management</td>
<td>5,158</td>
<td>158,015</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Beverage Management</td>
<td>3,316</td>
<td>77,508</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reservation Manager</td>
<td>1,105</td>
<td>25,715</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference/banqueting Manager</td>
<td>1,377</td>
<td>31,121</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar Management</td>
<td>4,384</td>
<td>85,917</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table above clarifies that the majority of positions available in Leisure are those of Restaurant Managers. Events Managers have the highest number of applicants per post and Kitchen managers have the lowest advertisements and applicants. As these statistics change on a yearly basis, Leisure Industry roles are a fluctuating context for educators to consider when planning courses, as it is unregulated and changes constantly. In comparison, if we consider other vocational industries such as Hospitals and Schools, they have very set hierarchical roles which have a standard pattern and formula. A school science teacher and a consultant anaesthetist have both education routes and working roles that have defined paths and duties. An operations manager in Table 2 could be working in accommodation, lighting and sound, environmental health, staffing or consumer operations. Thus, the roles for Leisure graduates are not clearly defined by the Sector Skills Council. This will clearly have an impact on considering the education provision in preparation for their roles. In terms of the skills and knowledge needed for Leisure employment, the following section will now identify what employers need from applicants entering the Leisure industries.

1.2.2 Skills and knowledge required in leisure graduate contexts

The Sector Skills Council, People 1st, publish reports on the skills and knowledge needed by Leisure employers. These reports identify the skilling shortages and employment issues throughout the Leisure industry in the UK. Their ‘State of the Nation’ reports assist businesses and education providers by identifying trends, patterns and problems in these sectors. Skills and Knowledge in Education is discussed in full in Chapter 2. In terms of skills, by 2013 there had been a steady increase in skills gaps within these Leisure businesses. People 1st reported these
industry skills gaps at 26% in 2007, 39% in 2011 and then 63% in 2013 (People 1st, 2011b; People 1st, 2013). Skills are the fundamental reason that employers gave People 1st for problems in recruiting to their business. Interestingly only 6% of employers reported that applicants had a lack of qualifications for the role. As mentioned previously, the majority of Leisure workers possess level 4 qualifications and it is not necessary for workers to have graduate or postgraduate qualifications in order to gain Leisure employment. As the skills gaps have been growing in industry, UK HE should provide graduates with these skills so that Leisure graduates excel in employment. To identify the skills and knowledge needed by industry, the following table offers comparisons between the People 1st 2011 and 2013 reports:

Table 3: People 1st skills gaps for leisure in 2011 and 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job-specific, practical skills 59%</td>
<td>Safety management 40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ensuring compliance/regulation 37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Financial/budgetary control 23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-Solving Skills 47% Customer-Handling Skills 65%</td>
<td>Monitor and Solve Customer Problems 37%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Capability to help customers with disabilities 33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork skills 56%</td>
<td>Teamwork 37%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral communication skills 52% Written communication skills 27%</td>
<td>Professional Communication Skills 35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management skills 39%</td>
<td>Management and Leadership 34%</td>
<td>Ability to coach and motivate others 35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy skills 25%</td>
<td>Basic Numeracy 22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy skills 22%</td>
<td>Basic Literacy 21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive Attitude and Commitment 38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Professional-looking appearance 28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intercultural Sensitivity 21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(People 1st, 2011b, p.87; People 1st, 2013, p.62)
The skills in Table 3 are general and do not relate to a specific role, which makes it difficult to stipulate if every graduate requires all of them for each role for which they apply. Equally, and unlike the QAA benchmark statements, these are not segmented into specific industries, meaning that some may be more essential to an area or role in industry. The highest skills gaps found are also in what could be termed basic transferable skills in communicating and solving customer problems. This study will seek to situate these skills and identify where they are evident in service encounters for Leisure Graduates. It is important here to note that Leisure degree courses and Leisure graduates grew not only from University expansion but also from an expanding service economy in the UK, which required more applicants in the labour pool who had the requisite skills and critical thinking in order to manage these businesses. As mentioned in the Introduction, the genesis of this study is based on the perceived skilling gaps felt by current students working and encountering guests in Leisure employment. These skilling gaps are mirrored here by industry data and identify that communication, working with others, appearance, attitude, and intercultural sensitivity are all needed. In this way, the skills of Leisure graduates are actually specific to the service encounters completed by workers in this industry. The next section will now consider the geographic context of the study, the city of Manchester.

1.3 Geographical context
This final section offers an introduction to the geographical location of the study. The study was conducted in the city of Manchester, which is located in England. Although results from this study aim to aid Leisure Lecturers throughout UK HE, it is important here to identify the geographical context, as it is the location in which the study was completed. As noted previously, this study sought to explore potential mis-matches between the education and industry needs for Leisure students, and identify particular skills and knowledge needed in support of Customer Service Encounters. Focussing on students and graduates in Manchester ensures the study is representative of leisure students going into leisure roles to identify the needs of these students, but is not comparative across the sector. This is important as the study offers a basis of knowledge rather than a replication or testing of previous studies. Also, as I work in Manchester I have direct access to participants who have
studied and work in the city. Teaching on the types of courses participants have completed also means I am aware of the education they have completed.

When Visit Manchester completed an International Perceptions study of Manchester in 2008 they found that football dominated people’s associations with the city (Visit Manchester, 2008). Although football may be the first thing of which people think, Manchester has much more than two major football teams. This section will consider Manchester’s Employment, Education and Leisure statistics to identify the geographical context in which the participants are located.

As a city, Manchester is seen as the second-largest city in the UK and has a population of 520,200 (Manchester City Council, 2014a). Manchester is often grouped with Greater Manchester, which includes the city of Salford and the metropolitan boroughs of Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. Within Greater Manchester there are 2,732,854 residents (Manchester City Council, 2014b). The Office for National Statistics Census in 2013 identified that 61% of the population were in employment, and 12% were unemployed (Statistics, 2014). The majority of Manchester residents were born in the UK (75%) (Manchester City Council, 2011a). Manchester has a higher percentage of EU and international residents than does the UK as a whole (Manchester City Council, 2011). These figures identify that the geographical context for the study is prominent in the UK. There is a diverse population and the majority of inhabitants are employed.

In terms of HE offered in Manchester, the city has three universities (University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, and Royal Northern College of Music) with an estimated 70,875 students studying undergraduate and postgraduate studies each year (Manchester City Council, 2014a). Within Greater Manchester there is also Salford University and the University of Bolton, which add a further 31,000 students to the cohort (Bolton, 2015; Salford, 2015). Manchester is one of the top 10 cities for graduate employers in the UK (High Fliers, 2015). Around half of all graduates from Manchester universities choose to stay in Greater Manchester (Manchester City Council, 2011b). Greater Manchester employs more Russell
Group² university graduates than does any other city in the UK (Manchester City Council, 2011b). Greater Manchester Graduates have an employment rate of 51% (Manchester City Council, 2011b). These figures show that the city has a variety of Universities and courses available to students and that graduates from these choose to remain in the city for employment after graduation.

As noted previously, the Leisure industries are made up of Hospitality, Tourism, Events, Sport and Leisure companies. These are not discreet industries and many overlap in their focus due to the provision of services. For example, a hotel will be regarded as part of Hospitality because it provides lodging and food, but it also hosts Events (as it may provide Weddings) and Tourism (as it serves a great number of tourists visiting an area). As this study focuses on Service Encounters between staff and customers in Manchester, it is provident that Tourism data in Manchester be offered for contextual clarity. £3.71bn is spent by Tourists in Manchester³, showing that the city obtains significant public spending in Leisure activities and businesses (Manchester City Council, 2015). Tourism supports over 45,000 Full-Time positions in the Leisure sector (Manchester City Council, 2015). Thirty per cent of visitors to Manchester are visiting for the first time, suggesting that the majority of customers are repeat visitors and will have expectations of Leisure service encounters based on previous experience (Visit Manchester, 2014). Most people come to Manchester for personal Leisure time (30%) and the majority are visitors from the North West England (41%), showing that tourists are also regionally local to the city (Manchester, 2014). Only a third of hotel night stays were from international tourists, showing that even though it is a tourist destination, UK nationals are the main visitors (Manchester, 2014). The Conference and Venue market in Manchester is worth £823 million, bringing 4.9 million attendees to the Greater Manchester area each year and proving that the Events market is an economic benefit to the city (Marketing Manchester, 2014).

These statistics identify a number of important points for this study. Firstly, the majority of visitors are local, repeat visitors. This means that they have already encountered Leisure companies and are returning with prior expectations and

² The Russell Group comprise the 20 leading Universities in the UK.
³ Representing 6% of Greater Manchester's economic output
perceptions of Leisure service encounters in the city. Secondly, the largest group of visitors are attending personal occasions. This means that they will be spending more focused time in Leisure outlets such as restaurants, shopping centres, museums, parks, and evening entertainment. Almost half of these visitors are from North West England. Therefore, service encounters are not totally with international, non-local, first-time customers.

In terms of graduate employment support for students on Leisure-based courses, Manchester has an extensive range of positions available. Eighty-three thousand jobs in Manchester are in Hospitality and Tourism (New Economy, 2013). Forty per cent of the Leisure businesses in Manchester are Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises. Thirty-six per cent of Leisure employment is based in restaurants and food service providers (New Economy, 2013). Customer service skills are a future priority for employers in Leisure businesses (New Economy, 2013). The ‘Hospitality Employer Skills Group’ in Manchester have identified that more needs to be done to promote careers in Leisure to support these businesses in Greater Manchester (Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, 2015). Due to the fluctuating number of students and tourists, the majority of Leisure vacancies in Manchester are Part-Time or Casual (Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, 2015). These figures show that Manchester can support a range of graduates from Leisure university courses. However, there are a greater number of casual jobs available in these sectors due to the large student cohorts present in the city. This is interesting because it identifies that Leisure staff serving customers in Manchester will be mainly transient staff, who will not have all had the same training, length of service or motivations to work. Therefore the standard of service and quality of the service offered is inevitably varied.

These statistics for Manchester identify an interesting context in which the study is based. As the second-largest city in the UK, Manchester has supporting infrastructure for the five universities, 100,000+ students and graduate positions needed for students and Leisure businesses. Synonymous with major football, culture, arts and Leisure, Manchester is also a thriving tourist destination, catering mainly to local UK residents. The plethora of students and graduates occupying

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4 SMEs have 10–50 staff members.
Leisure roles in the city means that it is an ideal context in which to explore a possible mismatch between the education provision and skills needed when completing Service Encounters.

1.4 Intended Theoretical Contribution
This chapter has sought to offer the study contexts to clarify the education, industry and geographical framing within which the study was completed. It is important here to also note the intended theoretical contributions from the study.

Firstly, the study aims to explore a better understanding of the Service Encounter from a graduate’s perspective. This will identify the types of demands present for graduates, and outline the skills and knowledge they need in order to complete encounters with customers in Leisure contexts. Secondly, the study will identify the graduate’s perspective of the Intercultural dimensions in Customer Service Encounters. As the study is based in Manchester there is a variety of graduates and customers present meaning it is an appropriate location in which to view the intercultural nuances of the encounters. Thirdly, the study intended to identify gaps and mis-matches between what graduates are prepared for and what they face in industry. Chapter 2 will identify how these three intended contributions are gaps in current knowledge from key literature.
Summary
This chapter has offered information on the various contexts within which the study is based. UK HE is the education context and this has gone through significant changes in the last 25 years. Since 1992 there has been an increased number of HE institutions, Student Satisfaction and Employability have been prioritised, and it has been evident that current course regulation from the QAA has meant that course content and graduate skills remain inconsistent. Vocational Education and Training offers students the ability to train for a specific job in a specific industry. Leisure fits within this scope, but, unlike Teaching and Medicine, VET has no postgraduate qualifications or mandatory placement requirements in University curricula. Leisure education combines Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, Tourism and Events Management and is regulated by the QAA. University lecturers are required to develop courses within individual programme teams and they teach and assess students through traditional university methods. My own experience in various roles in UK Universities has enabled me to perceive a mismatch between what is taught in educational establishments and what is needed in industry. Leisure employment is thriving in the UK and there are a range of Leisure Graduate roles available. However, the skills shortages within these roles are general and transferable, yet specific to service encounters with customers. As the majority of Leisure workers have level 4 qualifications, Leisure graduates from UK HE should support the skills gaps in offering a range of skills and knowledge. Manchester serves as an appropriate geographical location in which to complete the study, as it has a range of universities with graduates who tend to remain in the area. There is a well-supported Leisure industry with graduate Leisure roles available throughout the sectors. Focussing on Manchester students, and graduates in employment in Manchester also ensures the study is focussed to explore particular mis-matches present in customer service encounters.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction
This chapter offers a literature review of the theories which underpin the thesis, culminating in identification of the aim and objectives and research questions. The opening section offers clarification on the strands of literature, key terms and key authors used in this review to clarify the salient literatures underpinning the study. As this study focuses on the skills and knowledge that graduates need for employment, the following section will consider what skills and knowledge are. Service Encounters will then be discussed by looking at publications on Customer Service Encounters and Intercultural Service Encounters. This is followed by an examination of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) education benchmark statements for Leisure courses to identify the core topic areas and competencies stipulated for Leisure Degree courses in the UK. These Benchmark Statements for Leisure will then be compared with the skilling gaps of new applicants identified by Leisure industry employers compiled by the Sector Skills Council, People 1st. Through comparing education and industry documentation, mismatches will be identified to enable identification of gaps present in the education framework.

Evidently, the issues and arguments identified in this chapter draw upon a range of terms and authors from Leisure research, education and industry. This wide scope is imperative here to understand fully the information available to lecturers and the lenses through which they develop courses in support of their students’ studies. It also enables and supports exploratory research questions to ascertain if there is a perceptible mismatch felt by graduates who enter the industry.

2.1 Literatures used for the study
This section identifies each key term and body of literature used for critique in this chapter. In Chapter 3 I offer an account of how each piece of literature was read, critically appraised and chosen to be used in this study but here it is important to
identify how current literature impacted the study and the gaps seen in current literature order to support the study.

As noted in the opening chapter of this thesis, the genesis of this study was due to students and graduates identifying to me that they felt unprepared and unequipped to deal with the various customers in Leisure contexts. Therefore, I sought to complete a study which addressed these needs and explore what specific skills and knowledge are used and needed in customer service encounters. In order to investigate this perceived problem, the following table outlines the key literatures used in the review in support of the study:

Table 4 Key theories used for the literature review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key term or theory</th>
<th>Key authors</th>
<th>Key information and gaps seen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills in the 21st Century</td>
<td>Trilling and Fadel (2009), QAA (2011b), and HEA (2015)</td>
<td>Skills are defined through employability needs. They are segmented into types by current education governing bodies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Dummett (1991), Polanyi (1966), and Collins (2010)</td>
<td>Knowledge is still seen as Explicit and Tacit. Tacit can be split into Collective, Somantic and Relational.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural Service Encounter</td>
<td>Strauss and Mang (1999)</td>
<td>Different cultures in the service encounter can shock customers and cause service failure based on different nationalities. Gap seen = only focussed on customer perspectives. Nationalities of staff and customers are not fully disclosed making the result incomplete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Quality Theory</td>
<td>Parasuraman et al (1988)</td>
<td>Excellent service needs customer expectations and perceptions meeting and exceeding. Service is difficult due to the intangible nature of service. Personalised service is needed but varying accounts of what this is for each customer. Gaps seen = staff perceptions of service is ignored.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Co-production and Co-creation | Binkhorst (2005), Chathoth et al | Good service does not simply require knowledge of customer expectations, but also knowledge of how the customers may
| Skills and Knowledge definitions and Customer Service Encounter theory was reviewed in this study due to their relation to the framing of the study’s aims and objectives. Defining these key terms is important to situate the context and elements to explore primary research and desk based secondary analysis. From the theory on Customer Service Encounters, Intercultural Service Encounter theory emerged as a new term in the late 1990s. As both of these terms referred to Service Quality Theory |
is was also important to review literature on this and identify how service quality was needed in encounters in industry. Later emerging literature on Co-production and Co-creation links to Service Quality Theory and clarifies how research identified co-construction in service with both customers and staff.

The key terms Soft Skills, Emotional Labour, Aesthetic labour, Sexualised Labour and Intercultural Sensitivity in table 4 were all used in this review due to secondary desk based analysis of Leisure employer needs (People 1st, 2011b and 2013) compared to education frameworks for leisure from QAA (2008). The employer gaps were noted in table 3 in Chapter 1 and it was these gaps that were compared to the Benchmark statements stipulated by the QAA for all Leisure degrees taught in the UK. As these areas are seen as missing in the education framework, they were included in the review as key skills and knowledge needed by employers.

This sub-section has sought to identify the key literatures, authors and gaps in theory to clarify the structure and contents of this chapter. In addition to the key terms noted in table 4 there are also sections on Skills and Knowledge in Leisure benchmark statements and Benchmark Statements compared to Industry skilling needs which clarifies secondary desk based analysis completed to create the theoretical framework offered at the end of the chapter.

2.2 Skills and knowledge
Skills have been noted throughout Chapter 1 in terms of skills gaps seen in graduates from UK HE. These skills missing in current applicants have been identified as crucial to employment and needed to sustain the UK economy. This section will offer broad definitions of skills and knowledge to identify what these are for educators in Leisure UK HE.

There is an abundance of literature on skills and knowledge for UK HE, as educating students requires lecturers to assess these through examination in every discipline. Due to the 1992 reform of university courses and the increase in technology used in society, this section will discuss Skills in the 21st Century and tacit and explicit Knowledge to identify what skills and knowledge are. A brief review is offered here
to define skills and knowledge, but it is accepted that there are many more issues and debates surrounding these two terms.

2.2.1 Skills in the 21st century

‘Skills in the 21st Century’ is a term that has been used widely to report on the skills needed by society and employers. Through completing teaching qualifications in UK HE, I am aware of a range of areas in which Skills can be analysed such as competencies, behaviours, attitudes and actions. However, as this study focuses on skills for vocational employment, it is salient that Skills be defined through recent publications on skills needed from graduates and by employers. Skills in the 21st Century will be identified in this section, followed by key information on Skilling for Employability from the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

The Oxford Dictionary defines Skills as “the ability to do something well; expertise” (Oxford, 2010, p.1671). To discuss this term further, analysis on Skills in the 21st Century has been conducted to identify the skills that school pupils and university graduates need in order to support both the economy and society once they have completed their qualifications. Thus, skills are seen to be assets that graduates have in order to support society and the economy. Skills in the 21st Century originated from research carried out in America in which scholars identified that student skills needed analysis due to recent technological advances in society and employment. Trilling and Fadel’s (2009) book on this topic identified that these skills could be placed into three categories: Learning and Innovation Skills, Digital Literacy Skills, and Career and Life Skills. Each of these categories of skills is defined with specific attributes such as communication and collaboration, flexibility and adaptability, or media literacy. Evidently, skills are seen as abilities and competencies in order to complete tasks. In 2011 the QAA (2011b) carried out a research project in Scotland on 21st Century Skills to ascertain graduate attributes that are necessary in supporting graduates entering employment and society. Publications from this project offer academics information on the types of skills and activities needed to support 21st Century Skills. Later, the HEA (2015) stated that these skills involve “literacies, competencies and character qualities”, which are needed to succeed in 21st century society. Graduate skills in UK HE are therefore seen as vital outcomes of education
and are supportive of graduates’ employment and ability to contribute to society successfully. To analyse the specific categories and types of skills needed, the following table has been created:

Table 5 21st Century skills identified by the HEA and QAA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacies: literacy, numeracy, citizenship, digital and media</td>
<td>Ethical, social and professional understanding</td>
<td>People Management skills:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Problem-solving and critical analysis, Motivating other people,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to work in different cultures,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Financial skills,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Digital Literacy,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to reflect and self-awareness,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to have difficult conversations, Communication,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Team skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competencies: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration</td>
<td>Global Citizenship</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character qualities: curiosity, initiative, persistence, resilience, adaptability, leadership</td>
<td>Communication and information literacy</td>
<td>Global and ethical mindsets:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Can-do approach, Honest and ethical, work ethic, resilience, grit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and determination, collaborative,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>curiosity and willingness to learn,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>creativity, entrepreneurial, global mindset, risk-taking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 identifies recent reports on 21st Century Skills from UK HE governing bodies. The Chartered Management Institute (2014) report was supported by the QAA and, therefore, is included here for further clarity. Although the category names are different in these reports, it is clear that graduate skills are categorised as supporting society, dealing with different people and maintaining literacy skills.
As this study focuses on skills for Leisure employment, it is also important to identify employer definitions of skills. Hinchliffe (2013) offers a useful book chapter on analysing graduate skills for the UK. He identified that the majority of employers expect graduates to enter employment with all of the necessary skills with which to complete their roles. Hinchliffe (2013) tabulated the key skills for which employers look, as noted below:

Table 6 Employer rankings of employability skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employability Skill</th>
<th>1 (%)</th>
<th>2 (%)</th>
<th>3 (%)</th>
<th>4 (%)</th>
<th>5 (%)</th>
<th>6 (%)</th>
<th>7 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>18.90</td>
<td>8.90</td>
<td>8.90</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Communication skills</td>
<td>14.40</td>
<td>28.90</td>
<td>13.40</td>
<td>16.50</td>
<td>17.50</td>
<td>6.20</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT Skills</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>15.70</td>
<td>19.10</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>14.60</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>14.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of work environment</td>
<td>8.40</td>
<td>8.40</td>
<td>14.70</td>
<td>13.70</td>
<td>13.70</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>21.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial/business awareness</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>16.10</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>9.70</td>
<td>16.10</td>
<td>12.90</td>
<td>23.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy skills</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>9.90</td>
<td>19.80</td>
<td>16.50</td>
<td>16.50</td>
<td>18.70</td>
<td>13.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation skills</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>9.70</td>
<td>16.10</td>
<td>17.20</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>25.80</td>
<td>16.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Hinchliffe, 2013, p.56)

Table 6 above offers employer priorities in Employability skills from UK HE graduates. Hinchliffe’s (2013) results clearly show that interpersonal skills are the highest skills needed by employers. Interpersonal and soft skills are discussed later in this chapter. Hinchliffe’s (2013) research also highlights that presentation skills and work experience are not as highly prioritised by employers. This was due to the employer needing to train graduates on their own presentation style as well as needing graduates to have completed quality work experience.

The HEA and the QAA both report extensively on Employability skills for graduates. I have direct experience of this, as I have been the recipient of funds from the HEA for producing academic conferences on Employability; therefore, I am
aware that Employability skills are an important area for the education governing agencies. The HEA offer a range of publications on Employability Skills and publish these according to each discipline or level of education. For example, there are reports on Employability skills for Mathematicians (see Stirling, 2002; Challis et al., 2009; Hibberd and Grove, 2009). Reports on Employability skills using specific methods of teaching and assessment are offered for Blogs (Dunne and Ryan, 2014), Online learning portals (Bateman, 2014), Project-Based Learning (Whatley, 2011), and Alumni collaborative work (Russell, 2014). These examples identify that the HEA consistently support development of Employability Skills and that there is a plethora of pedagogies and forms of education which can be used within UK HE curricula. Conversely, the QAA have one specific area on their website devoted to Skills for Employability (QAA, 2012a). Like the 21st Century Skills noted in Table 5, the QAA identify Interpersonal Skills, Entrepreneurship Education, and Education for a sustainable society as key education themes. The skills associated with these themes are offered below for clarity:

Table 7 QAA skills for employability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QAA Theme</th>
<th>Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>• identify and respond to stakeholder needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>• communicate enthusiasm to 'sell' new ideas, concepts or solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• interact with others both to build trust for long-term relations and to 'close the deal' to make things happen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Delivery should include opportunities for:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• building trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• influencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• negotiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• stakeholder relations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial</td>
<td>• take creative and innovative approaches that are evidenced through multiple solutions and reflective processes (creativity and innovation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>• persuade others through informed opinion and negotiate support for ideas (persuasion and negotiation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• manage a range of enterprise projects and situations appropriately, for example, by proposing alternatives or taking a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| holistict approach (approach to management) | • evaluate issues and make decisions in situations of ambiguity, uncertainty and risk (decision making)  
• use networking skills effectively, for example, to build or validate ideas or to build support for ideas with potential colleagues or stakeholders (networking)  
• recognise patterns and opportunities in complex situations and environments (opportunity recognition)  
• model and propose business opportunities that take into account financial implications, legal implications and issues of intellectual property, financial and business literacy). |
| Society Skills | • employ visualisation and flexible planning skills to interact effectively with others  
• articulate ideas and present information or outputs to audiences  
• draw on the views of others to inform the development or enhancement of their work  
• provide research and other evidence to suggest how ideas can be taken forward over time, taking changing environments and emerging technologies and concepts into account.  

**Delivery should include opportunities for:**  
• thinking about and visualising the future, scanning the environment, and planning  
• communicating, directing and rationalising  
• building relationships, building trust, influencing, networking, negotiating, and reviewing progress  
• multiple forms of communication for a range of audiences, including new media technologies  
• learning how intellectual property and issues of confidentiality impact on communication. |

(Source: QAA, 2012a, pp.17–20)

What is interesting from the QAA’s (2012a) report on these skills is that although delivery methods are suggested for two of the Skills for Employability themes, there are no clear assessment methods, content or supporting texts identified for support. Therefore, although the QAA align Skills for Employability with 21st Century Skills, it is still unclear how these could be assessed and graded for each student. This being noted, the QAA provide benchmark statements for every discipline and suggest that these offer clear distinction of the “abilities and skills” that graduates should have (QAA, 2012b). This confirms that the QAA Education framework for all UK HE identifies key skills for graduates to acquire during their studies.
This section has identified that Skills are seen as competencies, abilities and attributes essential for UK HE graduates. Through a review of 21st Century Skills, there are themes evident in the types of skills needed by all graduates. These are also required by employers and the highest skill identified is that of Interpersonal Skills. The HEA offer research reports on Employability Skills and the QAA define skills through framing the skill requirements within benchmark states for all courses.

2.2.2 Knowledge: explicit and tacit

The definition of knowledge has been researched, theorised and postulated for centuries. Plato identified that knowledge is anything that is a “justified true belief” and it involves cognitive processes such as reasoning, memory, verbal communication, and perception. This section will identify two types of knowledge: Tacit and Explicit. Knowledge includes skills in part, as it allows a person to understand what is needed in action/behaviour/communication and then use that knowledge in order to complete the skill (Davies, 2001). Knowledge and skills can therefore be seen as linked. The skill cannot be implemented without knowledge of what is needed and knowledge can only be evidenced by using skills.

To begin with, explicit knowledge is seen to be knowledge which can be communicated verbally. Dummett (1991, p.96) noted:

“Someone has explicit knowledge of something if a statement of it can be elicited from him by suitable enquiry or prompting.”

This definition suggests that explicit knowledge can be tested through verbal or written examination, and represents information which is known and accepted as true by someone else. Thus, explicit knowledge is factual knowledge that a person has in relation to what something means (Collins, 2010). Explicit knowledge is also referred to as Propositional Knowledge and, ultimately, enables a person to communicate their understanding of something (Hager, 2012). This definition identifies that explicit knowledge is factual knowledge which a person can share with others easily. The topic areas from the Leisure benchmark statements identified in Appendix 1 are all explicit knowledge, as they identify areas of knowledge needed
by graduates. Full analysis of the benchmark statements is discussed in detail later in this chapter.

Tacit knowledge is more complex than explicit knowledge, as it is the awareness of unconscious feelings we have about things. The term is often linked to the work of Polanyi, a scientist from Budapest who wrote extensively about the term. Polanyi (1966) noted that “we know more than we can tell”, identifying that knowledge is also that which cannot necessarily be communicated verbally. Collins (2010) identified that there are three forms of tacit knowledge: relational, somatic and collective. Relational Tacit Knowledge (RTK) is seen to develop from a person’s history, family, and previous relationships. For example, you can identify someone’s feelings or emotions without them telling you how they feel. Somatic Tacit Knowledge (STK) is knowledge stored in our synaptic connections and muscles. For example, if you learn to ride a bike or dance the tango, your muscles will learn balance and movement instinctively as actions. Collective Tacit Knowledge (CTK) is when knowledge is learned within a group. For example, riding a bike is seen as STK, but riding a bike in traffic is CTK, as you have to know about rules and actions taken by others around you.

When considering the skills identified in the previous chapter it is clear that knowledge is needed for the performance of every skill. Whether it is knowledge of legal requirements, communication, negotiation or flexibility, each skill requires knowledge in order for the person to complete their tasks. By defining explicit and tacit knowledge it is evident that knowledge is manifest in communication, action and ability. These definitions of skills and knowledge are used later in this chapter within analysis of Leisure Education. The second section in this chapter will now analyse Leisure service encounter theory, as the study seeks to ascertain the skills and knowledge needed for these situations in employment.

2.3 Leisure service encounters

Focusing on service encounters, this study seeks to identify the skills and knowledge needed by my students to complete customer service and identify demands present in these situations. It is therefore important to establish the definition of service
encounters in Leisure roles. This section will identify the theoretical underpinning of service encounters by examining Customer Service Encounters and Intercultural Service Encounters.

2.3.1 Customer service encounters

Solomon et al. (1985) saw customer service encounters as being important due to:

“the increased recognition of the importance of the person-to-person encounter between buyer and seller — client and provider — to the overall success of the marketing effort” (p.99).

This quotation identifies that the term “customer service encounters” was instituted by recognising face-to-face interactions between a buyer and seller. The term derives from business scholars who saw problems in service encounters in a range of industries, such as Banking, Dentistry, Leisure and Retail. The focal relationship in customer service encounters is the binary aspect of people selling services and other people buying services. There was a perceived difficulty seen in the service encounter context, wherein the service is intangible and based upon behaviour and action rather than products. The difficulty in intangible services is that the customer perceives the service as a subjective experience rather than a quantifiable product. For example, if you purchase a washing machine and it does not clean your clothes, you can inform the manufacturer, who can get you a new one. Services use intangible skills such as communication, which is interpreted and offered differently. If a customer perceives that communication with a member of staff is not working, they still have to try to communicate with that person and define the nature of the issue until their query is resolved. Furthermore, the perceived satisfaction of this service is determined by one person (Service Quality theory of expectation and perception is discussed later in this chapter).

Solomon et al. (1985, p.100) also accepted that these encounters rely on intangible services, and noted that service industry management prioritise this due to their services being between customers and staff:

“it is primarily in the service sector that the dyadic encounter has generated a great deal of managerial concern”
Leisure businesses operate entirely in the service sector, as they offer experiences and provide accommodation and consumable goods to customers. Therefore, Solomon et al.’s (1985) research, although not based in a Leisure context, is a beneficial starting definition in consideration of service encounters in Leisure businesses. It is accepted that Leisure businesses serve food and beverages, which are physical products, but these are consumed rather than taken away and used repeatedly. The following review of customer service encounter literature will identify how this term is perceived in different locales. This broad scope is important because it enables an overview of the term and elicits key issues present as a result of the research and within the research itself.

In terms of issues identified in Customer Service Encounter research, it is evident that intangible services and consumable products present a problematic context. However, my study also suggests that the focus and lens through which research has been completed are also problematic. Papers from Bitner et al. (1990), Weiermair (2000), Reimann et al. (2008), Nickson et al. (2007), Sparks & Callan (1992), Surprenant et al. (1987), Ryoo (2005) and Solomon et al. (1985) focus on the customers’ perception of these encounters and not the staff’s. As the definition offered by Solomon et al. (1985) suggests that priority is in maintaining customer satisfaction, primary focus on customers’ perceptions in the encounter is valid. However, their definition also states that the encounter involves “person-to-person” interaction. By acknowledging two people within a customer service encounter and then only focusing research on customer perspectives in the encounter, it can be suggested that the origin and following research are deficient by not fully analysing both parties involved in the context. My study will rectify this in part by only focusing on the staff present.

As noted, the research on customer service encounters fails to explore staff perception in these situations. This does not mean that the staff are ignored entirely, but are seen as the agents of change who are malleable within the encounter. The majority of current research investigates encounters from a customer’s perspective and then offers recommendations to Leisure management as to how they can improve the services offered. There are only two papers found which refer specifically to staff in the customer service encounter literature (Yang et al., 2015;
Bowen, 2016). Within these there are persistent recommendations as to how staff should act. These are seen as recommendations stipulating that staff have to give a good service.

“the capacity to use his or her (staff) skills and resources to perform customer service to a satisfactory level” (Yang et al., 2015, p.829)

Yang et al.’s (2015) later paper sought to understand the variability in both customers and staff within the customer service encounter, but again failed to analyse fully the perspective of the staff when needed to “perform” for customers. By 2016 a literature review offered by Bowen (2016) confirmed that service research still focuses on customer satisfaction and that staff are seen as innovators of service quality, differentiators of service quality and enablers of service quality for customers. What is interesting from these two papers is that the recommendations identify the importance of staff in encounters but then state that they should offer excellent service and perform to a high standard without acknowledgement or investigation of staff opinions or defining clearly what is “excellent” or “high”. This finding of the lack of research in this area encouraged me to develop my study from a staff perspective regarding customer service encounters.

It is also clear from published literature that personalised service is needed in a customer service encounter. Personalised service will satisfy and delight guests and is seen as superior service. To offer examples of personalised service we can consider an encounter in which a customer in a Starbucks café orders a latte. Staff can personalise this service by asking if the customer wants additional ingredients or products adding to the order, by acknowledging them as a regular customer, or by developing a successful customer relationship with informal conversation about appropriate topics. These examples are all possible service standards which can be achieved through training of scripted service to staff. However, Surprenant et al. (1987) identified a further problem in this:

“There appears to be consensus among service providers that personal service is something their customers want, but little consensus about just what personal service means. In many cases it seems to mean a smile, eye contact, and a friendly greeting. In other cases it means offering to customize the basic service to suit the customer's needs or tastes. It may
The quotation above confirms that personalised service is difficult to manage and create. For example, and going back to the Starbucks situation noted above, the customer could equally be annoyed by any attempt at small talk with staff or deciding options for their coffee.

Surprenant et al. (1987) identified that facial expression, non-verbal communication, and verbal communication are all required in these encounters. These skills are difficult to regulate or control within the context, as customers in Leisure do not simply want a product, but want to be “served” by “personal” and “friendly” staff (Surprenant et al., 1987). (The need for facial expression and appearance of staff in the encounter is explored later in this chapter in Emotional and Aesthetic Labour theory.) It is evident that early research on customer service encounters identified that personalisation is important to customers, but that this was seen as problematic due to each customer’s perception of what they wanted or expected as personalised service. For example, if you have a customer who is rushing to get to work, they may not have time for conversation with staff. In this example, staff conversation may not be perceived as personalised service, but as potentially dissatisfactory service.

In summary of the definition and issues identified in Customer Service Encounter theory, it is evident that it originates from Marketing Research completed in America in the 1980s. Solomon et al.’s (1985) definition of customer service encounters and research into this context have been due to management intrigue as to how they can fully satisfy their customers. Publications on this term stem from academic awareness of problems associated with offering an intangible service. Since then, research into customer service encounters has fragmented into a range of other theoretical areas, including communication theory (Sparks and Callan, 1992), non-verbal communication in the encounter (Sundaram and Webster, 2000), staff Human Resource Management (see Emotional Labour (Hochschild, 2012) and Aesthetic Labour (Witz et al., 2003) for examples), and Service Marketing (Wu and Liang, 2009). Although the body of literature on customer service encounters has
fragmented, it is evident that it is still seen by other academics as an important research context in which customer satisfaction is achieved and maintained.

My study does not question the premise that all Leisure businesses need to succeed via satisfied customers. It acknowledges this construct in customer service encounters, but questions whether staff feel prepared by UK HE for these and identifies the skills and knowledge needed in order to improve current UK HE Leisure courses. Current literature on customer service encounters fails to acknowledge the opinions or feelings of the staff and only seeks to ensure that the staff are given the right skills and knowledge for customers. None of the papers viewed analyse whether the staff possess these skills and knowledge or whether they are happy or able to offer them in the customer service encounter. This literature informed my study and supports the need for focused analysis on staff’s perspective on customer service encounters.

### 2.3.2 Intercultural service encounters

As the research on customer service encounter theory is based on a range of businesses and not simply Leisure businesses, the term Intercultural Service Encounters (ICSEs) will now be explored. This will offer more evidence from research within Leisure contexts and identify further considerations needed when investigating the face-to-face encounters completed by my graduates.

ICSEs are perceived as a service encounter wherein the customer and staff are from different cultures (Strauss and Mang, 1999). Again, it is noted that the definition and use of this term were researched from analysis of service marketing and that the focus of ICSEs is placed upon customer satisfaction (as discussed in Service Quality Theory in the following section). Culture in ICSEs is defined using Hofstede’s texts on cultural difference in business management.\(^5\) From a review of Hofstede’s (2006) definition and classification of culture it is clear that culture is based on nationality or citizenship. Strauss and Mang’s (1999) paper identified that customers perceive culture shocks within Leisure airline service encounters and that this can lead to customer dissatisfaction. Although this seminal paper focused purely on cultural

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differences, other authors (as discussed later in this section) have considered individual identity, body language and self-reflection as important in an ICSE.

The first issue that I want to raise in consideration of ICSE research is that basing an ICSE on a Hofstedian definition of culture is inappropriate for the Leisure industry. Hofstede’s seminal research on culture was between 1967 and 1973 and used surveys of IBM staff to consider cross-cultural communication in business. His definition of culture states that each person has certain personality and communication traits due to the environmental grouping in which they grew up and/or live: “Culture is always a collective phenomenon” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p.5). By defining culture as a large national group to which each person belongs, his research sought to find differences and similarities between staff working in different countries.

“In research on cultural differences, nationality — the passport one holds — should therefore be used with care. Yet it is often the only feasible criterion for classification. Rightly or wrongly, collective properties are ascribed to the citizens of certain countries: people refer to ‘typically American’, ‘typically German’ and ‘typically Japanese’ behaviour.” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p.21)

This excerpt identifies how Hofstede uses a person’s nationality as the foundation for cultural differences. Interestingly, he notes that differences in nationality should be used with “care”, but then goes on to state that it is a common way in which people talk and, therefore, it is acceptable to group according to nationality. Using nationality as a way in which to group people’s culture is problematic, as it can lead to racist statements. What is interesting in Hofstede’s work is that even by defining culture as nationality, he fails to ascertain the nationality of his participants but simply infers their nationality based on the country in which they are working. Therefore, by basing ICSEs upon a definition of culture which does not fully elicit research participants’ nationality, the basis of culture is unclear.

ICSEs are also seen as ethnocentric and do not allow for ethnorelative development analysis in the encounter. Ethnocentrism is seen as viewing the world according to set cultural norms, whereas ethnorelativism is where a person can identify a range of accepted behaviour from different cultures present (Bennett, 1986). Ethnocentrism
and Ethnorelativism are discussed in a later section in Intercultural Sensitivity.

ICSEs are ethnocentric because they use the Hofstedian definition of culture, which only identifies nationality in the definition. Ignoring ethnorelative development and individual behaviour in an ICSE will only serve to highlight differences between customers and staff and may lead to staff feeling uncomfortable and unable to adapt to the demands required by guests. To analyse the ICSE literature further, four articles will now be addressed. Strauss and Mang’s (1999) article started an academic debate on ICSEs, so this paper will be considered first, followed by Barker and Hartel (2004), Warden et al. (2003) and Sharma et al. (2009).

Strauss and Mang’s (1999) journal article was based on research completed in Tokyo, Frankfurt and Atlanta airport service encounters. They interviewed 220 passengers who were travelling and asked them to narrate critical incidents from their service experiences within the airport. Here the definition of culture is also taken from a Hofstedian approach and sees people as having specific and discrete cultures based on their ethnic origin. They use the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) within interviews to ask customer participants about satisfying or dissatisfying encounters within a service business. This paper raises a number of concerns. Firstly, passenger culture is based on the origin and destination of their journey and the authors do not ascertain the actual nationality of each participant. For example, the hypotheses are looking for specific problems between German and American people, as Germany and America are where participants are travelling to and from. Nowhere in the paper does it acknowledge or identify the specific nationality of the customers or the staff. In this way, they are applying a Hofstedian frame of culture to a location and transportation method rather than to the people themselves. Strauss and Mang (1999) conclude that in order to satisfy guests, management need to understand that their customers attribute service failure to cultural distance. This is evidently incorrect. Without acknowledging customers’ or staff’s nationality or background experiences with airlines their conclusions are incomplete. Moreover, participants who travel and who may be of multiple nationalities or descent are also more likely to be familiar with or expect differences within an ICSE. By using a rigid definition of culture and yet failing to mention or ascertain the culture of both the server and the guest, Strauss and Mang’s (1999) paper is incomplete. Their use of the terms “foreign customer” and “domestic service” (p.331) is also misplaced, as the
encounters are completed within an airport which is built to cater to multicultural customers in a fundamentally global context.

Barker and Härtel’s (2004) study in Australia specifically targeted customers who looked foreign according to the usual appearance of Australian nationals.

“Limited prior contact presupposes limited psychological interaction, which in turn elevates the role of observable cues to ascribed stereotypes.” (p.4)

This research specifies race rather than nationality within the ICSE and the authors suggest that if staff have not had contact with customers from other races, they will experience service failures. Again, it is not clarified if the customers are Australian and the authors used customers who look Australian according to “ascribed stereotypes”. Furthermore, I would argue that there is an individual element missing here. Even if staff have never served someone from, for example, Japan or Africa, they will still understand that the customer requires something and can begin communication. The research considered tone of voice and body language as part of this cultural difference exhibited by customers, but they ultimately chose participants who had “non-Anglo-Celtic / Saxon appearance” (p.7). Here again, neither the race nor the nationality of the member of staff is specifically identified. This research therefore focuses on aesthetic differences between people and yet does not recognise that these people could already be familiar to customers due to repeat custom or the customer’s prior experiences. I would argue that their participant sampling method is also flawed, as they do not elaborate on how this is judged from the outset. Focusing on cultural diversity and racism within a service encounter, they recommend that Human Resource practices needed changing in order for staff to improve service for the multinational customers present in Leisure businesses. Even with this (perceived) flawed recommendation, they are unable to offer specific measures or procedures for this change in training practice for an ICSE. I would argue that customers and staff all look different in an ICSE, as they are strangers to one another. If staff are trained to accept general differences in every customer, then the service will be flexible and adaptable enough to meet all demands from all customers.
Warden et al.'s (2003) research focuses on service failures between local and non-local people. They use Strauss and Mang’s (1999) Zone of Tolerance to consider customer problems within a restaurant ICSE. Based on an online survey in Taiwan, the authors again fail to identify the nationality of the servers or guests. Instead, they consider that all customers are travellers (foreign and not Taiwanese) because eating is “equally required of all travellers” (p.437). It is an accepted fact that eating is required of every human. Therefore, suggesting that all customers in this research location are foreign is incorrect. This research is also based on Hofstede’s cultural distance dimension and compares American to Taiwanese cultural differences. Warden et al. (2003) conclude:

“An American who subjectively decides a restaurant service encounter is a failure, when he or she is served food not cooked to order, will have the same culturally learned reaction when visiting a restaurant in the USA or in China.” (p.447)

Even though the basis of this paper is ethnocentric, this conclusion identifies that service failure is not purely limited to cultural distance, and that service failure can be the same regardless of the service environment and the culture of the person serving them. I would advocate this and repeat that, regardless of the geographical location, members of staff and customers can be from anywhere in the world and that the difference is individual.

Sharma et al. (2009) is the only paper found which considers an ICSE from the perspective of both the customer and the staff. This is an improvement upon earlier research, as it enables analysis of both parties within the encounter and also acknowledges that both people may have different cultures from the location in which they are meeting. However:

“an ICSE gives an opportunity to the new immigrants to learn about their host culture in order to adapt and integrate better” (p.228).

Again, an ICSE is seen through an ethnocentric lens: if the server is not from the local culture, the business can offer them a place in which to integrate and adapt. I have two problems with this quotation. Firstly, the business and staff will not necessarily conform to the usual elements of the host culture (staff may not even be from that area) and secondly I find this quotation patronising to the individual
concerned, as they may not need to adapt or integrate. Furthermore, it may not be possible, appropriate or suitable for a person to adapt or integrate into the local culture. These points noted, the article improves on Warden et al. (2003) and Strauss and Mang (1999) by considering the multinational context of Leisure rather than the nationality of the location in which the encounter is completed. Sharma et al. (2009) found that Perceived Cultural Distance is the main factor contributing to service failure in an ICSE. A perceived cultural distance is how the customer or server perceives the cultural difference between themselves and the other person in the encounter. It is not clear if this factor is to be perceived by the customer or server, but they assert that each customer will prefer to be served by an employee of the same race as themselves due to “greater trust and familiarity” (p.229). Again, this is inappropriate to suggest for every customer in every situation. The purpose of Leisure experience for some travellers is to be served by staff who are different from themselves, as there is a learning element to the encounter. In their concluding discussion, Sharma et al. (2009) suggest that managers of Leisure businesses should not allow any service failure to occur due to intercultural problems and that these should be pre-empted by management. They do not clarify how this could be completed.

The four ICSE articles critiqued in this section have identified that customers are the focus, that local and foreign elements of the encounter can cause service failure, and that a geographical location can be used to identify a person’s nationality and culture. My critique of these points not only identifies my own position on cultural differences, but also clarifies the lack of attention devoted to how staff in encounters are meant to cope with the various demands placed upon them. An excerpt from Lashley and Morrison (2007) below clarifies an example of the type of demand present:

“People just come down and say ‘I’ve had a long day, I’m very stressed out, do you know where I can get a blow job...’” (p.266)

This quotation does not suggest that this request is acceptable or unacceptable, but requesting information about a private and sexual service in a hotel could be a distressing request for a member of staff. This example serves to identify that staff in the encounter are not only seen as providers of services to satisfy guests but also
seen as non-judgmental assistance for any and all customer demands. Thus, they need to be fully trained in responding to a variety of demands and customers so that they, too, can be confident in the satisfactory performance of their roles.

From a review of these articles it is clear that ICSEs were defined due to cultural differences and distance between the server and customer within a Leisure business. Like customer service encounter theory, this term came about from focusing on service quality and satisfaction for the customer. ICSEs are only deemed important due to the possibility of service failure for the customer. Whether based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions, race, ethnicity or nationality, an ICSE has been defined from an ethnocentric and grouping version of culture. Therefore, the research to date does not fully consider ICSEs from the staff’s point of view, whether the staff are prepared for the ICSE, and what types of difficulties staff perceive in the encounter.

Definitions of Customer Service Encounters and Intercultural Service Encounters have identified that face-to-face situations in which intangible services are offered to customers are of vital importance to Leisure managers. Graduates entering employment in Leisure roles will engage in these encounters on a daily basis in order to complete a service and satisfy their customers. Through critical analysis of theory I have offered definitions of these terms in order to clarify the conceptual context for my graduates as well as identify issues concluded and arising from current publications. As the encounters are focused on obtaining customer satisfaction, it is salient that I now explore Service Quality Theory, in which Leisure customer satisfaction is most appraised.

2.4 Service quality theory

Having defined customer service encounters and ICSEs, this section offers research on Service Quality Theory (SQT) to identify the foundations of customer satisfaction as derived from customer service encounter literature. This is important because students and staff are required to know how to satisfy guests and SQT offers an appropriate theory and model with which to explore this.
SQT is often attributed to the work of Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry in the late 1980s. They published their work on a customer service survey which could measure service quality based on customer expectation and perception. They noted that “superior service quality” (Parasuraman et al., 1988, p.12) was core to the success of any retail or service business and that by measuring this, companies could obtain a competitive edge and yield higher profits. Their definition of Service Quality was derived from the work of Gronroos in 1982 as there was a trend growing in service quality and service marketing theory in which Western economies had shifted their focus from manufacturing to service. Service itself was seen as a completely different form of labour and function:

“least three basic characteristics: the service itself is physically intangible, it is an activity rather than a thing, and production and consumption are, at least to some extent, simultaneous activities”  
(Gronroos, 1982, p.31)

This quotation mirrors the previous review of customer service encounters in that the difficulty in measuring service is that the quality of service is specifically undefined and so quantitative measurement is not impossible. As an activity produced by a member of staff and consumed by a customer, Parasuraman et al. (1988) focused on the consumer’s expectations and perceptions within the service encounter. It is this customer focus that drives the critique in this chapter.

Parasuraman et al.’s (1988) paper produced five scales of service quality (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy) which later emerged as a Service Quality Model (SQM), as follows:
The SQM noted in Figure 1 highlights key gaps that businesses should either evaluate through surveys or consistently monitor and manage through their marketing efforts. However, this model was expanded upon in response to the need for inclusion of “employee and manager performance” (p.353). Clearly, the original research in SQT ignored the other person in each of these encounters and the addition of employees was an afterthought rather than a basis for improving service quality. This clarifies how SQT has always placed the customer firmly at the centre of all service research and that staff working in these businesses are seen as adjunct actors who need to fit and adhere to their demands and brand image. To identify
further how the SQM is applied in a Leisure-specific context Appendix 3 presents a table of previous SQM research completed in leisure settings. These articles are not an exhaustive list of the available literature on SQT in Leisure, but do offer research outputs on SQMs in different Leisure businesses in different countries.

The table in Appendix 3 serves as example of both criticism of the model in Leisure and the wide application of the original model in Leisure businesses. All of these articles in the table purport that SQT maintains competitive advantage in a Leisure business in gaining repeat and loyal customers. They all use SQMs to address how a Leisure business can remain successful and gain profit. From a review of these articles, the following critique is based on two themes drawn from their research: the research notes that the original SQM does not fit in a Leisure context due to the application and understanding of the five scales of SQT in this industry, and the second theme is from my own analysis of these texts and that they do not consider employee perspectives in SQT, which means that the research is not comprehensive.

The literature reviews from Heung et al. (2000), Markovic and Raspor (2010), Douglas and Connor (2003) and Saleh and Ryan (1991) all identify that application of the original SQM is inappropriate in Leisure. It was noted as being inappropriate because the five dimensions of SQT did not result in the same outcomes as those of prior research. Tangibles, assurance and reliability were noted as being more important in Leisure contexts, and Empathy and Responsiveness were not as relevant to Leisure customers. It is understandable that application of a model intended for a different industry would need to be changed to fit another context, but suggesting that Empathy and Responsiveness are not as valid is intriguing. It appears that by using gap analysis between customers and management, SQM application in Leisure still prioritises the tangible aspects of the service. The particular Leisure context also forces this focus, as Heung et al.’s (2000) research in airport restaurants identified that customers preferred “prompt and quick service and convenient opening hours” (p.91). This paper suggested that certain types of Leisure businesses would prioritise different scales from SQT, as consumers from higher-end restaurants would prefer personalised and empathetic service. Specifically, they note that these customers did not expect to be treated as special guests or that their needs should be anticipated by the business:
“Those low perceptions, however, came in attributes not commonly associated with quick-service restaurants, such as employees anticipate guests' needs, putting customers' best interests at heart, employees are sympathetic and confident, employees are sensitive to guests' needs, employees are willing to handle special requests, and employees care about guests.” (p.96)

This quotation suggests that customers in fast-service restaurants (e.g. McDonald’s) may not expect personalised service; therefore, the context of the service and the defined targets of the providing company affects their expectations of service quality. It is evident not only that the industry context is a problem in applying SQMs but also that the type of Leisure business requires further analysis. If the expectation of a service is that it is transactional and functional, customers do not expect the service to be personal and intuitive. This is the reason why the tangibility of the service is also critiqued in all articles used here. Accuracy of service (Heung et al., 2000), reliability of the product (Markovic and Raspor, 2010), and the awareness and use of tangibles (Douglas and Connor, 2003) were all noted as components of customer perceptions. They presented a stark difference between the physical product and intangible service and prioritised the ‘Tangible’ in their results (Saleh and Ryan, 1991). Focus on Tangible aspects of service could again be due to the model being in consideration of other contexts; however, it is an important result of SQT in Leisure, as it suggests that focus on customer satisfaction purports that the service should be not only perfect, but also robotic.

Evidently, SQT and SQM application in Leisure for customer satisfaction analysis is imperfect due to the human and emotional aspects of the experiences expected in these contexts. However, this being noted, it is also interesting that none of the articles fully consider staff perspectives or whether these people are aware of customer satisfaction or are satisfied themselves in the encounter with the customer. Only Douglas and Connor (2003) address staff perspectives in the analysis of whether staff and customer perceptions are similar. They state that staff should:

“be able to perform not only the physical tasks but be able to display the qualities of responsiveness and assurance regarded by the consumer as being important” (p.170).
Here, displaying qualities of responsive service and assuring customers would suggest that empathy and assurance are important in a cooperative and equal encounter between the customer and employee. However, they conclude:

“The focus should not be on so much the provider and recipient as a ‘partnership’ in the overall service experience.” (p.172)

Again, the focus is grounded in customers’ power in the service encounter and in how the customer should be “empowered” (p.172) to demand whatever services they desire. With only one article addressing staff in a Leisure customer service encounter, it is worrying that Douglas and Connor (2003) dismiss the importance of the employee in the coproduction of the service, as well as staff perspectives and feelings in a seemingly subservient role. Even though staff roles are not specifically explored in the other articles, elements of their importance in the service can be inferred. Huang et al. (2000) stated that airport customers wanted accurate service and that this was achieved by the quality of what they received. As the service was provided by staff, it can be suggested that the communication and service promise was accurate for these customers and that staff offered appropriate transactional service using a range of skills. Markovic and Raspor (2010) considered customer perceptions of the empathy and competence of staff who served them. They then fail to analyse fully the results of these questions in their paper. Instead, they concentrate on examining the practical implications of using SQMs in Leisure and customer perceptions of reliable service. Therefore, even when survey results are available on employee skills and presence in the service encounter, they are not fully explored. Finally, Saleh and Ryan’s (1991) tangible table can be used to infer staff skilling in encounters. The 33 scales used in their work have been tabulated in Appendix 4 to identify how these can be seen as employee-related. This table shows that the Tangible SQT scales used by Saleh and Ryan (1991) can actually all relate to the intangible skills, knowledge and performance offered by staff. Indirectly, although customers may find these aspects to be part of a tangible service with products and experiences, they ultimately hinge upon staff’s intangible abilities in a service encounter.

The four articles offered here in examination of SQM in Leisure contexts suggest that the use of this model in Leisure is problematic. All authors viewed here have
changed the parameters of the original survey, thus accepting that there is a mismatch in applying the scales in a Leisure setting. However, they do not address staff perspectives and positions within the service encounter when customers are satisfied or dissatisfied, nor do they identify any service failures, critical incidents between the customer and employee or additional demands being met in addition to the usual services offered.

Evidently, there are a number of criticisms to using SQM within Leisure, but no one has critiqued it from the perspective of staff members, or students preparing to graduate into these roles. There is research on student perceptions of service quality in their higher education using SQMs (see, for example, Zafiropoulos and Vrana, 2008), but none on how education prepares them or outlines the key requisites to delivering service quality. No one has applied this to Leisure students to establish what demands are present or how they are prepared for the variety of encounters that they will perceive. Focusing on customers in SQT and SQMs is misleading, as researchers are striving to understand guests’ needs and the perceptions of whole groups and not individuals. They are also negating the other person in the encounter, i.e. the staff. From Appendix 4 it is evident that the individual skills and personality of staff and management are crucial to service quality and how they manage this encounter ultimately defines the perception of the service offered.

The work by Parasuraman et al. (1988) is not only widely cited, but also widely applied in business contexts to train and establish service procedures. However, applying Parasuraman et al.’s (1988) work in staff, student or service encounter contexts is not appropriate. All three authors stem from Service Marketing backgrounds and none of them identify work or application of the research in the Leisure sector. Berry works in healthcare research and Parasuraman and Zeithaml apply their work to the marketing of services. All three of these seminal authors of Service Quality are based in America. Later, research applying SQMs in Leisure contexts identifies further conceptual problems in that they also neglect employee or student learning in the encounter. Students on work experience or graduates are critical thinkers and not robotic staff who will automatically seek to serve and satisfy demands made of them. In order to support the Leisure industry, educators need to be mindful that SQM theory only serves to explain how customers act and perceive
service and that the students themselves need experience and reflection on these demands in order to be satisfied in the roles themselves.

2.5 Co-production and Co-creation

Co-production and Co-creation are important terms seen in emergent literature from Service Quality Theory. This section will define these terms and identify problems when comparing them to Service Encounter literature noted earlier in this Chapter.

Co-creation is defined as where a customer becomes a “co-producer” of a service (Gummesson, 1991; pg68). This is seen within service-dominant logic and was based upon the marketing and service quality literature from the 1980s. Literature on co-creation is primarily based in Tourism publications as Tourists are seen to both participate and actively create the Tourist experience. The work of Pine and Gilmour (1991) is also heavily linked to the term as it is seen that the Experience Economy has driven customers to become creators and not simply users of service. In this way, Rihova et al (2015) identify that co-creation occurs due to the “social contexts” in which Tourist services occur (pg356). This term links to service quality as researchers perceived that the expectations customers came with were actually being moulded in the service encounter due to their participation and production of the experience. Co-creation is therefore seen as also “co-creating value” to a service encounter (Rihova et al 2015; pg357). Binkhorst (2005) and later Binkhorst and Dekker (2009) both identify that it is simply the humans involved in the service that create the value of the experience. In this way Co-creation is opposed to previous research on service quality as:

“staged experiences that are considered too commercial, artificial and superficial and therefore not always suitable to attract todays customers”
(Binkhorst and Dekker, 2005; pg312)

This work suggests that customers in the 21st century no longer want managed experiences and that they desire to create and participate in the service in order to be satisfied. Thus, Co-creation is rooted in marketing and service quality literature, but addresses new forms of tourists wanting to produce the experience themselves.

Co-production was coined by Lovelock and Young (1979) and relates to service quality created by customers but using services already on offer. Chathoth et al
(2013) use a self-service buffet in a hotel as an example of this. In this example the customer still created the service by using the food on the buffet, but there is a limit to this creation due to the dishes on display. Therefore, Co-production is seen as more passive than co-creation as customers can only use what is at their disposal.

These two terms evidently relate to service encounters as they note how service is created with “face-to-face” encounters (Gummesson, 1991; pg67). Although these terms relate to a wide range of experiences in Tourism, current research on these terms again neglects the staff involved in creating the experiences. Grissmann and Stokburger-Saure (2012; pg1490) recommend that travel agencies need “highly trained staff” in order for co-creation to occur. In this paper they note that the staff handed out surveys to customers, but they do not ask how the staff complete part of the service. Binkhorst and Dekker (2009; pg314) note how customers are “partners” in service, but again fail to acknowledge the other person in the partnership. Rihova et al (2015; pg357) also note that co-creation is a “joint value realising process” but link the company as the other part of co-creation with customers and not the staff involved in creating the service encompassing value.

In terms of educating staff to co-produce and co-create these experiences in Tourism, there was no current literature found. Binkhorst and Dekker (2009) note that education is an important quadrant for tourist motivation and demand, but this is only one component of the Experience Economy (Pine and Gilmour, 1991) and not seen from the position of educating the staff involved in the experience. Evidently these two emergent terms are important in Tourism Services and Leisure Marketing, but by ignoring the staff involved in creating the experiences again neglects the other position contributing towards the encounter. This study looks at the service encounter from the staffs perspective and so addresses a current gap seen in Co-production and Co-creation literature to identify how staff help to create the service.

2.6 Skills and knowledge in leisure benchmark statements

Chapter 1 offered an overview of UK HE in terms of overarching changes to the context of University education and an overview of Leisure Education in UK HE. Section 2.1 in this chapter then defined skills and knowledge. This section will now
offer analysis of the Leisure Education framework and critically appraise the 
benchmark statements prescribed for UK HE Leisure education as published and 
regulated by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). This analysis will identify the 
skills and knowledge stipulated by the QAA for Leisure courses and used by 
educators to design their courses.

Before analysing the Leisure-specific benchmark statements it is important to discuss 
the regulation and use of these within UK HE. As noted in Chapter 1, all Leisure 
university courses in the UK are regulated by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), 
and the curriculum is established by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) in 
conjunction with People 1st, who are the Sector Skills Council. In 2008 a new set of 
benchmark statements were published for Leisure by the QAA (2008) with the 
following purpose:

“This subject benchmark statement is primarily designed to inform 
those developing or revising bachelor's degree with honours 
programmes in the HLST6 subject grouping. It should also be of 
value, however, to those preparing or revising Foundation Degrees 
which are designed to provide progression routes to bachelor's 
degree with honours programmes. It reflects current thinking and 
practice in learning, teaching and curricula which have been 
identified within the subject communities by their subject bodies, 
supported by the HEA’s HLST Network. The benchmark statement is 
also informed by an understanding of the expectations of employers, 
professional bodies and Sector Skills Councils gained through 
substantial engagement with relevant sectors of industry over many 
years.” (Section 1.6)

From this excerpt it can be seen that benchmark statements’ primary function is to 
illuminate key teaching, learning and skilling areas for academics to utilise when 
developing Leisure-based courses in UK HE. As the benchmark statements are based 
on employer and Sector Skills Council consultation, they should reflect the needs of 
industry and prepare graduates to be employer-ready with clear knowledge and skill 
areas. In terms of how the benchmark statements are created and utilised in Leisure 
UK HE, the following figure has been created for clarification:

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6 Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
Figure 2 A flow chart identifying how UK HE degrees are created

The QAA consult industry on employer needs

The QAA seek Sector Skills Council knowledge on industry needs

Benchmark statements are published by the QAA

UK HE course handbooks, unit handbooks and assessments

are written by a team of lecturers in each institution

Internal Moderation and External Examination of units and assessments

Courses are delivered to students

As a lecturer in UK HE, I created Figure 2 to demonstrate the process involved in the creation and use of the benchmark statements, from industry consultation through to course delivery to students. Figure 2 above identifies how university courses use the benchmark statements to create their courses and design an assessment to test skills and knowledge acquired in order to develop the necessary attributes for employment. The QAA not only publish these benchmark statements but also inspect each course and institution to check academic standards. As noted in Chapter 1, there are a range of benchmark statements for Leisure courses regulated by the QAA and they are separated into Hospitality, Leisure, Events, Sports, and Tourism Management (available verbatim in Appendix 1). The QAA do acknowledge the interdisciplinary nature of Leisure sectors in the benchmark statements, but there is no caveat for each benchmark statement section to suggest that Lecturers must look to the other benchmark statements in related areas and, therefore, create flexible and generic Leisure education (QAA, 2008). I also noted in Chapter 1 that without further regulation, students completing the same-named degree will graduate with different skills and knowledge, as academic staff in each institution will teach their preferred area of knowledge and expertise. Other Vocational Education and Training (VET) in medical and teaching courses requires postgraduate qualifications and at present there are no mandatory postgraduate qualifications for specific Leisure routes of employment.
The creation and use of the benchmark statements for Leisure courses has been identified to clarify the information available to academics teaching on these courses. This section will now analyse the Leisure benchmark statements by considering three areas: skills and knowledge specified, competency verbs used, and identification of where customer service encounters are stipulated.

Section 2.1 in this chapter clarified definitions of Skills and Knowledge. Skills were defined as competencies, abilities and attributes. Knowledge was defined as the Explicit and Tacit Knowledge which enabled the production of Skills. Both of these terms are widely cited in education research to identify what students should learn and how they should be assessed. Appendix 5 shows my analysis of the benchmark statement by identifying which skills and knowledge are evident in each of the 82 statements. To complete this analysis I used the QAA's (2012a) definitions of Skills — those of Interpersonal, Entrepreneurial and Society Skills — and Knowledge, comprising Explicit Knowledge (Dummett, 1991), Relational Tacit Knowledge, Somatic Tacit Knowledge or Collective Tacit Knowledge (Collins, 2010). A discussion of this documentary analysis will now be presented by looking at where the terms “knowledge” and “skills” are mentioned in the benchmark statements, i.e. Explicit Knowledge, Tacit Knowledge, Interpersonal Skills, Entrepreneurial Skills, and Society Skills.

Starting with Knowledge, only two Leisure benchmark statements refer specifically to students needing Knowledge. In the Events Management statements, students are required to “display critical knowledge” (QAA, 2008, p.17) of key frameworks. With regard to Sport Management degrees, students are required to make “effective use of knowledge” (QAA, 2008, p.21) of human functions. The Events Management statement referring to knowledge requires explicit knowledge, as they have to display their understanding of documented frameworks of information and, thus, communicate it in written or verbal form. Conversely, the Sports Management statement is unclear as to the type of knowledge required, as it relates to “making effective use” (p.21) of knowledge. This could be interpreted in a variety of ways. Human function knowledge could be assessed in written form, spoken form or used when dealing with customers. As the method of using knowledge is unclear, I noted this statement as referring to both explicit and tacit knowledge.
Six of the 82 Leisure benchmark statements specifically refer to Skills. These are located in Events Management (1), Leisure Management (1) and Sports Management (4) statements. These six statements are tabulated below for clarification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leisure Area</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>• engage with, contribute to and produce events, based on an acquisition and understanding of appropriate vocabularies, skills, working methods and professional business communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>• demonstrate the skills necessary both to deliver and to reflect upon a Leisure experience aimed at a specific group, e.g. an event or a competition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Sport        | • show evidence of the skills required to monitor and evaluate human responses to sport and/or exercise  
• show evidence of the skills required to monitor and evaluate sports performance in laboratories and/or field settings  
• display a broad range of skills, including awareness of health and safety, ethical considerations, exercise prescription, population differences, and the role of education, health and sports bodies in improving the health of the nation  
• employ strategic planning and development planning skills in analysing, understanding and addressing the development needs and intentions of sports organisations and communities |

(Source: QAA, 2008)

Table 8 reveals that the benchmark statements using the term “skills” do not specify the types of skills needed. Moreover, none of the uses of this term specifically state any of the skills categories mentioned earlier in this chapter. Instead, the QAA (2008) appear to use the Oxford (2010) definition of skill in that they require evidence of an ability to do something well. Four of these statements were seen to infer interpersonal skills and two infer society skills. Both the Events and the Leisure statements use the term “skills” to suggest interpersonal competency in managing and producing leisure experiences. The top two Sports statements in Table 8 also suggest interpersonal skills, as they require evidence of skills when “interacting with
other people” (QAA, 2012a, p.20). The third and fourth Sports statements in Table 7 are seen as Society Skills, as they refer to the ability to “draw on the views of others to inform the development or enhancement of their work” (QAA, 2012a, p.20).

With only eight of the 82 benchmark statements referring specifically to Skills or Knowledge, it is clear that the statements do not advocate specific types of skills or knowledge. As noted in Chapter 1, without clear assessment types, theory or assessment criteria, the QAA’s (2008) education is loosely framed. Nonetheless, as skills and knowledge can be implied through competency verbs and topic areas, I was still able to align skills and knowledge types for the remaining 74 statements.

In my analysis of the benchmark statements I identify that all 82 Leisure benchmark statements require Explicit Knowledge. They are seen as Explicit Knowledge because they require students to demonstrate knowledge of specific theories, operations or facts. Dummett (1991) identified that Explicit Knowledge is “elicited” information communicated verbally. I felt that all statements could be completed through verbal or written statements. An example of this is noted below:

“Critically reflect upon the origin, meanings and development of hospitality” (QAA, 2008, p.18)

Critical reflection in this statement could be conducted through thinking about information on hospitality. However, as all statements relate to examination of learning completed in their degree, it is evident that critical reflection in this example can refer to elicited information on the origin, meanings and development of hospitality.

Tacit knowledge was also evident in the Leisure benchmark statements. In Appendix 5, Relational and Collective Tacit Knowledge are seen throughout the discipline statements. Although Somatic Tacit Knowledge (STK) was not evident in the statements, it is clearly an important component of Leisure student knowledge, as it links to their ability to ameliorate their skills. To explain this further, a Hospitality statement will be used:

“operate and manage human and technical resources” (QAA, 2008, p.19)
This Hospitality Management benchmark statement identifies that students need to complete actions in order to manage people and facilities physically, but it does not state what level or measurement of action. Collins’ (2010) definition of STK suggests that students or staff need “socialisation” (p.100) in order to develop this fully. It could be argued that any benchmark statement using participative or community knowledge could include STK, but without clarity as to the specific actions involved, I could not concretely link this knowledge.

In Appendix 5 I identify that both Relational Tacit Knowledge (RTK) and Collective Tacit Knowledge (CTK) are evident in the same benchmark statements. A total of 20 statements were seen to use both RTK and CTK. An example of a statement with both of these is noted below:

“Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which attendees behave at events and within the venue and surrounding destination” (QAA, 2008, p.18)

RTK is seen in this benchmark statement as requiring knowledge of how “particular people relate to each other” (Collins, 2010, p.86). CTK is identified here also as students needing knowledge which is “embedded in society” (Collins, 2010, p.11) and “via practice” (Collins, 2010, p.138). These forms of Tacit Knowledge are therefore evident in benchmark statements in which students need knowledge of local and wider societies and an ability to reflect on practice.

Moving on to the specific types of skills evident in the Leisure benchmark statements and I used the QAA (2012a) definitions of skills as noted in Table 7 in section 2.2. From analysis of the benchmark statements all three skilling types noted by the QAA (2012a) were seen. 19 statements suggested the need for Interpersonal Skills, 17 statements are aligned with Entrepreneurial Skills, and 30 statements needed Society Skills. These will now be discussed to evidence the types of skills requisite for Leisure graduates.

As revealed in Section 2.1, Hinchliffe (2013) found that the highest skills needed by employers are interpersonal skills. Interpersonal Skills were perceived to be part of
benchmark statements in all Leisure management disciplines specified by the QAA (2008) apart from Tourism Management. None of the Tourism benchmark statements specify action or management of other people in order to evidence interpersonal skills. Events, Hospitality, Leisure and Sport Management benchmark statements all identified at least one form of participation or activity with customers, colleagues, managers or suppliers. An example of one of these is identified below:

“analyse the needs and expectations of different hospitality consumers and develop appropriate responses” (QAA, 2008, p.19)

The benchmark statement above from Hospitality Management implies that students require appropriate responses to customers. Appropriate responses are seen to require interpersonal skills, as the QAA (2012a) suggested that they require students to “identify and respond to stakeholder needs” (p.17). This also supports the previous discussion on Customer Service Encounters and Service Quality Theory, as Leisure work requires staff to deal with and respond to a variety of customers and customer demands. Although Interpersonal Skills are implied within the benchmark statements, it is perturbing that these are not explicitly stated throughout and that it is not easy to ascertain their need for Tourism Management.

I previously identified that the QAA (2012a) describe Entrepreneurial Skills as being a person’s ability to:

“recognise patterns and opportunities in complex situations and environments”.

This suggests that students need to be aware of opportunities to produce skills in order to meet the needs of different people in different contexts. Entrepreneurial skills are also acknowledged by the Chartered Management Institute (2014) as being 21st Century Skills. Creativity, developing ideas and working in a range of contexts are all noted as components of these skills by recent publications in UK HE. Within the Leisure benchmark statements, 17 implied the need for these. An example is given as follows:

“write and critically evaluate Leisure plans, development plans and recognise and meet the Leisure needs of specific communities” (QAA, 2008, p.20)
The Leisure Management benchmark statement above can be seen to imply Entrepreneurial skills, as students need to both create and evaluate plans in order to meet the needs of different communities. By requiring the creation of development plans, students also need Entrepreneurial Skills to ascertain problems and implement strategies to support the community.

Society Skills were categorised as a skilling need by the QAA (2012a) but were also evident in the HEA’s (2015) need for Literacy on Citizenship and the QAA’s (2011b) Global Citizenship skills. These skills are needed to live in a multicultural society, understand differences between people, and deal with differences when communicating with others. An example of this in the benchmark statements is as follows:

“demonstrate an understanding of the domestic and international nature and dimensions of tourism” (QAA, 2008, p.22)

The Tourism Management statement above suggests that students need to understand global dimensions of tourism. By gaining this understanding, I am suggesting that students should have also developed Society Skills in tandem. This suggestion is supported, as the QAA (2012, p.20) note that understanding “views of others” will enhance students’ Society Skills.

Although there is no definitive reference to Tacit Knowledge, Interpersonal Skills, Entrepreneurial Skills or Society Skills mentioned in the Leisure benchmark statements, this section has evidenced how they can be seen as implied. The competency verbs in all statements enable this position, as they identify the lens and action required to evidence the knowledge. As this study focuses on Service Encounters for graduates, the interpersonal skills are also seen as being of paramount importance. Even though I used the QAA’s (2012a) categories of Skills, it can be suggested that all of these skills rely on and refer to Interpersonal Skills. For example, in order to develop creative and innovative ideas for Entrepreneurial skills, you need to be able to communicate with others to ascertain what they need. Society skills for citizenship and global citizenship also demand interpersonal skills in communication, empathy, and understanding of others. Interpersonal skills are
discussed in full later in this chapter, but it is important here to state that I find all of the skills noted in the Leisure benchmark statements to imply the need for Interpersonal skills.

Before moving on, it is important to highlight another finding from the analysis of the Leisure benchmark statements: they are unclear. This is evident from the range of interpretations that I have offered on the benchmark statements, but there are also specific examples of ambiguous statements. For example:

“critically evaluate the notion of praxis derived from generic disciplines and apply these to a specific leisure context” (QAA, 2008, p.20)

The Leisure benchmark statement above is ambiguous. Praxis means the process of acting or practising ideas. Completing this in “generic” disciplines in “specific” leisure contexts could mean any knowledge or skill used in any Leisure or Leisure-associated context. Another Tourism benchmark statement ends with “and other terms” (QAA, 2008, p.23), suggesting that any key topic area will suffice although fortunately it avoids the ubiquitous “etcetera”. This ambiguity seen in the benchmark statements supports my claim that the current education framework for Leisure students is insufficient. Without clear skills or knowledge identified or key texts, authors or assessments, the QAA’s (2008) benchmark statements are unclear. This study has therefore identified a gap in the current education framework and analyses this in context through primary research (as discussed in full in Chapter 3).

To examine the skills and knowledge seen in the Leisure benchmark statements further, the following will now critique the competency verbs used. Competency verbs are often used to describe the type of skill or knowledge needed by a student on a course. In Figure 3 I used all of the QAA’s benchmark statements for Leisure areas and created a Wordle to identify the type of learning needed. It should be noted that the competency verbs were identified through the use of Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of educational objectives. These are standard academic objectives used throughout UK HE.

Figure 3 Wordle of leisure benchmark statement competences
The competency words identified in all of the Leisure benchmark statements were put into a Wordle to identify the priority skills prescribed by the QAA. A Wordle works by counting the number of times a word is used and then visually showing this quantification by making frequently occurring words larger than others. Figure 3 identifies that the benchmark statements use ‘reflect’, ‘evaluate’, ‘analyse’ and ‘critical’ the most. However, looking in more detail at the benchmark statements themselves, the Tourism benchmark statements do not mention ‘critical’ or ‘critique’ at all. By combining all competency verbs, Figure 3 offers a visual representation of the style of learning and examination required by students. Bloom’s Taxonomy of competency verbs is used in UK HE to identify how a student is expected to demonstrate their knowledge. For example, a student could be asked to describe their understanding of how Glastonbury Festival impacts the local area, or they could be asked to critically analyse festival impacts in general. This example shows how the competency verbs can be used to demonstrate different levels of understanding in UK HE studies. Although these verbs are used to identify a level of understanding from students for UK HE academics, the benchmark statements do not mention specific assessment types or topics associated with them. To analyse this perceived problem in the benchmark statements further, Table 9 below aligns the Event
Management statements that include the adjective ‘critical’ and verb ‘critique’ and my own interpretation of how this could be applied in teaching practice.

**Table 9 'Critical' and ‘Critique’ in events management benchmark statements and my interpretation as a lecturer**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark statements</th>
<th>My interpretation of resources to use in teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>critique the contributions of a range of academic disciplines that have informed the subject as a field of study (p.17)</td>
<td>Use published academic research on Events Management as a field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write and critique event plans, event strategies, and recognise and meet the needs of specific stakeholders (p.18)</td>
<td>Use Event management plans and strategy documents from industry and align them with stakeholder satisfaction information. Stakeholders in events can be suppliers, customers, artists, local residents, or employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explain, interpret and challenge theories and concepts which are used to understand the origin, purpose, meanings and development of events from a range of critical perspectives (p.17)</td>
<td>Gather perspectives on the origins of Events Management and get students to compare and analyse these. Perspectives could be used from Journals, Books, Industry reports, TripAdvisor, Newspapers, industry speakers, or students themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demonstrate a critical awareness and understanding of how core values, e.g. ethics, integration, sustainability, creativity, strategy, and continuous improvement, relate to, and are reflected in, events (p.17)</td>
<td>Consider ethics, integration, sustainability, creativity, strategy and improvement documentation and evidence from theory and industry. In sustainability alone there are international standards for events with legislation and theory to support management decisions for events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demonstrate a critical awareness and understanding of appropriate domains, including administration, design, operations, marketing and risk, and how they apply to the phases of events, such as initiation, planning, implementation, event and closure operations (p.17)</td>
<td>Use theory of key event management areas that identify different ways of operating and perceiving event management practice. Use feasibility studies, event manuals, event plans, and operational and logistical documentation to demonstrate how these differ within Event Typologies and markets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>display critical knowledge, understanding and application of risk management and the legal, ethical</td>
<td>Use legal frameworks for event management from the Health and Safety Executive or the International Organisation for Standards. Possibly both nationally</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and regulatory frameworks that affect event management (p.17) and internationally.

critically reflect upon the role of those organisations and structures charged with a responsibility for the promotion or training of practitioners in events (p.18) Use Human Resource management theory and management practice in Events. Knowledge of Professional Development and training employees.

demonstrate a critical awareness and appreciation of existing and emerging standards, policies, initiatives, frameworks and contemporary issues (p.18) Adopt frameworks and policies used in both event companies and the Leisure industry as a whole.

(Source: QAA, 2008)

The eight Events Management benchmark statements that refer to ‘critical’ all use the verb in different ways and add ‘reflection’, ‘awareness’, ‘knowledge’ and ‘perspectives’ to the competencies. From Table 9 it is evident that the benchmark statements are not specific in how these competencies could be taught or assessed. As an Events Management lecturer, I have identified how I could interpret each benchmark statement in terms of lecturing resources in both academic publications and/or industry regulations. However, another academic, manager in industry or QAA inspector could interpret these benchmark statements entirely differently. There are no key texts, authors, businesses or specific foci offered in the benchmark statements. Instead, the benchmark statements refer to general management areas such as ‘marketing’, ‘human resource management’, ‘finance’ and ‘risk’ in applying the verb and understanding. Having developed courses in some of these generic management areas in UK HE, I am aware that these umbrella terms are vast in their academic content and scope. Marketing and Human Resources, for example, are taught as single degrees and, therefore, can offer a range of foci in class and assessment. Furthermore, the QAA benchmark statements for Leisure are unclear, as there is no specific perspective or lens through which they should be considered. A number of these diverse interactions could be Human Resources from a Manager, Supervisor or Employee perspective? Event Impacts from a consumer, resident, manager or government perspective? Evidently, these benchmark statements are not
only flexible for different programme teams to adapt their curricula, but also unclear as to how these should be implemented in course units.

Through an overview and generic critique of the QAA’s Leisure benchmark statements, it is evident that there can be perceived problems in their framework, content and direction for academic staff teaching courses in these areas. Without transparent information on the specific skills and knowledge for all Leisure students, these benchmark statements are insufficient at present. As my study focuses on customer service encounters in industry, I will now ascertain where customer service and satisfaction are present in the benchmark statements and how they are clarified for Leisure Academics. Table 10 below summarises the key benchmark statements that refer to customers:

Table 10 Consumerism perceived in leisure benchmark statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>Analyse the nature, characteristics, needs and expectations of different consumers through applying consumer behaviour theories and concepts (p.18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Hospitality| Analyse the needs and expectations of different hospitality consumers and develop appropriate responses (p.19)  
|            | Analyse the quality of the service encounter and its impact on the hospitality consumer and the service provider (p.19) |
| Leisure    | Demonstrate an ability to synthesise interdisciplinary approaches to issues of consumption and consumerism in Leisure markets (p.20)  
|            | Demonstrate the skills necessary both to deliver and to reflect upon a Leisure experience (p.21) |
| Sport      | No specific statements on customer service                                                     |
| Tourism    | Be able to explain the patterns and characteristics of tourism demand and the influences on such demand (p.23)  
|            | Analyse relations between consumers of tourism and the providers of tourism services (p.23)    |

(Source: QAA, 2008)
By compiling Table 10 it is evident that the benchmark statements for Leisure courses do not mention Customer Satisfaction or Service Quality. Instead, they consistently refer to ‘Consumerism’. Students are required to understand the complexities of consumers in Leisure, but not how their own needs are included in the service exchange. Similarly to customer service encounters, in ICSE and SQT literature the lens appears to be consumer-centric and does not mention a specific context, physical environment and situation within which customer encounters are experienced. It is only in the Leisure and Tourism statements that student skills for delivering service and the relationship between customers and staff are noted. In the other benchmark statements, students have to analyse what is known about consumers’ attitudes, trends and satisfaction. It seems prudent that any reference to customer service or consumerism is replicated throughout the industry areas here, since Tourism and Hospitality consumers can be the same group in a number of business areas.

From a discussion of the benchmark statements, competencies, verbs, customer theory, and satisfaction in the Leisure benchmark statements, there is a perceptible gap in acknowledging the specific staff (graduate) skills and knowledge needed for serving a variety of customers in the service encounter in any given Leisure context. Graduates will not solely reflect and critically analyse current trends and meanings disconnected from the activity, as they will be a component of the service. One benchmark statement from the QAA that acknowledges graduates (staff) in the service encounter is as follows:

“analyse relations between consumers of tourism and the providers of tourism services” (p.23, Tourism)

This benchmark statement suggests that there may be differences between providers’ and consumers’ perspectives in the Leisure industry. The ‘relations’ between these people are unclear and could refer to customers, suppliers, managers or government. Therefore, students’ employment-specific skills are unspecified in the QAA’s benchmark statements and only one of these directly addresses a dissonance between customer and staff perceptions in a service encounter. My study will seek to ascertain the extent and implications of which skills and knowledge are actually needed.
From a critical analysis of the benchmark statements it is evident that sectioning Leisure into five areas is unnecessary for graduate roles, which could ultimately require skills and knowledge from all of the presently separated areas. The competencies used to assess criticality and analytical knowledge could be interpreted and used in a number of ways, meaning that these courses will be developed in entirely different ways, whereby resulting in a lack of cohesion in the skills and knowledge of Leisure graduates throughout UK HE. Finally, customer service and satisfaction are stipulated in consumer theory, which ignores graduates’ role in service encounters and requires students to analyse consumers in an abstract form. The following section will now seek to compare these benchmark statements to industry requirements of applicants to ascertain if there is a mismatch between them.

2.5 Benchmark statements compared to industry skilling needs

Having discussed the Leisure benchmark statements in Section 2.4, this section will now identify Leisure employer needs and how these are supported by the QAA’s (2008) Leisure benchmark statements. This will identify any further mismatches between the education framework and the industry needs of Leisure graduates. People 1st are the Sector Skills Council for Leisure industries and they publish reports on employment and labour pools throughout the Leisure sectors. People 1st reports from 2011 and 2013 are used in this section to identify employer problems in their applicants and the skills and knowledge seen as missing in the current labour pool.
Figure 4 Leisure employer reasons for inadequate labour pool in 2012

(Source: People 1st, 2011, p.47)

Figure 4 indicates problems perceived by Leisure employers when recruiting for advertised roles (People 1st, 2011b). These figures include the whole labour pool available in the UK and not solely graduate applicants. Plainly, industry has informed People 1st that applicant skills, personality, motivation, qualifications, transportation and the number of applicants are their primary areas of concern. Skills (32%) are evidently the highest area of concern by Leisure Employers. Section 2.4 in this chapter has already analysed the use of Skills in the benchmark statements. In Section 2.4 I noted that Skills are unclear, ambiguous and unspecified throughout the Leisure benchmark statements. As employers have reported concerns about applicant skills, and because the education framework is not clear about the skills needed, this is evidently a gap. From a review of Figure 4 the QAA (2008) should support industry by specifying the skills needed.

The next area highlighted in Figure 4 concerns the low number of applicants with the right personality, motivation and attitude (21%). None of these are mentioned in the QAA’s (2008) benchmark statements for Leisure. The six subsequent reasons offered in Figure 4 relate to applicants’ unsatisfactory perception of work in the Leisure industry, few applications submitted, the lack of prior experience, and an inability to travel to work. These are all applicant problems in obtaining work in Leisure, rather than a lack of skills or knowledge needed of applicants. They are
evidently barriers to obtaining work in Leisure but they are not specific skills or knowledge needed by Leisure students in UK HE. Finally, Figure 4 shows that only 6% of employers reported a problem with the level of qualifications that applicants have.

The highest and lowest figures noted in Figure 4 appear contradictory to me. If the levels of skills are seen as the largest problem, then it would also stand to reason that applicants’ qualifications are seen as an equal problem. This is not the case. Figure 4 suggests that employers have the right number of applicants with the right qualifications, but that applicants’ skills are not evident in the labour pool. If employers are accepting applicants with lower qualifications, then perhaps this is from where the skills problems are manifest. Moreover, they may not expect the qualification to equip applicants with the necessary skills and, therefore, may not expect higher qualifications in return. As this figure does not have qualitative information from employers, I can only speculate reasons for these polar-opposite accounts of a seemingly connected area.

Moving on, it is important to identify specific skilling gaps seen by employers. In both the 2011 and the 2013 State of the Nation reports, People 1st offer clarification as to the skills gaps seen. These are offered for clarification in Table 3 in Chapter 1. This table in Chapter 1 aligns the skills gaps from both 2011 and 2013 reports to identify common areas. Although the employer survey changed format between these reports, there are still common themes that need addressing. Communication, customer problem solving, teamwork, management, literacy and numeracy, and technical job skills are all priority gaps noted in the reports. Comparing Table 3 with the benchmark statements’ core competencies noted in the benchmark statements in Appendix 1, it is clear that numeracy, literacy, regulation, legal impact and compliance, management, employee training, and consumer management are currently supported by the benchmark statements. This means that the QAA’s Leisure benchmark statements are already supporting industry by focusing on these areas. The areas that are not fully evident in the benchmark statements but are required by industry are employee attitude, appearance, and intercultural sensitivity. These are seen as gaps in the benchmark statements which will be analysed in
respect of the primary data gathered in my study. These three areas can be grouped and seen specifically as interpersonal skills:

“The big challenge hiring — getting the right sort of people. It’s a whole package and you need people with interpersonal skills who are motivated, who want to be engaged, and who want to work in a team — people who like people. And then in a sense you can teach the skills.” (People 1st, 2013, p.48)

As the above quotation suggests, People 1st consistently report that the industry lacks applicants and staff with interpersonal skills. These are seen in the 2011 report in Customer-Handling Skills (65% lacking), Oral Communication Skills (52% lacking), and in the 2013 report in Positive Attitude and Commitment (38% lacking), Professional-looking appearance (28% lacking), and Intercultural Sensitivity (21% lacking). All of these skills are necessary for staff when communicating and dealing with customers in a variety of Leisure roles. Furthermore, People 1st (2013) suggest that these skills are more difficult to acquire in the context of Leisure work, as the roles require long working hours, unsociable shift times, and low pay. Thus, industry requires a range of interpersonal skills from its applicants, but these are currently not clearly supported in the QAA’s Leisure benchmark statements.

The skills and knowledge noted above as a gap between the benchmark statements and People 1st reports are evidently needed in customer service encounters in order to satisfy customers. From a review of reports from People 1st and comparing these to the benchmark statements for Leisure UK HE courses, it is apparent that there is a mismatch. The benchmark statements adhere to the majority of technical and regulatory knowledge and skills required by industry, but they do not specifically direct lecturers to educate on either interpersonal or intercultural skills and these are not identified as important areas for new applicants for Leisure roles. These skills are seen to affect employee motivation, retention and satisfaction (People 1st, 2011b) and are important to industry to ensure that their customers are satisfied and that their staff are skilled enough to complete their roles competently and efficiently. This noted, from my own experience of lecturing and external examining in UK HE, some of these skills are developed indirectly within theory delivered in class. As interpersonal and intercultural skills are apparent skills gaps for industry and yet are
not noted specifically in the benchmark statements, the following sections seek to
firstly examine what Interpersonal (soft) skills are and how they relate to industry
and education for Leisure graduates.

2.6 Soft skills in theory and education for leisure
Thus far, I have identified how UK Leisure Education is regulated by the QAA and
that academics use the benchmark statements to develop courses for Leisure
programmes throughout UK HE. This identified generalised competencies needed
and a lack of clarity of assessment types or key authors. From this, industry applicant
needs were outlined from People 1st (the Sector Skills Council who support the
QAA’s benchmark statements), which identified that a range of Soft Skills (attitude,
behaviour and communication) and Intercultural Sensitivity are lacking in both new
applicants in industry and the benchmark statements. This section focuses on these to
offer theory on Soft Skills, Emotional Labour, Aesthetic Labour, Sexualised Labour,
and Intercultural Sensitivity.

The need for higher-skilled staff and the evident skills shortages in these Leisure
industries are an identified and well-researched area amongst Leisure-focused
academics (Burns, 1997; Westwood, 2002; Baum, 2007; Baum, 2008; Lashley,
2009). For the purpose of this study, a brief review of Soft Skills is offered now to
serve as a foundation upon which to develop focused analysis of the student-specific
skills needed for graduate employment as seen from current published literature.

People 1st (2011; 2013) noted that employers have difficulty in finding applicants
with the developed soft skills to evidence the full criteria of the advertised roles. I
have grouped attitude, behaviour and communication as Soft Skills due to the use of
this term in Leisure research. Within published academic literature on Leisure,
Interpersonal and Soft Skills are used in tandem and refer to similar skilling
requirements for Leisure students. In Leisure research, authors Nickson et al. (2011)
use Soft Skills to refer to interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, Bailly and Lene
(2012) and Nickson et al. (2005) use Soft Skills to infer social and Interpersonal
Skills, and Baum’s research (Baum, 1996; Baum, 2006; Baum, 2002b; Baum, 2007;
Baum and Nickson, 1998) focuses on Soft Skills, which are seen to be the same as
Interpersonal Skills. To exemplify this, the following considers just two papers from Sparks & Callan (1992) and Burns (1997) (Sparks & Callan on Interpersonal Skills and Burns on Soft Skills). The types of behaviour and skills are listed in the table below to identify the similarities between these two terms.

Table 11 Interpersonal and soft skill attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal and Non-verbal communication</td>
<td>Verbal and Non-verbal communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye Contact</td>
<td>Emotional behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>Attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Competence</td>
<td></td>
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(Burns, 1997; Sparks and Callan, 1992)

Table 11 evidences how Leisure skilling authors focus on the same types of staff behaviour when researching Interpersonal or Soft Skills. Since these early articles, and as noted above, Leisure research has primarily focused on Soft Skills as the term with which to explain the types of skills needed in Leisure education and training. Furthermore, subsequent UK government reports (Leitch, 2006; The Dearing Report, 1997) on Leisure skilling also refer to Soft Skills rather than Interpersonal Skills. Thus, this study will now use ‘Soft Skills’ as the term with which to infer both Soft and Interpersonal skilling for Leisure students and staff.

In terms of the context in which current literature positions use of these Soft Skills from graduates entering industry Leisure roles, it appears that these skills are needed in customer service encounters to deliver effective customer service and produce what Burns (1997, p.240) calls the production of “unreality”. Soft Skills are needed when communicating and interacting with customers in industry to create, perform
and deliver Leisure experiences. Burns (1997) calls a customer service encounter in Leisure “unreality” because customers are receiving an intangible service, part of which is intangible and unquantifiable, from graduates/staff. This ephemeral characteristic is perceived and experienced differently by each guest.

Burns (1997) also supports People 1st reports by noting not only that Soft Skills are lacking in applicants, but also that specific roles in Leisure are also deficient:

“Given that nations are capable of producing Prime Ministers, Senior Military Officers, Lawyers, and Doctors, the difficulties found in producing a skilled pastry chef or an effective hotel manager is little short of astounding.” (Burns, 1997, p.244).

This quotation from Burns (1997) underlines the difficulty that Leisure managers have in finding staff with the necessary skills. Here, Burns (1997) suggests that the lack of skilled applicants for kitchens is “little short of astounding”, suggesting that the skilling shortages are shocking to him. If the UK is able to produce staff for roles requiring more skills and knowledge, it seems odd to Burns (1997) that the soft skills are lacking for Leisure roles. This shortage could be due to the roles being seen as transient roles (as discussed in Chapter 1). My study will identify the Soft Skills needed for Leisure Graduates in order to highlight how customer demands in customer service encounters require a range of professional skills and knowledge to again support previous researchers in Soft Skilling for Leisure.

Textbooks for Hospitality training often segment Leisure customers according to their reason for visiting (e.g. Leisure and business) (Hassanien, 2010; Smith and Warburton, 2012; Chon and Maier, 2009). This segmentation is to ensure that the business understands guests’ needs and satisfies them through service. Thus, graduates/staff are not simply using their Soft Skills to replicate the same form of interaction, but creating varied “unreal” experiences for different groups of guests with the aim of satisfying each individually. Lashley’s (2000) textbook on Hospitality retail management problematises customer segmentation, however, by noting that the standard Leisure customer groups are no longer simple, stratified groups, in that:
“the same hospitality retail customers may visit different types of premises for different reasons and different times of the week” (Lashley, 2000, p.287).

Therefore, customer groups do not demand the same services, products or experiences in every encounter and they may require these in a range of Leisure businesses throughout the week. This discussion has shown that the context of these soft skills is that of an “unreal” space, and that the skills are demanded by a range of customers who arrive with a variety of requirements and preconceptions. This context suggests that Soft Skills are neither general nor robotic, but need to be adaptable, flexible and reflexive for each service encounter. Staff members also need an ability to assess and analyse consistently what skills and knowledge are needed (as stated in the customer service encounter review in Section 2.2).

To examine the Soft Skilling literature and issues within this research further, Professor Tom Baum’s work will now be reviewed. Baum’s work focuses on Leisure education and employee training both in the UK and internationally. His research spans the last 20 years on Soft Skilling and has followed the progress of issues and debates in this field. Discussion here will focus upon the general perceptions and importance of Soft Skills in Leisure, the viewpoint from which these skills are analysed and, finally, industry problems in maintaining a workforce with adequate Soft Skills.

Issues identified by Baum include how Hospitality roles were deemed to be low- or semi-skilled, which was seen as an incorrect assumption of the skills used (Baum, 1996). Leisure work being deemed as low or unskilled was noted as an inappropriate portrayal of the roles due to the inherent international dimension of the industry and multiple soft skills needed (Baum, 1996). This historic denigrating perception of Leisure work is also highlighted by People 1st (2011b), which suggest that this perception is still felt throughout the sectors and, therefore, can lead to recruitment problems. Perceiving Skills for Leisure work to be low or unskilled means that there has been a consistent “myth that undermines their (staff) contribution” (Lucas, 2004, p.31). Undermining the work and employee contribution to service due to a poor perception of Soft Skills is an issue in the literature, as it suggests that the work is easy and menial. Baum’s argument in 1996 was that this inadequate perception of
Soft Skills needed addressing to support Managers and staff in Leisure businesses. Later, research by Bailly and Lene (2012, p.87) noted that, actually, most employers still do not “fully understand” how these skills are demanded. This study seeks to ascertain this through examining graduate perceptions of the Soft Skills in customer service encounters.

The next issue to be noted from Baum’s work on Soft Skilling is the perspective from which these Soft Skills are analysed. Leisure workers interact and serve guests who derive from a range of backgrounds and requirements. This means that the Soft Skills used are complex (Baum, 2002a). Baum and Nickson (1998) identify that the weakness in this position is that Soft Skill research only focuses on Service Quality from the customers’ perspective, when it should consider both employer and staff perspectives. Leisure industry employers are consistently reporting a lack of Soft Skills (from People 1st) in their applicants and by judging these skills in relation to customer service quality, current research appears not to engage fully with the variety of perspectives available. Hassani (2010, p.95) offered a partial response to this by noting that staff should be treated as “internal customers” and served by their managers, but there is no clear definition or account of the service encounters and customer demands which require these skills. This study seeks to understand these from Leisure graduate perspectives in order to understand this problem from their perspective.

Baum’s early work clearly sought to dispel the belief that Leisure skills are low or unskilled, and identified this through examination of customer service encounters with international guests. This initial research on skilling for Leisure was in response to the negative connotations given to Leisure workers’ skills, and identifies that there is a historical issue surrounding the importance of Soft Skilling and the perspective from which it is interrogated. As the Leisure benchmark statements written by the QAA were formed in 1992, it could be suggested that the lack of Soft Skilling competencies in the benchmark statements is due to this historically poor perception and lens through which skills have been viewed.

Now to consider why Leisure Soft Skilling should be seen as important in education rather than industry. As noted previously, Leisure education does not require
students to complete postgraduate courses in order to become fully employer-ready for their role in industry. Unlike Medical and Teaching education, Leisure students move directly into industry. Baum (2002b) noted that employee training is largely completed on the job rather than in a structured and assessed framework. Bailly and Lene (2012, p.88) confirm this and note that businesses pay “scant attention in training programmes”. This poor attention to employee training is mainly due to sector composition. Within the Leisure industry, the majority of businesses are private small and medium-sized businesses rather than public or large multi-national companies (46% employ fewer than five staff and only 1% employ more than 100; People 1st, 2013). This suggests a reason as to why employers require new staff who already possess adequate Soft Skills to deal with their customers: they may not have the resources with which to train them on the job, as there is no nationally available accreditation. If Leisure businesses need Soft Skills from their applicants and are unable to train them on these within their roles, then it stands to reason that Educators should provide this training.

From Baum’s research on Soft Skills it is apparent that soft skills are vitally important in Leisure businesses. Baum’s research spans the developments in Soft Skills research in the Leisure industry and education and identifies how diversification in labour markets, international travel, and education have all affected the way in which soft skills are now prioritised. This is a shift from the 1980s and 1990s, when technical skills were prioritised by educators and industry, until now, when soft skills are seen as a priority. The poor perception of these skills has meant that there has been a negative perception of the skills needed to work in Leisure. Despite this perception, it is evident that Soft Skills are needed in staff working in industry. By researching soft skills from a customer perspective in relation to service quality, current literature does not fully address how graduates/staff perceive these skills. It is clear that industry cannot sustain training for Soft Skills on the job; therefore, it is imperative that educators in Leisure UK HE look to address this deficit. The following subsections now consider Emotional, Aesthetic and Sexual Labours, which are components of Soft Skilling because they require behaviour, attitude and communication.

2.6.1 Emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour in leisure
Both People 1st and Baum identify that emotional displays and appearance are integral to offering good customer service. These areas are considered Soft Skills, are termed Emotional Labour, Aesthetic Labour and Sexualised Labour, and are widely researched in the Leisure industry from an employee and human resource management perspective. This section assesses the Leisure literature with regard to these three types of labour to further identify the components of Soft Skills which are deemed necessary for graduates on Leisure-based degrees.

Beginning with Emotional Labour, Arlie Hochschild’s book stemmed from her attendance at an Airline Training event. Her work is seminal in Emotional Labour and has been widely cited within Leisure, Business, Sociology, Psychology and Gender research since the first edition in 1983. The premise of this type of labour originated in the known training phrase ‘service with a smile’. Surprenant et al.’s (1987) paper also noted how smiling was a necessary skill and part of a customer service encounter (as discussed previously), but it was not until Hochschild’s work that this became a theorised skill for all Leisure staff. Hochschild noted how staff were told to use their smile — their greatest asset — to ensure that airline guests were happy and satisfied. However, this facial display was not to be a performance, but rather a “travel experience of real happiness and calm” (Hochschild, 2012, p.5). The notion that staff should not only appear happy but also be happy is a powerful concept when dealing with customers, who each have their own background, history and personal experiences. This smile, or positive emotional display, exemplifies a brand message ensuring that customers receive the appropriate level of service and satisfaction with their experience. Thus, Emotional Labour was seen by Hochschild as a commodity rather than a personal choice of feeling. Since this initial study of an American Airline, other researchers in the UK have sought to analyse Emotional Labour at different levels of Leisure business and in different geographical locations. For this study, Seymour (2000), Witz et al. (2003) and Warhurst and Nickson (2007) are examined to offer evidence of how Emotional Labour is seen in Leisure research.

Seymour (2000) considered Emotional Labour within fast food in comparison to traditional hospitality outlets and explored whether uniform and service scripts affected Emotional Labour. Uniforms are considered to be within Aesthetic Labour further in this section. Scripted service is a service and training tool used by
numerous chain Leisure businesses. “Have a good day,” “How can I be of service?” “Can I assist you with anything today?” and “Is everything to your satisfaction?” are examples of scripted lines that staff are required to say to their customers to maintain customer satisfaction. It is important here to note that there is no research suggesting that these phrases could also annoy customers. Seymour (2000) analysed where staff deviated from these scripted lines in order to ascertain employee motivation to personalise the service:

“If you sell yourself all the time you end up losing your identity. You must hold a part of you back. You don’t want to end up being just part of the meal experience. You need to learn to keep respect for yourself.” (Seymour, 2000, p.167)

Like Hochschild’s work with airline crew, Seymour’s participants felt that the emotion communicated in conversation needed to be limited in order to ensure that their personality and identity were protected. This is an important consideration when investigating staff perceptions, as the demands from customers in the customer service encounter may conflict with their own personality and identity. For example, if a customer asks for a burger from an Islamic server, the server may find it difficult due to their own religious practices.

From these observations it appears that Emotional Labour has two axes of conflict. Vertically, Emotional Labour is a commodity that is produced and consumed, intangible and changing according to the interaction with and demands from a guest. Horizontally, staff have to be both robotic in communicating set scripts and individual in offering personality and flair to their service. The skills for displaying and creating Emotional Labour are what Stinchcombe (1990, as cited in Seymour, 2000) calls “ethnomethodological competence”. This type of competence is seen as a core occupational skill for Leisure staff because they need to control interactions, which are dependent on guest requirements and organisational duties.

“Employees are expected to give the appearance of enjoying their work as much as visitors are enjoying their time.” (Baum, 2006a, p.135)

“Emotional demands are made of employees to constantly be in a positive, joyful and even playful mood. An ability to cope with such demands must be recognised as a real skill.” (Baum, 2002, p.79)
Within Baum’s soft skilling research he reflects on Emotional Labour as an important Soft Skill needed by workers in Leisure, wherein they have to show positivity and enjoyment when serving guests in order to maintain customer satisfaction. Hochschild’s seminal work in Emotional Labour, followed by that of Seymour and Baum, identifies that Emotional Labour is a Soft Skill embedded in Customer Service Encounters throughout the Leisure industries. Emotional Labour can conflict with the identity and personality of the member of staff, and serves to create robotic effigies of the brand that they are representing. This brief overview of Emotional Labour confirms that it is a component of Soft Skills for Leisure students, but there are issues in producing it in customer service encounters because staff are not robots, and yet, conversely, staff are also unable to appear a complete individual so as to avoid conflict with their customers.

From the work completed on Emotional Labour, Aesthetic Labour emerged as a term with which to describe how Leisure staff need to present themselves physically. Seymour’s (2000) research also considered uniform and appearance when discussing EL, as they enable “surface acting” to portray their role in the company (p.164). AL was conceptualised by Witz et al. (2003) as follows:

“We feel that the concept of emotional labour foregrounds the worker as a mindful, feelingful self, but loses a secure conceptual grip on the worker as an embodied self” (p.36)

Witz et al. critiqued Hochschild’s text, as they felt that the separation of surface and deep acting diminished the visible and innate bodily functions surrounding Emotional Labour. For example, a person’s body is tall, short, fat, thin, etc., regardless of their own personal feelings and performance in a customer service encounter. A company makes use of these “embodied capacities” (p.37) in recruitment and training to transfer staff appearance so as to portray their brand and style within service. Their conceptualisation of Aesthetic Labour refers to the control that managers have over employee hair, makeup, uniform and weight and how this is controlled to create high service levels and aid employee Emotional Labour.
Witz et al. (2003) compare employee aesthetics with the Aesthetics created by the organisation in marketing, branding and outlet styles. When comparing staff Aesthetic Labour to the company’s aesthetics they note that Aesthetic Labour is like:

“the inanimate elements of the corporate landscape, corporately designed and produced” (p.44).

Their conceptualisation of Aesthetic Labour seeks to diminish an employee’s personal feelings when made to look part of a business (ultimately an intangible and corporate thing), but highlights an important aspect of business priority in creating a styled labour force to portray a brand and offer a specific level of service to guests. Furthermore, Witz et al. (2003, p.35) suggested that uniform and staff appearance offer customers a “distinctive mode of exchange beyond contract”. This suggests that uniform/attire is a mandatory practice even if it is not within the employment contract. If it is also seen as an exchange, then it is clear that staff aesthetics are part of the service and received by customers. Ultimately, Witz et al. (2003) classify Aesthetic Labour as a skill which is learned through recruitment, but fail to mention the incompatibility between a person’s identity and feelings and being made to look a certain way.

Warhurst and Nickson’s (2007) research in Hospitality and Retail noted that employers prioritise attitude and appearance as vital aspects of their staff, but that on-the-job training focused on hard and technical skills and expected the recruitment process to control for appropriate appearance and attitude skills in new staff:

“For those staff who had received appearance related training 62 percent had training in dress sense and style, 60 percent in body language and nearly a third in make-up and grooming (29%).” (p.114)

This confirms that Soft Skills are pre-eminent, as they focus on these in recruitment and follow up with on-the-job training. Again, their work in AL fails to mention employee feelings when being trained or encountering customers using these communication devices. They do not consider how effectively AL is implanted or how it could be communicated to students on Leisure and Retail courses and they do not address personal sensitivity issues when staff are being made to look or
communicate in specific ways. They conclude that businesses are allowed to discriminate in recruitment practices if there is a business case concerning appearance. Even if it is lawful, Aesthetic Labour research does not account for how staff feel or how it affects their ability to learn soft skills and produce them effectively in the “styled labour market” (p.107).

Warhurst and Nickson's (2009) considered sexuality and Sexualised Labour to be components of Aesthetic Labour. Employee appearance, including flirting and sex appeal, is seen as a core aspect of serving and satisfying guests in a Leisure service encounter. They note three levels of Sexualised Labour. These range from being sanctioned by management to being a specific strategic element of the business. Hooters bars in America are an example of strategic Sexualised Labour, as their uniform consists of:

“short shorts and a choice of a tight tank top or crop or a tight T-shirt to deliberately make up female employees as sexy waitresses” (p.396).

Warhurst and Nickson do not explore how being sexy or sex appeal is defined, understood or consumed. Instead, they critique how it is seen and trained through Aesthetic Labour. Specifically, they identify how staff use this sex appeal between colleagues to improve their working environment:

“As such, appealing to the senses of other staff, through flirting, for example, is behaviour used to create less boring and less bureaucratic, more exciting and more personal workplaces.” (pp.391–393)

Sexual harassment and unwanted sexual advances must be a concern to managers and employees using this form of Aesthetic Labour. Flirting conversation is understood and produced with a range of intentions. If people are not aware of the motivation behind this behaviour, then it could be misconstrued and lead to problems between staff and customers. Equally, with the retention issues in Leisure as identified by People 1st, sexual harassment could be seen as a reason for staff leaving their roles in the sector. The article even notes how tour reps in holiday destinations use alcohol to increase Sexualised Labour. Here the danger of Sexualised Labour is made clear by Warhurst and Nickson, who note how female workers choose to drink
less alcohol to ensure that they “remain in control” (p.400). This article does not underline the dangerous elements of Sexualised Labour in employee harassment, discrimination, and illegal behaviour. It only seeks to label the types of Sexualised Labour seen in Aesthetic Labour and identify how they are used. It does critique the bias of sexuality in that SL mainly refers to Heterosexual (and not Homosexual) labour, but it only does this to identify how companies may be losing out on the “pink pound” (p.401). The texts on Sexualised Labour noted here clearly raise some concerns. The literature addresses its presence in Aesthetic Labour but does not fully explain how staff could be trained or identify staff awareness and ability to deal with this aspect of Soft Skill use in their roles.

This section has sought to identify the key tenets of Emotional, Aesthetic and Sexualised Labour, as People 1st (2013) reported that Leisure employers are in need of interpersonal (soft) skills such as having the right attitude (38%) and appearance (28%). If graduates are to gain successful graduate employment, there is clearly a need for them to have soft skills with which to manage customer service encounters and employee management. Hochschild and Seymour’s work on Emotional Labour identifies how emotions are acted and performed to maintain a company’s brand image. In order to use EL, staff need to be ethnomethodologically competent in order to understand what the customer wants and portray feelings to entertain the guest successfully. Warhurst, Witz and Nickson’s critique of EL speculated that emotions cannot be devoid of the bodies in which employees portray and complete their duties. Their creation of Aesthetic Labour allows researchers to consider appearance soft skills and how these are used in the recruitment and training of employees. From this, they link Sexualised Labour to AL and advocate that employee sex appeal is needed so as to sell and maintain guest satisfaction in Leisure industries. Although EL, AL and SL are all noted as soft skills, current literature focuses on how this serves to make a Leisure business successful and not how staff or graduates learn these skills and manage their feelings in situations. As these clearly play a part in every customer service encounter, it is concerning that they are missing in the benchmark statements, too.
2.6.2 Intercultural sensitivity

This section offers the second mismatch identified between industry skilling needs and Leisure education documentation. People 1st (2013) noted that 21% of employers need employees who have “Intercultural sensitivity”. Only one of the Leisure benchmark statements noted the term ‘Intercultural’ and this was within the following Tourism statement:

“understand the intercultural dimensions of tourism” (p.22)

This skill is only present in one benchmark statement and it is unclear as to how a lecturer would apply, assess or develop this in their courses. Therefore, this section begins by offering an explanation as to what Intercultural Sensitivity (IS) training is and also how this has been examined in Leisure education theory.

IS training theory is widely based on Bennett’s (1986) model of Intercultural Communication between people of different nationalities and assessing a person’s intercultural competence in this communication. His definition of Intercultural states that there is a perceived difference between one person and another, but that this difference is not labelled or categorised, but rather “a learner’s subjective experience of difference” (p.181). The IS training model is included below:

Figure 5 Bennett’s model of intercultural sensitivity training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1 – Denial</th>
<th>Ethnocentric Stages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2 – Defence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 3 – Minimisation</td>
<td>Experience of difference and development of intercultural sensitivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4 – Acceptance</td>
<td>Ethnorelative Stages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 5 – Adaptation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 6 – Integration</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

(Source: Bennett, 1986, p.182)

Bennett’s use of Ethnocentrism and Ethnorelativism (the latter created as an antonym to ethnocentrism) is taken from a chapter on Intercultural Communication
as written by Samovar and Porter in 1983. Samovar et al. (2013) define Ethnocentrism as a worldview in which each person perceives their own culture as rigid and central. This model for IS training suggests that students can complete progressive learning, development and accomplishment from Ethnocentrism to Ethnorelativism.

To understand how Ethnocentrism and Ethnorelativism are situated in Leisure contexts, Lashley and Morrison’s book offers further explanation:

“European waiters create fewer problems than American waiters because the former are more accustomed to class differences and low social mobility and therefore less resentful of social distinctions.” (Lashley and Morrison, 2007, p.264)

This quotation suggests that Leisure employee nationality can affect service because of their worldview and understanding of differences. However, the quotation does not identify whether staff are located in that context or merely a national of that area. For example, a European Waiter working in America may actually conform to the supposed American Ethnocentric tendencies due to assimilation of the host culture. Furthermore, restaurant Leisure businesses often create cultural experiences which specifically require staff to act or perform in respect of a nationality (e.g. staff who may be ethnically labelled Indian or Chinese in restaurants). Therefore, Ethnocentrism and Ethnorelativism may be part of the expected performance of Leisure employees, as well as being a frame through which to ensure that they can serve a range of other cultures. Clearly, consideration of cultures and differences in Leisure employees is complex and multidimensional.

Two papers on application and adaptation of Bennett’s model of IS will now be critiqued to identify the types of knowledge and skills present in IS development and application in education.

Medina-Lopez-Portillo's (2004) doctoral studies suggest that students benefit from study-abroad programmes of a certain length, whereby increasing their IS. Here, she applied Bennett’s model to explore whether Maryland students who went to Taxco and Mexico City thought of themselves as individual cultural beings or belonging to
a culture grouped by nationality. Participants completed a survey akin to Barron and Dasli’s later research, but they also conducted interviews and offered student journal entries on their intercultural experiences. Results from this research suggested that study-abroad programmes specifically aided student IS development (31% in Taxco and 67% in Mexico City). Longer periods of time abroad led to increased IS. Cultural differences analysed were located in both nationality and individual behaviour. These points noted, there were interesting conclusions drawn when considering how this could apply to Leisure Education. They identified that if a student had a rigid understanding of culture to begin with, it was more difficult for them to progress through Bennett’s stages of IS. When considering this paper from a Leisure Education perspective, it could be argued that all Leisure experiences would offer similar IS improvements. Leisure work itself brings together people from all nationalities and backgrounds, so students could encounter and reflect on differences without necessarily going to a different geographical location. Moreover, student groups themselves are inherently global; therefore, the class itself may already be in a different location from their home or national culture. Clearly, this paper feels that geographical movement is needed for IS development, but I would argue that Leisure education and training already do this.

As noted, Medina-Lopez-Portillo’s (2004) paper situates intercultural differences in national and locational differences. It is odd, therefore, that the author also considers individual understanding of IS. If it is accepted that students can perceive differences on an individual level, why question large cultural differences from geographical locations? The individual tenets of culture as identified by her participants are as follows:

“I think it’s really just what people are used to in a different culture. I think it’s just the little things that you take for granted, that you accept as part of your everyday life, that everybody does that it’s so obvious that those little things that change when you go to another culture. I think that’s the real cultural differences. It’s the part of everyday life that changes from society to society.” (p.188)

These individual tenets of IS infer adaptive personality, behaviour, attitude and motivation. This has parallels with the skills required for Emotional Labour and Aesthetic Labour as well as the individual service types offered in industry. Cultural
differences in a multicultural society should not assume that the geographical location of the person infers their nationality. In this study the nationality of participants is not confirmed; instead, their own culture is inferred by their geographical movement from Maryland to Mexico. Moving geographical location is not the only way in which cultural differences can be encountered to assess IS. If you visit an ethnic restaurant (Chinese, Indian, Asian) or attend a cultural event (Religious, National or Societal), you will also interact with people from other nationalities and experience cuisines, language or behaviour different from what is usual.

Moving on to Leisure education research in the UK, Barron and Dasli (2010) completed a quantitative study with their Leisure students at Edinburgh Napier University to investigate their Leisure students’ intercultural sensitivity. In this study the ‘difference’ taken from intercultural was attributed to whether students were classified as either home or international. As noted earlier, any university classroom can be viewed as a multicultural setting within which students could analyse their own Ethnocentric and Ethnorelative perspectives. However, this research suggested that classrooms do not inherently allow for this training. Instead, it was noted that International students tended not to integrate with the Home students, which led to a division in the groups. The reason for this division was attributed to language problems, wherein the home and international students could not communicate effectively. These language problems made group work assignments difficult and home students became less empathetic towards the international students. Results from this study identified that IS problems in a classroom were addressed and resolved easily, as the classroom context already engendered open debate through which to resolve differences in opinion and perception. The perceived differences noted by these students lay in behaviour and expectations of ‘normality’, which actually suggests an individual and behavioural intercultural divide rather than solely language problems. Evidently, IS education in a Leisure classroom can have positive outcomes, but the authors did acknowledge that they were uncertain whether the IS developments would be replicated outside of the classroom’s protected space.

These outcomes from Barron and Dasli show how Leisure academics have interpreted Bennett’s use of “difference” to mean nationality within students’
enrolment status. By applying this definition to examination of IS, they unveil a range of skills present. Willingness, adaptation, empathy, understanding and respect are all noted in how their students address cultural differences. However, as “the students do not engage in sufficient culture learning opportunities” (p.14), it was noted that UK students tend to be ethnocentric rather than ethnorelative. Again, I would argue that classifying students as either Home or International and using this as the parameter of national difference is inappropriate. A student is classified as a ‘Home’ student if they have English or European citizenship. Living in or having parents from a geographical location does not mean that all of these people have the same perspectives or backgrounds. For example, West Indian families who came to the UK in the 1950s are now in their second or third generation but may still speak Patois.

Evidently, IS has been considered within general education and Leisure classrooms to explore whether students have the necessary skills for intercultural encounters upon graduation. The skills identified include personality traits, behaviour, language, motivation, understanding and awareness. A final section will now identify the research questions and align the soft skills, emotional, aesthetic and sexual labours, and intercultural skills so as to identify the conceptual frame through which this study was completed.

This chapter has offered a literature review on previous publications linked to Leisure education and Leisure skills and knowledge needed for successful employment. As such, it has enabled me to identify gaps in current research and offer a foundation from which the research aim, objectives and research questions were created. These will now be identified along with the theoretical framework from which primary data was analysed.

2.7 Aim and Objectives, research questions, and theoretical framework

This Chapter has offered critical documentary analysis of all literatures in support of the research questions, aim and objectives. The order of this review was due to the exploratory nature of the study. Opening with key definitions on skills, knowledge,
customer service encounters and intercultural service encounters led to analysis of Service Quality, Co-production and Co-creation literature which underpinned the focus of successful service encounters. From this, analysis of the skills and knowledge in the Leisure benchmark statements clarified how these key words are used in the education framework. I then also compared the benchmark statements with industry skilling needs to clarify any mis-matches with what employers need. This analysis suggested that Soft Skills on Aesthetic, Emotional and Sexualised Labour as well as Intercultural Sensitivity was missing from the educational framework.

The range of theoretical analysis has enabled me to create a theoretical framework to address my aim to identify the skills and knowledge needed by UK Higher Education Leisure graduates for completing Customer Service Encounters. Also to achieve my objectives:

1. To explore any potential mis-matches between employer requirements and theory published on skills and knowledge for customer service encounters;
2. To identify a theoretical framework of skills and knowledge for Leisure students completing Customer Service Encounters;
3. To examine critical incidents offered from recent students or graduates on customer service encounters and identify skills and knowledge used by these participants;
4. To offer recommendations to educators and industry on the skills and knowledge graduates need in order to complete successful Customer Service Encounters.

Thus, to answer my research questions:

1. What skills and knowledge are currently needed by graduates completing a customer service encounter?
2. How do the skills and knowledge needed by graduates compare to my theoretical framework of skills and knowledge?
3. Is the current training and education provision for Leisure students in UK Universities adequate for graduates completing customer service encounters in graduate employment?

My theoretical framework is based upon the mismatches seen in current literature.
The theoretical framework identified from secondary source analysis in this chapter is noted as follows:

Table 12 A theoretical framework of skills and knowledge needed to complete customer service encounters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Skills and knowledge needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Quality</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge of customer expectations and perceptions informing customer satisfaction with the customer service encounter. Relational Tacit knowledge on what customers perceive to be satisfactory service. Interpersonal skills to serve customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-creation and co-production</td>
<td>Customers may need to co-create the service in order to be fully satisfied. Tourist’s experiences require participation from a number of people and not just simply customers and staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry Skills</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge of the processes and operations within their role. Technical and general skills are needed to complete roles in Leisure businesses. Management and leadership skills are needed with customers and colleagues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Skills</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge on Customer behaviour theory. Students need to develop critical and analytical skills and knowledge of key concepts relating to operations in Leisure businesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft Skills</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge of different people/companies/societies/beliefs/ways of being and doing. Verbal and Non-verbal Communication. Sensitivity to different cultures. Communication techniques for a range of customers. Understanding another person’s perspective and relating to their feelings so as to understand the other person’s emotions regarding the topic of Social Norms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Labour</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge of how emotional performance can enhance the service encounter. Skills in Performing, Exhibiting and Controlling Emotion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic Labour</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge of grooming and clothing. Wearing a uniform to a standard. Using makeup, accessories and body piercings appropriately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexualised Labour</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge of how sex is used in Leisure roles. Flirting and sex appeal are used in Leisure businesses to satisfy customers and maintain brand image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural Sensitivity</td>
<td>Students need explicit knowledge of culture and cultural differences in order to anticipate a range of guests’ needs. Ethnocentric customers may expect services based on their cultural</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
background.
Ethnorelative customers will show flexibility in their knowledge and understanding of services provided.
Soft skills and communication skills are needed to portray effective Intercultural Sensitivity.

All of the knowledge and skills stipulated in Table 12 require students to reflect critically on and adapt their behaviour within each service encounter. They are neither rigid nor tangible assets that each graduate can display or replicate in each encounter. As soft skills are seen as a commodity for Leisure recruiters, it is vital that these areas are investigated in graduate employment to assess whether they are needed and whether graduates feel prepared for service encounters with customers.
Summary

The core issue outlined in this chapter is that current literature and research have not provided clarity as to whether Leisure students in UK HE feel prepared for customer demands placed on them in service encounters. Literature from educational, business and industry locales focuses on the importance of maintaining customer satisfaction within customer service encounters but repeatedly ignores staff perceptions within this context. It is accepted that Leisure businesses need satisfied customers in order to succeed, but my study argues that if the staff are not prepared for the demands, customers will never be satisfied fully. From an educational perspective, my study sought to investigate graduate perceptions of customer demands in service encounters using a theoretical framework of skills and knowledge gleaned from current theory. The theoretical framework encompassing Service Quality Theory, Co-creation and Co-production, Education requirements, Industry requirements, Soft Skills, Emotional Labour, Aesthetic Labour, Sexualised Labour and Intercultural Sensitivity has been offered so as to establish current thought on student skilling and knowledge needs with which to compare participant data. The following chapter will now identify the planned methods for the study.
Chapter 3
Methodology

Introduction
This chapter presents the research design for my study and outlines the planned methods for obtaining and analysing data presented in this thesis. This chapter starts with clarification on my Epistemological position and how this influenced the design of the study. Next follows a discussion of the term Needs Assessment. This is followed by details of how the theoretical framework in Chapter 2 was created using Thematic Analysis of existing secondary data. Section 3.4 then reviews the term Narrative Research, as the planned data to be gathered were seen as Narrative data. The fourth section outlines the planned methods of primary data collection, including the sampling strategy, participant briefing, participant informed consent, payment of participants, critical incident technique, stimulated recall, and semi-structured interviews. As a pilot study was completed in 2012, there is a section on how this was completed and what data were yielded. I then identify the planned analysis methods for primary data collection. The final two sections in this chapter consider issues pertaining to my reflexivity in the study, as well as ethical considerations needed for conducting the study.

3.1 My Epistemological Position
An Epistemology is seen as “how one aligns oneself” in relation to research being completed (Cohen et al 2009: pg7). Scott and Usher (2002) further clarify that Epistemology enables a researcher to distinguish between knowledge and non-knowledge based on objective or subjective approaches to a study. My epistemology is therefore important as it identifies the alignment and approach to knowledge claims made in this thesis.

From completing studies on Research Methods and Methodology I identify my epistemology during this study as Interpretivism:

“Researchers using an interpretivist paradigm emphasize human interaction with phenomena in their daily lives” (Egbert and Sanden, 2013: p.34)
As noted by Egbert and Sanden, (2013) Interpretivism involves a researcher interacting and understanding humans in their daily lives. This means that the researcher is not simply abstract from the foci of research, but may be known or present in the research gathering process. Green et al. (2012) notes that Interpretivism involves thick description of the data and the research often analyses information from their “compatriots” (Geertz, 1973; p.9). As noted in the introduction to this thesis I have investigated a context which I have experienced and which I my students and graduates have experienced. In this way the participants can be seen as my compatriots. Focussed on service encounters in employment this study also reviews a usual daily event or activity which can be relayed via stories and incident narrations to allow for thick description and interpretation of events.

One of the founding writers on Interpretivism, Geertz (1973) identified that participants need high levels of trust in the researcher in order to offer honest accounts of their daily lives. In order to facilitate this aspect I will approach participants who are already known by me so that they trust in my position and purpose for their participation.

3.2 Framing the study as a needs assessments

As noted in the introduction to this thesis, my study offers a form of Needs Assessment (West, 1994) of what skills and knowledge graduates need in industry, and compares this to what they are taught in their UK HE Leisure Education. To begin with, a definition of Needs Assessment research is presented. From this I will then identify previous research using a Needs Assessment to evidence the typical methods of data collection and analysis used when applying this frame to education research.

Firstly, Needs Assessment is also known as Needs Analysis, but for the purpose of this study, the term Needs Assessment is used. The majority of current English publications on Needs Assessment show that it is rooted in Language Learning Education research (see, for example, Benesch, 1996; Chambers, 1980; Richards, 2001). West (1994) stated that Needs Assessments originated in India in the 1920s and defines them as being:
“what learners will be required to do with the foreign language in the target situation, and how learners might best master the target language during the period of training” (p.1).

The quotation suggests that a Needs Assessment requires investigation of what students need to learn for a specific context, and then how they might best learn the skills and knowledge to use in the new context. My study uses this frame by investigating what skills and knowledge students and graduates use in customer service encounters and how they might best learn the skills and knowledge to support this. Richards (2001) later confirmed that a Needs Assessment has to assess the “learner’s needs” (p.51). My study is defined as a Needs Assessment because I am assessing the learner’s needs in supporting successful graduate employment. The defining what and how questions noted in West’s (1994) paper are used in the Research Questions for this study, as I wanted to explore what skills and knowledge my graduates need and how this is supported in their current education. In this way, the framing of my Research Questions supports a Needs Assessment approach. The words what and how also show that this study uses an exploratory and investigative approach.

Needs Assessments originated in educational research and are supportive of curricular development. It is noted that any form of curriculum or training course development must use this line of inquiry in order to successfully evaluate and change education provision to make improvements (Richards, 2001; West, 1994). My study does not seek to redevelop Leisure UK HE, but instead seeks to understand if there are any current mismatches with the education provision and the skills and knowledge needed in employment in order to offer recommendations to the governing bodies associated with Leisure UK HE. Traditional Needs Assessments would amend the curriculum and assess application of learning in tandem (West, 1994); therefore, this study is framed as a Needs Assessment but does not attempt to alter the education provision within the study itself. The conclusions will, however, offer recommendations as to how Leisure education could change. Other studies have followed a similar pattern. For example, DeSensi et al. (1990) used a needs assessment to establish whether Sports Management education provision matched employer needs, and Kolarik et al. (2006) assessed education provision in palliative
care by using a large-scale survey. These two examples of other research using a Needs Assessment as a frame support my use of it for this study, too.

The theoretical underpinning of a Needs Assessment uses examination of competencies needed by learners and then examines how this translates into training and education competencies (or learning outcomes) to mould curricula. Richards (2001) confirms that this form of research usually focuses upon learners after they have finished education and that the research investigates whether the education provision has matched the resulting needs of students. In this way, a Needs Assessment is emancipatory, as it seeks to unveil problems found by the learners themselves. My study adheres to this by only seeking participants who are graduates or students from Leisure courses in UK HE (participant sampling is discussed in full in Section 3.4).

This opening introduction to the Methodology of the study has outlined that the research is framed as a Needs Assessment. My work-related query in ascertaining what skills and knowledge students need and how this is supported by their education directly links to the definition and use of a Needs Assessment in educational research. Although this study does not include the delivery of a new course or training programme, it is noted here that by ascertaining what skills and knowledge are needed by graduates, my study will offer invaluable contributions and recommendations to support new curricular development for Leisure UK HE.

3.3 My theoretical framework

This section will illuminate the processes undertaken to create the Theoretical Framework used for this study. The theoretical framework is offered in full in Section 2.7 (Chapter 2). This section will identify how this theoretical framework emerged from my review of secondary data published and the processes that I completed to create it.

Definitions of Skills, Knowledge, Customer Service Encounters and Intercultural Service Encounters were offered using secondary sources to clarify their meaning for my study. This literature was sourced through the Library at the University of
Manchester using the key terms “Skills”, “Knowledge”, “Customer Service Encounter” and “Intercultural Service Encounter”. Definitions of Skills and Knowledge were sought from UK publications, especially from the QAA and the HEA, and Customer Service Encounters and Intercultural Service Encounters were sought from Leisure-based journal articles. This purposive searching meant that the literature yielded was specific to my study and allowed clear definitions for the study. Whilst reading the sources for these terms I used Wallace and Wray’s (2011) critical synopsis questions to ensure that my reading, understanding and use of the literature were valid. An example of this is offered in Appendix 6. These critical questions also enabled me to reflect on my own interpretation of the sources and ensured that my reading was focused on the relevance of the information to my study.

Service Quality Theory and Service Quality Models were critiqued in Chapter 2 due to my previous knowledge and experience in teaching these models in Leisure UK HE. I have used them in lectures on operations management and customer service standards because they offer a useful model with which to identify differences between customer expectations and perceptions of service. This literature was already known to me, but I reread the articles using the critical synopsis questions to ensure that my review was purposeful for this study. By focusing my reading of these articles on what skills and knowledge my students needed, a gap in perspective was made clear and I used this to identify problems in existing consumer management theory.

Being a lecturer in UK HE, I am aware of the QAA’s published frameworks for all university courses. Beginning with the QAA’s benchmark statements for Leisure, I analysed these data using thematic analysis and constant comparison (Bell, 2009). When analysing the skills and knowledge in the benchmark statements I used thematic analysis to identify where these terms were used and then compared these with the definitions known of skills and knowledge from key theory. Looking at the overall structure of the benchmark statements it was apparent that the QAA separated Leisure into five distinct areas. These are then formulated in benchmark statements for each discipline. In Section 2.4 of Chapter 2 I discussed the use of skills and knowledge as seen in the statements in Appendix 1. Identifying the topic
areas and cross-examining them with skills, knowledge and competencies enabled me to perceive quantitative differences in the number of topics and benchmark statements present. (For example, there are 19 topic areas for Events Management and only 13 for Leisure courses.) I noted in Chapter 1 that operational, consumerist, legal and social topics were present throughout these benchmark statements, but appraised this in Chapter 2 by stating that some topic areas were only present in one discipline but perhaps were needed throughout all areas (with food and beverages potentially being needed throughout the areas). To analyse the competency verbs used in the benchmark statements, I employed a Wordle to evidence trends in the key terms used in the benchmark statements. Results from this Wordle were then crosschecked with each benchmark statement. Using thematic analysis in the review of the QAA’s benchmark statements, I was able to identify patterns and trends implicit in the documentation but not specified.

After analysing the benchmark statements for trends and patterns I also problematised them in terms of operational use for Academics on these courses. With access to degree specifications created from the benchmark statements, I was able to offer an example of how the topic areas are realised for students on these courses. I also tabulated the Events Management benchmark statements which used the words ‘critical’ or ‘critique’ in them and suggested how I might use them in resources or assessments for students. This analysis enabled me to identify inherent problems with the benchmark statements, as each lecturer could interpret and apply the benchmark statements in entirely different ways. As consumerism was seen as a trending area in the benchmark statements, this was tabulated to appraise its use in Leisure UK HE. Again, constant comparison was used to identify similarities and differences in the use of this term in order to problematise its meaning for educators creating programmes of study from the benchmark statements.

From an analysis of the QAA’s benchmark statements for Leisure courses, I then moved on to consider the employer needs of Leisure students by inspecting the Sector Skills Council’s reports on industry needs (People 1st, 2011b; People 1st, 2013). These data are published as quantitative results in a report format. Moving in a cyclical manner, I reviewed the Sector Skills Council’s texts (with the benchmark statements in mind) in order to identify gaps seen in education and industry
publications. Not only did the People 1st reports identify current problems in recruitment and retention in Leisure sectors, but they also offered clarity as to the skilling and knowledge areas needed. These gaps were compared to the benchmark statements to identify areas not currently covered, and were suggested as employee attitude, appearance, and intercultural sensitivity.

The emergent areas of employee attitude, appearance, and intercultural sensitivity as seen between the benchmark statements and People 1st reports were then linked to current theories available for Leisure educators. This enabled me to identify Soft Skills (Baum, 2002b), Emotional Labour (Hochschild, 2012), Aesthetic Labour (Witz et al., 2003), Sexualised Labour (Warhurst and Nickson, 2009) and Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett, 1986) as five theories present in current publications supporting the gaps observed. Furthermore, due to the study’s focus on service encounters with customers and colleagues, I also offer critical analysis of Service Quality Theory (Parasuraman et al., 1991) in order to appraise how students are taught about meeting and exceeding the customer demands present in their graduate roles. This study therefore offers an emergent Theoretical Framework. The framework is emergent because it was created by secondary text analysis. My study has aligned key theory with a new framework in order to assess the skills and knowledge used and needed by Leisure graduates.

3.4 Narrative data

This study is the exploratory part of a Needs Assessment, finding out what skills and knowledge are needed to complete customer service encounters, and how these skills and knowledge compare to the theoretical framework of skills and knowledge as noted in Section 2.7 (Chapter 2). As such, it was evident that I required primary data in order to ascertain answers to the posed research questions. To gather these data I needed students or graduates who had completed Leisure education in UK HE and who were working in Leisure roles. To gather data from participants, there are a range of research methods available in both qualitative and quantitative forms. To ensure that all research gathered is valid and reliable, I chose a Narrative Research approach to gathering the data so that my own knowledge and bias were managed effectively (researcher bias and control are noted in Section 3.7). This section will
identify the core tenets of Narrative Research to evidence how it can be used in educational research. The following section will then outline the planned methods for gathering data from participants for the study.

Narrative Research is common in educational research in which life histories and incident narration are used to understand the complexities of human issues. Narrative Research is useful in educational research because humans are said to live “storied lives” and research participants can offer rich information through recollection of their own stories (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990, p.2). Using participant stories as research can enable researchers to understand “human interaction in relationships” (Clandinin, 2007, p.427). As this study is exploratory in ascertaining the skills and knowledge needed for customer service encounters, Narrative Research is best placed as a methodology with which to gather this information. I have my own experiences of customer demands in these contexts, so it is important that the data be participant-led and participant-based; therefore, getting participants to offer stories ensures that the data are purely based on participant accounts of customer service encounters. (I consider on my own reflexivity in the data gathering and analysis process in Section 3.7 of this chapter.) Furthermore, research authors on Intercultural Service Encounters (ICSEs) as noted in Chapter 2 also used this method (Warden et al., 2003); therefore, it fits within the known discourses in customer service encounters around which this study is framed. Interestingly, though, ICSE authors only use Narrative Research with customer research participants and not staff research participants.

In terms of how Narrative Research can be used in research, there is an array of options available. I have mentioned narrated incidents from ICSE literature already, but this is only one form. Autobiographies, life writing, personal narratives, life histories, narrative interviews and oral histories are all other possibilities in this area of methodology. These can also be staged in different ways. For example, a participant can offer a diary of incidents to inform a researcher of their experience, they can relay information from memory, or the researcher can watch participants in context to identify key components of their human interaction (see Connelly and Clandinin 1990 for an extensive list of Narrative Research approaches). As I am concerned with the individual graduate perceptions of customer service encounters, I
decided to use Personal Narratives in the form of Narrated Critical Incidents (see the following section for a full review).

### 3.5 Planned methods of primary data collection

With the plethora of research methods available with which to gather participant data, Narrative Research was chosen for this study. The first research question is offered here again to clarify the need for primary research:

1. What skills and knowledge are currently used by Leisure graduates completing a customer service encounter?

Ascertaining which skills and knowledge are used by graduates could be by means of analysing employers, graduates or educators. However, as this study seeks to identify these skills in a Needs Assessment from the learners, it is evident that graduate perspectives are needed. Obtaining critical incident narrations from graduates in industry would offer stories of customer service encounters which I can analyse and discuss in detail with each participant in support of RQ1. This section offers information on methodology decisions made in planning the gathering of primary data. Subsections include the sampling strategy employed, sourcing participants, briefing participants, Critical Incident narrations, Stimulated recalls, and Semi-structured interviews. These all offer information regarding the plans made to gather data for the study. The proceeding section will then identify the pilot study completed.

#### 3.5.1 Sampling strategy

When primary research is gathered from research participants it is suggested that the quality of the research is based on the “suitability of the sampling strategy” employed (Cohen et al., 2009, p.100). As this study was exploratory in finding out what graduates perceive to be demands in a customer service encounter and unearthing the skills and knowledge used therein, it is clear that a purposive sampling strategy was needed. Purposive sampling is seen as when a researcher handpicks participants based on judgments made on the “particular characteristics being sought” (Cohen et al., 2009, p.115). The specific characteristics needed of participants in this study are noted as follows:
Figure 6 Characteristics of participants sought

- Graduates or Students from Leisure UK HE courses,
- Working in Manchester,
- Employed in a Leisure-based company and role.

The three characteristics noted above identify that the study needed to choose purposefully the participants with these in order to gain data that would yield results with which to answer the research questions. It should be noted here that by asking for students or graduates I was applying a negative case sampling strategy, too (Cohen et al., 2009). Negative case sampling is that of asking for students as well as graduates. Ultimately, this study sought to ascertain if graduates felt equipped by their studies, but obtaining participants who are yet to graduate will also evidence if the perceived demands, skills and knowledge are different between students and graduates.

3.5.2 Participant sourcing

Using a Purposive Sampling strategy, I planned to find participants via a number of calls for participation. As a lecturer in Leisure UK HE and working in Manchester, I already have access to a number of businesses and contacts who could participate in the study. I planned three approaches to sourcing participants: to contact Leisure businesses, to contact current students, and to contact current graduates in industry. Each of these methods of sourcing will now be discussed and the particular participants yielded by these methods are then identified in Chapter 4.

It is salient here to note that using my own contacts means that I accepted that I may have had a prior relationship with participants in the study. This prior relationship was important because I needed narrative data offered through a “deeply human, genuine, empathetic, and respectful relationship with the participant” (Clandinin, 2007, p.539). Narrative research suggests that prior relationships between the researcher and participant are important, as they ensure that participants are open and comfortable in discussing their problems and issues in full.
Firstly, I planned to contact my own network of contacts in the Leisure businesses located in Manchester by email. The contacts were from business cards received from networking events and I also searched for additional contact details in Leisure by using the Yellow Pages. The additional contacts were due to my knowledge of the company and because students or graduates had already worked there previously. A list of these companies is offered in Appendix 7.

The 42 companies identified in Appendix 7 would offer a starting point from which to source participants for the study. I created an advert (see Appendix 8) for these businesses and planned to call and email to source research participants. (The number of participants needed was identified after the pilot study in 2012, as discussed in the next section.)

The next method planned for sourcing participants was to email current students studying Leisure courses in Manchester. As I have taught in both Universities offering Leisure courses in Manchester, I am able to contact all Leisure students via email. During the course of this study these courses have changed, but for information I have tabulated all courses offered at the time of gathering participants:

Figure 7 Leisure courses in Manchester universities in 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BA (Hons) Tourism Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA (Hons) Events Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA (Hons) Culinary Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSC (Hons) Sports Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA (Hons) Hospitality Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA (Hons) International Hospitality Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA (Hons) Tourism Management with Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA (Hons) Hospitality Management with Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA (Hons) Management, Leadership and Leisure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA Events Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA Tourism Management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7 above clarifies that I had access to students in a range of Leisure courses. As this study considered the graduate needs from undergraduate courses, only students on the nine undergraduate courses were contacted. The email inviting them to participate in the study is located in Appendix 9 for reference.
The third method planned for sourcing participants was to use LinkedIn. LinkedIn is a networking website allowing professionals to connect and network online. During the course of teaching students I am connected with over 1000 graduates on this site; therefore, it offers another avenue through which to source participants who meet the criteria stipulated in the previous section. This is confirmed as an acceptable method for sourcing participants:

“Researchers may also consider other avenues to recruit online participants. One potentially fruitful, but largely untapped source for such participants is LinkedIn. Using LinkedIn, researchers could identify and contact working professionals based on the identifying information in their profiles.” (Knemeyer and Naylor, 2011, p.298)

Knemeyer and Naylor (2011) confirm that this resource is appropriate in sourcing participants and that it is currently neglected by many academics. Contacting known graduates on LinkedIn enables me to see their current role and Leisure business in which they are located. This meant that I could ensure that I contact only the graduates who meet the participant criteria, thus supporting the purposive sampling method. As this method is relatively new to research studies, the following identifies the advantages and disadvantages to using it:

Table 13 Advantages and disadvantages to using LinkedIn to source participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Contacting people via this website does not give me the person’s personal or work email address. This means that I do not need to access or use sensitive or personal information to contact them.</td>
<td>• I can only send a message to people with whom I am ‘Connected’. This means that the majority of my messages will be to graduates who I have taught previously. This limits the group of people to whom I have access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The recommendations and links on my profile show that I am a real person and give credence to my request for their participation.</td>
<td>• I will not see when they open or read my message, so I will have to message them and await responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• LinkedIn enables me to target people who are ideal candidates. I can review their prior education and current place of work. I am also able to search for a pool of participants</td>
<td>• Without other personal contact information I am only able to chase or reply to them in written form through this site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 13 was created to reflect the advantages and disadvantages to using my LinkedIn account to source participants. As evident from reading supporting texts on this method, it is perceived to be an advantage in finding specific participants for a study. Messaging my current contacts also supported my relationship with each potential participant. It also ensured that there is a continuing relationship basis on which I could ask for their support and conduct Narrative Research. Identifying three methods of participant sourcing ensured that I contacted and purposely sampled participants for this study in a systematic and appropriate manner.

3.5.3 Paying participants
As I have identified that the participants required for this study were either students or graduates from Leisure UK HE courses, it is apparent that their time spent participating in the study is valuable to them. As such, I decided to offer them payment in return for their participation. The ethical considerations of this are discussed in full in Section 3.8, but this section will identify the management and communication thereof. As can be noted in Appendices 8 and 9, the call for participation clarifies that participants will be offered a £20 voucher upon completion of the study. Although the time needed to complete the research was unknown, I felt that this was an appropriate amount to recompense their time. Previous known studies which offer payment are seen in medical research studies (see, for example, Head, 2009; Sullivan and Cain, 2004; Ripley, 2006). Medical studies offer payment to participants to motivate participation, reimburse time spent, or enable travel to and from the research location. For this study, and as noted above, the primary reason for offering payment was to reimburse participants for their time.

3.5.4 Participant briefing and informed consent
As a doctoral student completing research at the University of Manchester, I am contractually required to adhere to internal policies regarding participant briefing and informed consent. These are considered to be ethical issues (as discussed further in Section 3.8) and research processes needed when gathering research participants.
Plans for participant briefing and informed consent will be discussed here to outline the management of participants once they answer the call to participate.

Participant briefing is an important stage in communicating with research participants. It is an initial meeting held between the researcher and the participant to inform the participant of the requirements of the study and confirm their participation. I edited the University of Manchester Information Sheet (see Appendix 10) to offer this to participants during the briefing meeting. The information sheet clarifies the title of the research, the parameters of the study, the location of the study, participation required, and also contains a consent sheet to confirm their participation and what will happen with their data being offered. When editing this document and considering the consent from participants, I noted the University’s Policy on research involving human participants and made notes on how I managed these considerations:

Table 14 Briefing and informed consent of human participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of documentation</th>
<th>Considerations for the study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy – The participant must be free to take part in the research without coercion or penalty, and must be free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without a threat of any adverse effect.</td>
<td>Inform participants verbally that they can rescind their participation at any time, even after signing the consent form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficence – The research must be worthwhile in itself and have beneficial effects that outweigh any risks; it follows that the methodology must be sound so that positive results are yielded.</td>
<td>The methodology must fit the study and the processes involved must enable a viable and reliable study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-maleficence – Any possible harm must be avoided or mitigated by robust precautions.</td>
<td>Risk assessments are needed when considering the location of the briefing and data collection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidentiality – The right of the participant and his/her personal data remaining unknown to all but the research team must be respected (unless the participant agrees otherwise).</td>
<td>All participant names will be removed from all publications of their data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrity – The researcher must be open about</td>
<td>The consent sheet will identify the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
any gains, financial or otherwise, that he or she makes from the research, acknowledge the relevant contribution of third parties, and ensure that research outcomes are disseminated appropriately. publications possible as a result of participant data.

(University of Manchester 2014)

The considerations made in terms of the briefing and informed consent sheet were important in maintaining the safety and integrity of myself and the participants.

Informed consent is where research participants confirm their participation, but that they do so in the knowledge that they have the freedom and ability to choose to participate (Cohen et al., 2009). As this study looks into the demands felt by graduates in customer service encounters, it was identified that participation could lead to emotional stress. Emotional stress could occur due to the emotionally charged incidents that participants may wish to offer. As such, it was necessary to inform participants of this during the briefing, as well as plan for additional support if they needed it afterwards. Emotional distress is discussed as an ethical consideration in section 3.8.

This subsection has identified the plans for briefing participants and obtaining informed consent. These are vital stages in gathering primary research data, as they ensure the validity and legitimacy of the data used.

3.5.5 Stages and types of data collection for the study

Thus far, I have identified that primary data will be gathered from research participants using a purposive sampling strategy; they will be contacted via email and LinkedIn, briefed, and will consent to participation before gathering data. Data gathered for this study use Critical Incident Narrations, Stimulated recall Interviews, and Semi-structured interviews. These are each discussed in the following sections, but, for clarity, this brief section shows how this is staged and completed for each participant.
As Figure 8 illustrates, there were a number of stages planned for gathering primary data for my study. Like the Qualitative data analysis completed in Chapter 2, these stages were staggered for each participant to ensure that the concepts and theories can emerge from the data obtained. Specifically, Participant 1 started their participation and once they had finished, Participant 2 then started. This cyclical and staggered approach ensured that I gained focused discussion from each participant in the stimulated recall and interview, as well as enabling new questions and probing with each new participant.

### 3.5.6 Critical incident technique

This study gathered participant stories of critical incidents that they had experienced in working contexts. The reason for using the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) is that it is widely used in other customer service encounter research. It was also seen as the most effective way in which to obtain answers to my first research question:

1. What skills and knowledge are currently needed by graduates completing a Customer Service Encounter?
Nyquist et al. (1985), Nyquist and Booms (1987) and Bitner et al. (1990) all used the CIT to elicit customer stories of service encounters. Bitner et al.’s (1990) paper on customer service encounters is seen from the customer’s point of view and states that staff must ensure that their service is deemed satisfactory. This research reviewed 700 incidents of customer service to understand what customers perceive to be good or successful service in a range of Leisure businesses.

“The CIT (critical incident technique) can identify what employees need to know by making clear what general information customers consider important in different encounters. It is crucial that employees not only be taught scripts, but also be given appropriate knowledge. Training programs should be designed to develop a broad repertoire of responses (range of knowledge) and to allow for practice in selecting from the repertoire.” (Bitner et al., 1990, p.82)

In the conclusions to Bitner et al.’s (1990) paper they assert that their study can aid successful customer service encounters by giving staff the skills and knowledge needed to appease customers. Contrary to Bitner et al.’s (1990) study, this study seeks to understand staff (graduate) perceptions of customer service encounters. As intercultural service encounter research also used this method, it was deemed an appropriate method through which to gather graduate perceptions of customer demands made in industry (Warden et al. 2003; Strauss & Mang 1999; McCollough et al. 2000). Furthermore, the CIT is seen as a useful tool when completing a Needs Assessment, as it ensures that data are offered by participants and identifies specific areas in which education is lacking (Grant, 2002).

As noted in Section 3.3, critical incidents are seen as a form of Narrative Research, as they offer stories from research participants. Flanagan (1954) documented the use of the CIT in research to observe and collect data on human behaviour. He noted that participants were asked to think of a situation in a specific context and relay their thoughts and emotions relating to it. Fifty years on from Flanagan’s work, Butterfield et al. (2005) reviewed the developments of the term since his original paper. Although recent authors have adapted the term and applied it in other contexts, I used Flanagan’s stages for gathering critical incidents. Firstly, I noted the aims of the data: what are the demands felt by graduates? What skills and knowledge are seen in the encounters? This enabled me to frame participant briefing so that I could request
incidents that would answer these questions. Next came collecting the data. During the course of one week at work, participants were allowed to use either their personal phone or a Dictaphone provided by me to record their incidents. Participants would not be asked to record a set length, time or number of incidents and I kept this open. This decision was made because I was curious as to how many and what types of incidents they would produce. If they could not produce many and they were short and simplistic incidents, then it would be evident that customer demands, skills and knowledge were not seen as important to participants. Equally, if they declined to participate after the briefing, it would be clear that either they were too busy or could not provide me with the incidents requested. Each participant completed these narrations over one week and I organised them consecutively with the other participants. This enabled me to analyse and complete the next step with each participant separately, ensuring that my attention and reflection were on one participant independently and not on all of them at once. The incidents were either emailed directly to me or brought into the University on a USB stick (data management is noted in Section 3.5).

3.5.7 Stimulated recall

After collecting all incidents from each participant the next stage was to complete a Stimulated recall (Lyle, 2003). This is a form of Narrative Interview, as it is based upon narrated incidents. A stimulated recall incorporates the narrated incident recordings into the interview to allow the participant and researcher to reflect and make comments on the recorded incident. Prior to the stimulated recall with each participant, I listened to each incident twice and made notes on the location, participant and my reflections on the incident (examples thereof are offered in the next chapter). This enabled me to reflect on my own understanding of their stories before completing the stimulated recall. The premise of a stimulated recall is to stimulate further comments on, and insight into, an event that has happened (Lyle, 2003). It also allows the researcher to check their own understanding of an incident to ensure that they have fully understood the problems and emotions felt by the participant in relation to the incident. This method was also used to aid in answering my second research question:

2. How do the skills and knowledge needed by graduates compare to my theoretical framework of skills and knowledge?
By analysing the incidents offered in a stimulated recall I was able to elicit more information on skills and knowledge in order to link them to my theoretical framework.

3.5.8 Semi-structured interviews

The final stage planned in data collection is to complete Semi-structured interviews with participants after their Stimulated recall. This was in support of the third research question:

3. Is the current training and education provision for Leisure students in UK Universities adequate for graduates completing Customer Service Encounters in graduate employment?

The critical incidents and stimulated recall offer answers to research questions 1 and 2, but in order to evaluate fully whether the training and education provision is perceived to be adequate for these encounters, it is also important that I ask participants directly. I chose to use a semi-structured interview for this method because it allows open and probing questions for the researcher.

Semi-structured interviews are seen as:

“a conversation between an interviewer and respondent with the purpose of eliciting certain information from the respondent” (Moser and Kalton, 1971, p.271, as cited in Bell, 2009).

After obtaining incidents and reflections on participant experiences in industry it was important that I elicited information from them on their perspectives of education. As this interview was conducted immediately after the stimulated recall, it was also a focused interview based on new data offered and discussed immediately beforehand. It was advantageous to complete the interview in the same sitting so that the participant did not have to attend another meeting, but it was also useful that we had discussed the incidents immediately beforehand so that the incidents were fresh in our minds also. To investigate the mismatch that I perceived between Leisure Education and Graduate needs I could have simply completed a number of semi-structured interviews. However, obtaining new data on their experiences in industry enabled a more informal and focused interview relating to their education.
There are a number of advantages and disadvantages which need to be considered when planning to use semi-structured interviews. Some of these are tabulated below:

Table 15 Advantages and disadvantages to a semi-structured interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is adaptable to suit the research focus,</td>
<td>It is time-consuming in comparison to a questionnaire,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can ascertain participant feelings, motivations and beliefs in depth,</td>
<td>It is subjective and can therefore be biased,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probing in the interview allows for additional data to emerge,</td>
<td>Probing can mislead participants,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional aspects such as the tone of voice or expression of the participant can aid in understanding the content.</td>
<td>Questions are difficult to phrase correctly if participants have no prior knowledge of the topic area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Bell, 2009)

Table 15 above denotes key areas of consideration when planning this research method. Beginning with the advantages, it is clear that in order to ascertain participant feelings on their education, an interview will offer an in-depth account of their opinions. However, this can also be seen as biased and subjective; as an educator, I am all too aware that if a student feels that their marks are unfair, they can attribute their whole educational experience as being negative, regardless of the planning and support offered to them. The time needed to complete these also needed consideration, as critical incident narration already required one week at work and the stimulated recall was to follow. I was mindful of this when preparing the questions so that participants did not find their participation to be endless.

As noted, I planned to complete the semi-structured interviews after the stimulated recall. Questions planned for this method are noted in Appendix 11 to clarify the construct thereof. A mixture of closed and open questions was planned for these in order to enable me to gain data on when they had studied, what units they had completed, and to elicit their feelings on whether their education had prepared them for the encounters narrated. It was also important that I ascertain how the participants felt the skills and knowledge identified could be best taught. As an educator, I could easily analyse the data and suggest a method for teaching the skills and knowledge identified. I felt that it was more important to raise this question with the participants first in order to identify how they felt they could be taught. This would also ensure
that recommendations found in this study were not simply due to my analysis as an educator, but rather supported by recent graduates.

Evidently, interview data will be limited according to the participants completing the study. As I will not obtain a large sample of the total student population, it is also limited to the participant sample used in this study. However, by eliciting their feelings on whether their education had prepared them for the encounters narrated, I will also glean information on whether they see the conceptualised skills and knowledge being adaptable for course units and assessment.

3.6 Analysis methods: transcription and thematic analysis

As described in the previous section, all data gathered for this study are qualitative. These data are collected in audio format either by the participants themselves or by me. A summary of all primary data collection is noted below for clarification:

Table 16 Data collected and methods of recording and storing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of data collection</th>
<th>Obtained and stored</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Incidents</td>
<td>Participants record on either their personal devices or a Dictaphone provided by me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once received, all recordings will be stored on an encrypted device.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulated recall</td>
<td>Recorded on a Dictaphone by me and uploaded to a safe and encrypted device.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-structured interview</td>
<td>Recorded on a Dictaphone by me and uploaded to a safe and encrypted device.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 16 confirms, all data are produced in audio format and presented on a Dictaphone or via email by all participants. The data management plan is identified in the ethics section later in this chapter to confirm how the audio data were managed and stored. Audio data can be documented and analysed in a variety of
methods. Audio data are often transcribed, but doing this can result in problems in fully evidencing the interview components. As an interview can be seen as a social encounter (Cohen et al., 2009), translating this into written words (transcription) and then analysing this can lead to an inaccurate account of the data offered. Lapadat and Lindsay's (1998) paper suggests that “transcripts are reified during the interpretive process” (p.9). This is a conclusion noted by a number of academics in that by writing out every word, more emphasis is given to every word and, therefore, the meaning can become construed and the analysis inaccurate. In order to manage this problem I strategised the transcription in terms of timing, note taking, and conventions. These will now be discussed.

As relayed in Section 3.5.5, I planned to stagger gathering all data so that each set of narrated incidents and each stimulated recall with interviews would be completed together before I moved on to the next participant. Within this staged data collection I also planned to stagger the note taking and transcription. When listening to each critical incident received, I used a form to denote key areas understood from each incident. These are noted below:

**Figure 9 Planning for notes on each critical incident after submission**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Number:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incident number:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills used:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge used:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues/Points of interest:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links on this incident to my own experience:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further questions on content and incident for the stimulated recall:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The form in Figure 9 allowed me to make notes on each incident offered and to clarify my understanding of the event, but also raised questions in preparation for the stimulated recall with the participant. By staggering the collection of critical incidents and then listening to these in the stimulated recall with each participant, I was able to probe and understand fully the meaning and issues felt by participants in
each one. Writing notes when listening to the submitted audio incidents enabled me to clarify the logical chain of events in each incident as described by the participant, and raise any queries that I had without the participant being present. I also planned to identify how each incident linked to my own experience in industry so that I could clearly perceive my own lens and potential bias (this is explored in full in Section 3.7). By making notes and raising questions for each incident, I also had a clear plan of what to probe participants about during the Stimulated Recall. An example of these probing questions and my comments in using Figure 9 is outlined in Chapter 4.

As noted in Section 3.5.7, the purpose of a Stimulated recall is to allow both the researcher and the participant to pause and reflect on the content of the recorded incident. Although participants were not asked to prepare questions, my own planned questions would ensure that I questioned the perceived actions and meaning in the incident to check my own understanding.

After completing the stimulated recall and semi-structured interview, I planned to transcribe these in order to complete thematic analysis. Firstly, in transcription there are options in completing partial or full transcription. King and Horrocks (2010) identified that transcribing a number of interviews can become time-consuming and that researchers need to be aware that there is a:

“golden rule to avoid becoming swamped by the transcription process... (and)... think carefully about what needs to be transcribed” (King and Horrocks, 2010, p.143).

As this study requested critical incidents from participants over one week at work and then a stimulated recall and semi-structured interview, there were no quantitative elements framing these. Moreover, until the pilot study was completed (as noted in Section 3.6), I did not have a specific number of participants in mind. This meant that until all data gathering was completed, I would not know the amount of data available for transcription. Nevertheless, knowing that transcriptions would be needed partially or in full, it was important that I identify the transcription conventions planned.
Although Cohen et al. (2007) note that transcription can allow researchers to unpack the complexity in an interview by noting non-verbal cues and communication, it was clear that transcription conventions are also necessary in explaining to other readers the way in which the words were spoken. Conventions in transcription enable readers to understand intricate details of the words spoken in interviews:

“Conventions promote shared understanding between researchers and readers, and may facilitate the use of a data set by multiple researchers. Conventions improve consistency within a transcript and within and across databases, and may be necessary for the effective use of certain types of computer-assisted analysis.” (Lapadat, 2000, p.205)

Conventions are evidently an important aspect of analysis in qualitative data and are needed in order to clarify how analysis was undertaken. The conventions identified for this study are noted below:

**Figure 10 Transcription conventions used in the study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Convention</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td>Pause in speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___</td>
<td>Emphasis placed on a word (word seen as underlined)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pattern</strong></td>
<td>Any area that was seen as a pattern or key word was highlighted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Laughs)</td>
<td>Participant laughs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Coughs)</td>
<td>Participant coughs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Yawns)</td>
<td>Participant yawns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To create the transcription conventions in Figure 10 I studied the Jefferson (2004) system of conventions, as this is most widely sourced in research method texts (O’Reilly and Kiyimba, 2015; Sidnell and Stivers, 2012; Johanssen, 2004). Although Jefferson’s (2004) conventions use more symbols in transcription, the ones identified in Figure 10 will enable readers to read them clearly without pausing in confusion as to what the symbols mean. As this study seeks to understand what demands are made of graduates, the critical incidents are stories offered to be interpreted. Transcripts of these do not need more conventions, as they are stories rather than interview conversations. The subsequent stimulated recall and interviews are focused on ascertaining the meaning and content of the critical incidents and participants’
opinions on their education. Offering more conventions to these transcriptions is seen to damage the flow of reading.

In terms of analysis conventions available, Miles and Huberman (1994) identified 12 tactics possible in dealing with transcribed qualitative data. For this study I planned thematic analysis of all gathered data. Thematic analysis is where a researcher identifies patterns arising from a transcription or matches current themes identified in the literature. An important component of thematic analysis is to evidence the processes undertaken to obtain the themes in order for successful auditing of the research (King and Horrocks, 2010). As noted in Section 3.2, skilling and knowledge themes from my theoretical framework arose from secondary data analysis in Chapter 2. These themes, along with their codes, are noted below for clarification:

Table 17 Theoretical framework themes with codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Key Text Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISKil&amp;K</td>
<td>Skills and knowledge needed in industry as seen by employers</td>
<td>(People 1st, 2013; People 1st, 2011b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USKil&amp;K</td>
<td>Skills and Knowledge taught in UK Leisure Courses</td>
<td>(QAA, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS</td>
<td>Soft Skills and Knowledge needed in industry as seen in research</td>
<td>(Baum, 2002a; Burns, 1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL</td>
<td>Emotional Labour</td>
<td>(Hochschild, 2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>Aesthetic Labour</td>
<td>(Witz et al., 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>Sexualised Labour</td>
<td>(Warhurst and Nickson, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Intercultural Sensitivity</td>
<td>(Bennett, 1986)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQ</td>
<td>Service Quality</td>
<td>(Parasuraman et al., 1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>Co-creativity/production</td>
<td>(Chathoth et al., 2013)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The codes noted above were used in the transcription document for each critical incident. In table format (examples offered in Chapter 4). Placing the transcription into a table enabled me to identify emerging themes as seen in the data. As noted in
this section, there are a range of problems and benefits in analysing audio data from an interview setting. In order to mitigate the perceived problems in transcriptions, I have discussed the decisions made to manage and analyse all forms of data. To clarify the method of transcription and analysis for each stage, please note the following table:

Table 18 Stages of interpreting the received audio data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data type</th>
<th>Transcription and Note taking</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Incidents</td>
<td>Listening to each incident of each participant one by one. Making notes on these to prepare questions on their meaning and content in the Stimulated recall. Transcribing them after all data are collected.</td>
<td>Transcription to identify the content of each incident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulated recall</td>
<td>Making notes in the stimulated recall on participant reactions, tone of voice, expressions, and non-verbal communication. Transcribing the stimulated recall after all data are collected.</td>
<td>Thematic analysis of the incident and comments made during the stimulated recall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-structured interview</td>
<td>Transcription.</td>
<td>Thematic Analysis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.7 Pilot study in 2012

In the process of completing doctoral research it was important to complete a pilot study to test the planned methods of data collection and analysis. As my study sought to identify the skills and knowledge needed by graduates, it was important to identify if critical incident narration would yield enough information on the typical demands felt by graduates in industry. I did not pilot the stimulated recall or the semi-structured interview as I have completed interviews in undergraduate and post-graduate dissertations and have experience analysing these.
Piloting critical incident narration would also evidence the number of incidents and the length of time offered for these in order to ascertain the number of participants needed. During the summer of 2012 I conducted a pilot study of critical incident narration with one participant. This person conformed to the participant requirements in that they had completed previous studies in Leisure in the UK and were working as a manager in a Leisure business. Using the information sheet and informed consent sheet in Appendix 10, I asked this participant to record critical incidents over the course of one week at work.

The pilot study participant offered three narrated incidents during one week. Dates and lengths of recordings are noted below:

Table 19 Pilot study critical incident timings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Length of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09/07/2012</td>
<td>3 minutes, 40 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/07/2012</td>
<td>3 minutes, 55 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/07/2012</td>
<td>4 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These were listened to, transcribed and analysed using the thematic analysis and codes planned and stated in Section 3.5. Neither the stimulated recall nor the semi-structured interview was piloted, as the pilot was focused on ascertaining the number of incidents possible and whether these were of a suitable length and content to enable analysis. An example of the analysis completed with these narrated incidents is offered in Appendix 12 where incident 2 from the pilot study is offered in full. A full report on this pilot study is not offered, as the main objective was to ascertain if the CIT offered enough data on skills and knowledge in order to answer the research questions. Having completed this pilot of the narrated incidents and analysis, I decided to source 12 participants for the study. (The specific participants used are noted in full in the following chapter.)

3.8 Reflexivity
My study was born from experience in lecturing Leisure students in UK HE. As it is based on my own experience it is important that I reflect upon my own position as a researcher:

“Objectivity is a false claim by researchers.” (Cohen et al., 2009, p.36)

This quotation from Cohen et al. (2009) confirms why my own reflexivity and subjectivity need addressing in this study. Trying to be impartial or unbiased in this study would be dishonest, as the premise was born from my own professional practice and I am therefore professionally motivated. Furthermore, in using Narrative Research with participants who know me, I am also emotionally connected with the data offered by people with whom I already had a professional relationship.

“Reflexivity brings into the process a more personal dimension” (Bold, 2011, p.3)

Bold’s (2011) text on Narrative Research confirms that researcher reflexivity is important as it aids identification of the human elements of the data offered. Reflexivity is also important in narrative research as:

“the researcher will be both a member of the group and yet studying the group” (Cohen et al, 2007: p178)

Therefore, as I am inextricably linked with the participants my own reflexivity in this study is vital to ensure that my own opinions and responses are clear.

It is essential to note that any data analysis seen to involve the researcher’s own knowledge and position:

“the lens of the researcher is always involved in the analysis of data” (Punch and Oancea, 2014, p.49)

This quotation from Punch and Oancea (2014) accepts that a researcher’s position in analysis is not simply detached, but rooted in the analysis of the data. I have identified one tool used in control of this in Figure 9 in section 3.5. Figure 9 shows a list of questions I used when listening to each incident for the first time. This check
list of areas enabled me to make notes on my own understanding, clarify my own lens on the data, and identify questions to clarify this understanding. This reflexivity was important to ensure my own bias and opinion was questioned before meeting with participants in the stimulated recall. Although Briggs et al. (2012) states that reflexivity does not entirely omit researcher opinion and bias, it does allow transparency in researcher opinion and lens during the analysis process.

Another form of reflexivity used in gathering the data for this study was my own empathy with the participants. As I already knew the participants I had an interest in their safety, happiness and success and empathised with their situation. Punch and Oancea (2014) state that a lack of empathy on participant concerns would actually ignore the concerns raised or felt by participants. Therefore my own empathy with the participant was deemed an asset and important part of reflexivity to ensure I tried to fully understand their position. This was supported in the stimulated recall where I asked participants directly about how they felt about certain incidents and tried to further empathise and understand their position.

Briggs et al (2012) suggest another way to be a reflexive researcher is to critically reflect on my own race, class, gender, education and background. Although they talk about this tool as being important in feminist research by women, it is poignant to my study as I have also studied and worked in the same positions as my participants:

"Researchers are in the world and of the world. They bring their own biographies to the research situation and participants behave in particular ways to their presence." (Cohen et al., 2007, p.171)

Biggs et al (2012) suggestion is confirmed with Cohen et al's (2007) quotation above and it is clear that education research requires researchers to accept and identify their own position and history in order to fully reflect on their position in the research. In chapter 1 section 1.1.4 I identified my previous education and work experience to ensure I am transparent in my own position and history in relation to this study. These experiences and situations cannot be ignored and by being aware of them I can ensure my position is clear and not incorrectly influencing the interpretation of data gathered. Another way I checked on my own interpretation of the data was through discussion with my supervisors. Whilst I drafted and edited
Chapter 5 I discussed my analysis and discussion to check my interpretation and understanding of the incidents offered to ensure my own perspective was challenged.

Reflexivity through visiting and revisiting the data was seen as another important task when collecting and analysing the data. I adhered to the following statement in questioning my understanding of all data:

“what is the data telling me (subjective lenses) and what is it I want to know? (research objectives) and how are the two linked?” (Punch and Oancea, 2014, p219)

This quotation was useful when listening to the incidents submitted, note taking and then probing in the stimulated recalls. By focusing my questions on my subjective lens and the research questions I was able to maintain my own focus. Using the stages note in Figure 8 also meant that I consistently reflected and revisited the data for each participant.

So far I have mainly discussed my reflexivity in listening to and understanding the critical incidents offered from participants. The stimulated recall also required my reflexivity. Stimulated recalls are seen as “a result of continual discussion” (Rolfsen, 2011, p.3) and not simply a narrative interview using a question and answer format. In this way I had to be probing and curious throughout the stimulated recall and reflective on my own understanding and questions which came about as a result. Examples of this reflective probing are noted in the following chapter.

In terms of reflexivity in producing and analysing the data offered for this study, Briggs et al (2012, p.116) suggests that researchers should act as a “conduit” of participant accounts. Indeed, as noted previously, Cohen et al (2007) identified that the researcher is a member and observer of the group and so clearly acts as a translator of participant data. Being both a participant and observer in the research requires further reflexivity as I needed to ensure my own contribution to the stimulated recalls was appropriate and not manipulating the opinions offered from participants. Being a participant and observer within this study is also supported by the work of Flick (1998) who suggested four researcher roles: stranger, visitor,
insider and initiate. Again my participation is seen as an insider in this study as I have not only known the contexts within which the participants work and had studied, I too have completed a degree in a similar area and have graduated into Leisure roles. In this way my position and participation enabled deeper understanding of the incidents, issues and emotions felt by the participants as I had also witnessed and experienced similarly.

A final point of note in reflexivity in this study is in Sexual dichotomism (Cohen et al., 2007, p.35). As noted in Chapter 2, Sexualised Labour is present in the Leisure industry. Thus far, the literature has seen this from female employees’ perspectives in that attractive female workers are desirable to service in Leisure businesses. As a female and as a member of staff who has also been asked to wear uniform that enhanced my own aesthetics, I needed to be mindful of my own position if participants narrated incidents of a sexual or aesthetic nature. My own critique in Chapter 2 noted how the literature does not currently consider homosexual attractiveness or the sexualised labour of men, so it was important that I, as a woman, ensured that I observed all possible perspectives offered in the incidents as being equal in order to enable full comparison to previous literature.

This section has acknowledged my own role in data generation and collection. Through acknowledgement of my own position and creating reflective processes in the methodology, I was able to perceive my own understanding and crosscheck participants’ reasons for offering specific data to analyse. Reflecting on my own experiences in the Stimulated recall enabled me to offer understanding and empathy to participants to grasp fully their own positions and feelings of customer demands as a graduate. As a needs assessment study I was already a component of the research, as I am seeking to understand how to improve my own teaching in support of graduates in industry. By outlining the processes and reflections that I made during data generation, it is clear that this study will offer an insight into customer service encounters from a graduate perceptive, but that it is limited by the experiences and perceptions of the participants and myself.

3.9 Ethics
“The inherent ethics of narrative research lies in the resolute honesty of the researcher’s reflexivity, which states clearly the biases, aims, and positioning of the knower and the circumstances under which the knowledge was created, with the researcher taking full responsibility for what is written.” (Clandinin, 2007 p.549)

The quotation above was important in this study because I was gaining narrative data within a Needs Assessment of my own professional practice. It was vital that I adhere to researcher ethics to ensure that the study and report are honest and clear accounts of how the research was undertaken. This section reiterates and confirms all decisions made in the research to ensure that it was carried out in an ethical manner.

To begin with, the ethics panel at the University of Manchester confirmed that the study planned was of a medium risk to participants (See Appendix 13 for confirmation of ethical approval for the study). This was due to the personal and emotional nature of the incidents that I was requesting from them. A customer demand could refer to a number of different situations and, from my own experience and knowledge, I was already aware that these could be of a personal or even sexual nature. With a medium-risk rating for the study, the briefing and additional support offered to participants were important so that they felt safe and comfortable in discussing all of their opinions. The ethical components and decisions of this study will now be discussed.

After gaining consent from each participant to meet and discuss the research, a briefing and informed consent sheet was created to use at the meeting (see Appendix 10). Each participant was asked for a date and location convenient for them to meet with me for the research briefing. Some participants wanted to meet near work and others wanted to meet near their home. This required me to use Situated Judgment (BERA, 2004), as it was important that participants felt safe and comfortable in discussing the research, and yet, at the same time, I had to assess the risks in meeting them in a range of locations (ESRC, 2012). The participants chose a range of public service businesses in which to complete the briefing: Starbucks, Cafe Nero, Biko's Cafe, Caffe Rouge, Beach Road Cafe, and the Spread Eagle Pub. When meeting a potential participant in a strange location I assessed the risks by completing a site visit prior to the meeting. This ensured that I knew where I was going and that the business was a safe location. When meeting each participant I offered to buy them a
drink and a snack for the meeting so that they had refreshments for the meeting and did not spend their own money. These refreshments totalled £60.05 and were paid by my scholarship funds at the University of Manchester. The initial welcome and ordering of refreshments enabled the participant and I to familiarise with each other whilst providing me with the opportunity to set an informal tone for the relationship. An informal tone and relationship were important so that the participant could trust and feel at ease with me. If they agreed to participate, there was potential for narrating incidents which are emotionally charged; therefore, I needed them to trust and feel comfortable with me quickly whilst maintaining professional integrity (BSA, 2002). The briefing sheet used at these meetings contained the research questions and explained the process and participant requirements within the research (see Appendix 10). This was read through with each participant, allowing them time and consideration to ask questions about their role. There were an additional four participants who attended a briefing meeting, but these four decided not to complete the research (see Appendix 14 for a full list of respondents). This identifies that participants knew that they could opt out after completing informed consent and used this right to withdraw where necessary. I also confirmed at the briefing that they would be anonymised and that in the thesis they would only be known as P and then a number.

Throughout the participant narrations I had calls and emails from participants needing reassurance that their stories would be of use. This suggested that by using a method unknown to each participant, I had asked them to complete something that they were not secure or confident in completing. However, the purpose of asking participants to choose and narrate incidents was crucial in gaining data that represented their own working and skilling use and not something for which I had asked them to specifically look. This was supported by a frequent comment in that they wanted to submit the ‘right’ data. I had to reiterate that it was not ‘right’ data that I needed, but rather their own opinions and stories that they wanted to offer me.

A further ethical consideration within obtaining critical incidents was the potential for incidents to rouse emotional discomfort in each participant. To mitigate this potential for discomfort, I implemented nine strategies. Firstly, a risk assessment was
completed (see Appendix 15) to identify potential emotionally charged encounters and discussions. In this risk assessment I identify the contingencies put in place to lessen the risk or severity of the potential risk to participants completing the narrated incidents. The consent sheet clarified possible emotional risks to each participant. In this way, they were aware of this possibility before narrating the data. My own reflective notes and researcher diary were used when listening to each incident so that I was aware of potential emotionally charged incidents before the stimulated recall.

Reiterating the participant's right to withdrawal at each stage ensured that if participants did feel uncomfortable or unhappy while discussing each incident, they were able to withdraw at any time. In addition to this, I was aware that I could terminate their participation if I felt that they were becoming increasingly distressed, and that I could put them in touch with a qualified counsellor if needed. By creating a break between the narrated incidents, listening to these alone and then completing the stimulated recall, it meant that I could raise any concerns that I had about the data with my supervisors. I raised concerns with my supervisor in one of the 35 incidents, in which I felt that there were mental health issues raised from others narrated in the event. I was concerned that I could hear undercurrents of participant discomfort in the narration and needed to check how to manage and ask questions in relation to these implied feelings.

Through a supervisor discussion I was able to direct my questions appropriately and gain further participant comments. This skill was developed through prior experience as a lecturer and placement supervisor. If during the stimulated recall a participant wanted to talk about their feelings regarding the incident in depth, I offered them more time or refer them to a counsellor if requested. Finally, all participants were debriefed at the end of the semi-structured interviews to ensure that they completed the narration and discussion without any emotional, personal or professional discomfort.

The final area for consideration in the ethics of this study is in the use of recording devices and technology to complete and submit the incidents. As each participant
was requested to record incidents individually and send these to me prior to the stimulated recall, they needed to ensure that these remained confidential and secure. Participants were offered Dictaphones with which to complete the recordings, which could then be handed back to me. The recordings were then downloaded onto my work computer and encrypted so that only I could access them. This security in recording and file management was important so that participants knew their information was safe and kept secure in order to protect their anonymity.
Summary

This chapter has offered an account of the planned methods of data collection and data analysis, participant sourcing and briefing, and research ethics. This is supported by a number of appendices that evidence the planning and consent of participants used in the study. As a needs assessment, this study gained narrative data from participants in order to identify the skills and knowledge needed by Leisure graduates in their graduate employment roles. The following chapter will now identify the participants used in the study, the data that they offered, and examples of the analysis completed.
Chapter 4
Collection and Analysis of Data

Introduction
The previous Methodology chapter outlined the planned methodologies for the study. This chapter explains the specific data gathered and offers examples of the data and analysis completed. To begin with, changes to the planned methods are noted. This is followed by tabulated details of the participants and locations and the recordings completed. These tables identify the quantity of the data gathered. Next, examples of data analysis are offered to evidence how the data were recorded, examined and analysed. As I received a vast amount of data, this chapter offers only examples of the data collected and analysed. Then in Chapter 5 I discuss the analysis conducted of all of my data.

4.1 Changes to the planned methodology
There were two changes made to the planned methodology as outlined in Chapter 3: fewer participants are used and the stimulated recalls were not transcribed. Both of these changes were due to the mass of data received. The methods of data gathering and analysis were planned due to a pilot study in the summer of 2012; however, researcher reflexivity was needed in the completion of this study to ensure that the mass of data gathered did not swamp the analysis process:

“golden rule to avoid becoming swamped by the transcription process... (and)... think carefully about what needs to be transcribed” (King and Horrocks, 2010, p.143)

Through knowledge of how data transcription can cause analysis problems, I decided to transcribe only the incidents submitted and listen to the stimulated recalls, drawing out direct quotations where necessary. This section identifies the two changes made in order to identify which data were collected and then move on to how the data were reported in the thesis.
This study uses data gathered from six participants. In order to gain these, I followed the sourcing method as described in Section 3.4 in the previous chapter. Firstly, I had originally planned to source 12 participants directly from their place of business or learning institution. I originally wanted 12 participants due to the quantity and depth of information offered in the pilot study completed in the summer of 2012. The pilot study had offered me three incidents from one employee; therefore, I used this as a benchmark of how much data was likely from each participant. To find participants, I firstly emailed, phoned and visited 59 Leisure companies in Manchester and emailed over 500 Leisure students at the University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University and Salford University between 6th March and 4th June 2013. From these calls seeking interest, I received responses from 18 potential participants. Of these 18 responses, only one completed the research in full (P1). I met with one other participant from this group of 18 but they declined to participate. The remaining 16 did not respond in relation to meeting for a briefing. For full details of all of these participants, please note Appendix 14.

With such a low response rate from the hundreds of people and companies that I contacted, I decided to contact people that already knew me and my position through LinkedIn. From 14th June to 15th July I emailed 33 contacts through the social networking site LinkedIn. As reviewed in Chapter 3, LinkedIn is a useful mechanism in sourcing participants, as it clarifies the researcher’s credentials and enables the researcher to view participants’ locations prior to contact (Knemeyer and Naylor, 2011). I used LinkedIn to find graduates and contacts who I knew had completed Leisure-based degrees and were working in the local area in Leisure-based roles. I found 33 potential participants on this site. Of the 33 messages sent on LinkedIn, I received 17 responses.

In summary, and from a review of Appendix 14, I received a total of 29 responses to my call for participants. Of these 29, nine immediately rejected the call and informed me that they no longer lived or worked in Manchester (7), had temporary, sporadic work (1), or that they needed to concentrate on postgraduate studies (1). A total of eight participants agreed to complete a briefing meeting after their initial response. Of the eight who met me for a briefing, two participants signed informed consent sheets and then decided not to participate. Reasons for this were that they were too
busy and that they could not find time to narrate incidents for the study. This
confirms that, through using an informed consent sheet and knowledge of the
participant’s right to withdraw, this study allowed participants to withdraw their
participation without negative consequences for the study or themselves. 12
respondents did not reply to my follow up email and so did not complete the
research.

Although I had originally aimed to recruit 12 participants, the volume and variety of
data gained from these six were sufficient to use for analysis against the theoretical
framework created in Chapter 2. The pilot participant had offered four incidents, but
the six reported in this study offered 35 recordings, showing a higher average than I
had anticipated. Although I have half the number of respondents originally planned,
the length and depth of data from these offer a rich and varied account of the
customer demands faced by graduates and the skills and knowledge needed to meet
these demands.

The other change to the planned methodology was that of transcribing all data
gathered. With 35 critical incidents, six stimulated recalls and six interviews, it is
evident that I was “swamped” with data (King and Horrocks, 2010, p.143). As such,
I decided to transcribe the 35 submitted incidents and the interviews only. A
summary of these changes is noted below:

Table 20 Changes to transcription planned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data gathered</th>
<th>Planned method</th>
<th>Changes to the method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Incidents</td>
<td>Listen to each incident once before the stimulated recall and make researcher notes to prepare for the stimulated recall.</td>
<td>No changes made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transcribe and analyse using thematic analysis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulated Recall</td>
<td>Transcribe and complete thematic analysis using the transcription.</td>
<td>Listened to the stimulated recall and linked content of additional incidents and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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A final comment on a change not anticipated in this study was that of participants taking the offered vouchers after completing the study. I offered the planned reward of £20 to all participants because they were working professionals and may appreciate reimbursement of their time. In Chapter 3, it was noted that paying participants is usual in medical research (for further details see Ripley, 2006; Ripley, et al., 2006); however, it is also an increasing incentive used to gain social science participants (Head, 2009). Research on paying participants suggests that it is seen to enable easier access to participants who may not usually offer participation. However, in this study, only three of the six participants actually took this payment after completing their participation in the study. I did not ascertain if this was a key motivator for my participants, but it is evident that using LinkedIn to find them was an easier method of receiving responses.

### 4.2 Participants and data gathered

This section identifies specific details about the Participants and the amount of data gathered and used for the study. As noted in section 3.8 all participants are anonymised and referred to as P and a number in this thesis:

#### Table 21 Participant demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Date graduated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Waitress and Bar worker</td>
<td>Events Management</td>
<td>Not graduated, in 1st year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Events Coordinator and Host</td>
<td>Tourism Management with Events</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 identifies participant demographics to enable a clearer understanding of where they all worked and the degrees which they studied. All of these participants had studied at one of the Universities in Manchester. For anonymity and ethical reasons, I am not including the name of the institution. Furthermore, they had all graduated recently or were currently studying. P1, who completed the study, was the only participant still studying and was the only respondent from the first call for participants. The genders of participants are unequal, as only P6 is male. The issue of gender and sexualised labour is discussed in full in the following chapter, but it was not essential to compare equal groupings of gender for this study, as I was interested in finding out generic demands present and generic skills and knowledge needed. The data collection can be seen as limited due to only using six participants completing the study. This could suggest that the diversity in participation is limited. This impacts the study in a quantifiable sense, but as the study is exploratory it was important to identify the particular skills and knowledge needed and not test these across a large sample. By staggering the collection and processing of data from these participants I was also able to identify when data saturation was complete. Data saturation is whereby qualitative research brings in new participants continually until the data set is deemed complete (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). My study reached data saturation after completing data gathering with 6 participants. I decided to stop recruiting more participants when the particular skills and knowledge were identified. Data gathering occurred between 2\textsuperscript{nd} May – 4\textsuperscript{th} August 2013 and is clarified below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Event Business Consultant</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Conference Consultant</td>
<td>Events Management</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>Hotel Account Assistant</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Events Management</td>
<td></td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>Hotel Food &amp; Beverage Assistant</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Events Management</td>
<td></td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>Pub &amp; Dance Troupe Manager</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Director/Manager</td>
<td>Tourism Management with Events</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 22 Critical incident data gathering

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>How data were recorded</th>
<th>When data were submitted and how</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dictaphone provided by me</td>
<td>Handed into my office on 2\textsuperscript{nd} May 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Used their own iPhone voice memo application</td>
<td>Emailed the incidents on 15\textsuperscript{th} July 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Used their own iPhone voice memo application</td>
<td>Emailed the incidents on 17\textsuperscript{th} July 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Used their own iPhone voice memo application</td>
<td>Emailed the incidents on 1\textsuperscript{st} August 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Used their own iPhone voice memo application</td>
<td>Emailed the incidents on 4\textsuperscript{th} August 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Used their own iPhone voice memo application</td>
<td>Emailed the incidents on 11\textsuperscript{th} July 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 22 tabulates how the critical incidents were recorded and submitted to me. As mentioned in the previous section, P2–P6 wanted to use their own mobile phones to record their incidents. Only P1 used the Dictaphone and handed this to me directly. The incidents emailed by P2–P6 were removed from my emails and stored on my own computer to ensure that they were safe and encrypted. Table 22 also shows the timing of the staggered participant submissions. Data were received between 2\textsuperscript{nd} May and 4\textsuperscript{th} August 2013. This staggered approach enabled me to complete the stimulated recalls one by one, reflect on the data received, and probe further with the next participant. The next table outlines the total data received from all participants’ critical incident narrations. Once transcribed these amounted to 27 pages and 13, 592 words:

Table 23 Participant critical incidents and length

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>Incident Number</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Incident Number</th>
<th>Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Talking about a definition</td>
<td>29 seconds</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 mins, 59 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 min, 41 seconds</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4 mins, 50 seconds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 min, 18 seconds</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4 mins, 17 seconds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 min, 09 seconds</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 min, 21 seconds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 identifies the number of incidents that each participant submitted, alongside the length of time for each one. Although my pilot study participant offered four incidents, each only around 1 minute in length, participants in the final study offered between three and 13 incidents, which ranged in length between 29 seconds and 5 minutes, 48 seconds. With a total of 35 incidents offered by these participants, it was clear that I had a great range of data from which to report this study. Furthermore, when listening to these, P3 and P5 included more than one incident in their narration. This meant that in total there were 38 incidents in these narrations. In addition to transcribing the incidents I also created titles and key words associated with each incident to ensure I could remember and recall them more easily.

Appendix 16 clarifies the specific details of all incidents submitted for the study. When listening to these I made notes on their content and reflected on how the incident linked to my own experience. This was to ensure that my own knowledge and experience were clear and documented before each stimulated recall, where we discussed the content and meaning together. For example, when listening to P4’s recordings, I had direct experience of the same problems. When reflecting on incident 1 from P4, I noted:

“I had a similar experience working at ‘Hotel Chain’. I worked at the ‘Hotel Name’ and my email address was
rhi.manbr.sales.manager@hotelname.com. It was not the url after the @ I had a problem with, but the words for my own account before the @ sign. My role in ‘Hotel name’ was to network and gain new business, so this proved tricky when talking over the phone or handing out business cards, as the email was not personal to me. In my own experience I found it easier sometimes to get the email address of the client first and then start correspondence from me first. This made it easier.”(MF researcher notes)

By noting my own reflections and experience linked to the incidents, I was able to eliminate bias and check participant perceptions of the incident. This was then checked in the stimulated recall with each participant. Details of the stimulated recalls are now offered in the following table:

Table 24 Stimulated recall and interview locations and duration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Number</th>
<th>Date of stimulated recall and Interview</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>09/10/13 @ 1330 hrs</td>
<td>A1.30 (meeting room)</td>
<td>41 mins, 32 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>19/07/13 @ 1300 hrs</td>
<td>A1.23 (my office)</td>
<td>1 hr, 52 mins, 22 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>22/07/13 @ 1900 hrs</td>
<td>A1.23 (my office)</td>
<td>1 hr, 14 mins, 19 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>05/08/13 @ 1700 hrs</td>
<td>A1.23 (my office)</td>
<td>1 hr, 31 mins, 43 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>14/08/13 @ 1000 hrs</td>
<td>A1.30 (meeting room)</td>
<td>1 hr, 47 mins, 49 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>29/07/13 @ 1400 hrs</td>
<td>A1.23 (my office)</td>
<td>1 hr, 57 mins, 07 seconds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The stimulated recalls and interviews also took between 41 minutes and almost 2 hours in length. Again, these were staggered in date according to when each participant had sent in their critical incidents and when they were available. P3 and P4 requested times after work so that they could complete the research. Completing these in University settings meant that they were completed in private, safe and secure locations for both of us.
There was one problem during the stimulated recall. During P2’s stimulated recall there was a fire alarm in the University. This meant that her stimulated recall was paused for 35 minutes. During this time we evacuated the building to the designated safety area with the other University personnel and staff. As P2 was completing research, I ensured that we stayed away from colleagues and I did not introduce her to anyone. This was to maintain her anonymity and also ensure that she felt comfortable and safe. I also made sure that our conversation during the fire evacuation avoided discussion of the study to ensure that no further details or information was offered while amongst others.

The tables offered in this section clarify the dates, times and quantity of data gathered for the study. They evidence how the data were managed and recorded ethically to ensure that the information remained safe and anonymous. The following section will now evidence how I transcribed and analysed these data yielded.

4.3 Handling and analysing data collected

As mentioned previously, after receiving the recorded incidents from each participant, I listened to each one and made my own notes on its content, meaning, my own reflections, and questions to ask during the stimulated recall to clarify. This created 38 pages of notes totalling 13,300 words. As mentioned in the previous chapter, these notes were made to manage my own reflexivity, to clarify my own understanding of the incident, and make notes on the questions that I wanted to raise during the stimulated recall. An example of the kinds of questions that I noted is offered below:

“Participant 1, Incident 2: MF: Why did the customer ask if the participant understands English? How do they feel about this?” (MF researcher notes)

These notes enabled me to plan my probing and understanding of each incident before the stimulated recall. As noted previously, my own reflections on how the incident linked to my own experience also enabled me to see my own perspective on these. For example, the fourth incident offered by Participant 1 involved a sexual request from the customer. After listening to this incident, I noted:
"I have had similar experiences when working in bars and restaurants. I have had marriage proposals and phone numbers given to me in the past and have not found this alarming or scary, unlike P1." (MF researcher notes)

These notes enabled me to see any difference in perspective and experience between me and each participant incident. They also ensured that my questions in the stimulated recall remained impartial and probing of their perceptions and not mine.

Therefore, when starting the stimulated recall, I had acknowledged my understanding of each incident, noted the content and details, written out questions to understand the participant’s perspective fully, and reflected on my own experience linked to the incident. By making these notes and preparing for each stimulated recall, I was able to complete the interviews ethically and transparently.

The stimulated recalls were audio-recorded and included playback of the original incident submitted by the participant. During the stimulated recalls, participants would often explain their incidents or feelings through offering more incidents. An example of how these arose in the stimulated recall is noted below from P5’s data:

“For example, once I went, it was a function, and I'm not smoking, so I'm allowed to just go out and have a drink. And he's (colleague) a smoker, he's a bad smoker. So every time when he sees me somewhere outside, doing nothing, it's like, "What are you doing here?" It's like, "I'm smoking. Pretend that I am smoking. If you can't see my cigarette, doesn't matter if I don't smoke. I'm smoking." So just because I need to get out as well, because it's warm, and stuff like that. So I went out, and I sit down, and he comes outside with the manager, like, "What are you doing here?" "I'm smoking. Can't you see it? Invisible." And he comes to me and he rolls a paper and just put it like rolled paper, put it on my hand. And I look at him, like, "What do you think you are doing? Why do you think you can do that?"" (Participant 5 incident 47)

As you can see, P5 started the new incident by stating “for example”. This clarified that she was offering a different incident so that I could further understand her perspective. A summary of these additional incidents is in Appendix 17.

These additional incidents either identified new demands felt by participants or offered clarity as to their original incident by offering a different example. All of
these, except for incident 43, were aligned with the theoretical framework successfully and used in the discussion in Chapter 5.

From identifying the total number of incidents and data received it is important here to offer a quantification of the documents I created which include all transcriptions and analysis.

Table 25 Quantity of data and analysis completed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical incidents offered before the stimulated recall</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13,592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical incidents offered during the stimulated recall</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills and knowledge analysis in critical incidents</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic analysis of critical incidents</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15,633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic analysis of interviews</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>129</strong></td>
<td><strong>63,283</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table 25 above shows, the amount of data and analysis completed for this study is significant. This is why this chapter offers single examples of the transcribed incidents and then discusses the analysis in Chapter 5 to identify what the analysis showed. An example of the transcribed incidents is now offered:

Participant 2, Incident 2:

“Okay, so this is my second observation ....Today there was an Irish mother and her son. The Irish lady was in her late 50s and her son was in his 30s somewhere, and they happened to, erm, meet two of our more Spanish members of staff at the front door. M1, who is a manager, and S1, who is new, learning, learning English, and, erm, being trained at the moment sort of, erm, she has been here about a week now. Erm, basically, there was just a big, massive breakdown in communication. The Spanish girls could not understand the Irish accents and the Irish mother and son couldn’t understand the Spanish girls at all really, so... erm...I stepped in and played translator...erm... My observation of this was firstly that, erm... the Irish... parent, the Irish mum and son were... getting more and more frustrated really, as they were having to repeat themselves, getting, getting annoyed...erm...generally my observation of people... in the Hospitality industry not being understood, they, they seem again to take like I said in my first observation: they seem to take offence. People take offence to things
like this; they can’t really understand why. It seems like they can’t understand why people can’t understand them when, in fact, they are speaking English, erm… but then you know I don’t think people from Northern Ireland… are aware of how difficult it is to understand them if you have not come across their accent before or, or if English is your second language anyway. Erm, they seem to be getting quite frustrated with each other and, erm, there was just loads of miscommunication but… the bigger observation, erm, was that, er, by the time they had been seated and made placed an order, S1 had… asked… them… I think they’d asked for Chips with a Garlic sauce and M1 had asked S1 who was training had asked if… erm…if they wanted like a, a, a, I don’t know, a standard Garlic Sauce or if they wanted… oh, they asked for Garlic Mayonnaise. S1 had asked if they wanted crushed… or sliced Garlic, ‘cause she didn’t really understand that there was just, erm, already pre-made Garlic Mayo and… erm… when they finally got to the bottom of (laughs) what they wanted to order, I overheard M1, the Spanish manager, telling S1 that…English, erm…English people don’t like to be given options and she was explaining to S1 that in Spain... you...you converse a lot more with, with people in the Hospitality industry. You, you, you have a big chat. You really get to the sort of nitty-gritty of what people want and what they prefer and you, you tailor-make things a bit more for the individual customers, whereas in England, M1 observation was that if you should rather just keep it simple... if they order something that is on the menu, just serve it as it is... English people prefer to just not go through the hassle of having to answer loads of different questions...erm... it just makes life easier for everyone and, and that was just her cultural observation... for me I am not...you know, I am not too sure... what... I am not too sure I agree with that because I think everybody likes to be given options and as long as you know where... to...where to stop, you know, and not to, not to ask too many questions, I think it’s just some...it’s just something you should be able to tell judging by whether or not the... by the reactions of the person you are speaking to, erm, but it was interesting to, to, to... see that that was what the Spanish staff had... sort of come to the conclusion that, that you are just better off keeping it simple and keeping it brief when it comes to serving English people, so that was, err, an observation for today. Yep.”

The transcribed incident offered above shows the length and depth of some incidents submitted. This noted, P2’s incidents were longer than the others. P6’s incidents were the shortest and an example of theirs is offered below:

Participant 6, Incident 3:
“Thursday the 11th of...July, err, a regular customer, err, was quite...intoxicated ... erm ... had been at the bar ...erm, for a few hours...err... having known he has had a few relationship issues, recently...have, err... obliged him...err...he...and he is a well-known and well-liked regular...err, however, I found him... asleep... about 10 minutes, 15 minutes later, sat, err, within view of the entrance, so firstly had a bit of a joke with him...err... told him to cop on... that he
I couldn’t be sleeping in the pub...err...went back 10 minutes later, he had dozed off again; offered to ring him a taxi, but he said it was time for him to leave himself, so all sorted.”

I conducted thematic analysis of each transcribed incident to compare with my theoretical framework. For reference, the theoretical framework is offered again below:

Table 26 Theoretical framework themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Key Text Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SQ</td>
<td>Service Quality</td>
<td>(Parasuraman et al., 1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>C-creation and Co-production</td>
<td>(Chathoth et al., 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISkill</td>
<td>Skills and knowledge needed in industry as seen by employers</td>
<td>(People 1st, 2013; People 1st, 2011b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USkill</td>
<td>Skills and Knowledge taught in UK Leisure Courses</td>
<td>(QAA, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS</td>
<td>Soft Skills and Knowledge needed in industry as seen in research</td>
<td>(Baum, 2002a; Burns, 1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL</td>
<td>Emotional Labour</td>
<td>(Hochschild, 2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>Aesthetic Labour</td>
<td>(Witz et al., 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>Sexualised Labour</td>
<td>(Warhurst and Nickson, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Intercultural Sensitivity</td>
<td>(Bennett, 1986)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An example of how these themes were identified in the transcribed incidents is offered below:

Table 27 Thematic analysis of a critical incident

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant 1 – Incident 4</th>
<th>Theme identified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Today is 5th of May; it’s a Sunday... Today I am in the bar section and it’s a late-night shift. A drunk guy asked for bill and I get the bill to him. While I pass the bill to him he tried to get my hand with him and asked whether I am interested in a one-night stand with him and he will”</td>
<td>Managing harassment SL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
pay for me for that. And I say I’m not interested and I do not need that money and ask him to just pay for the bill. He do not let go of my hand and the bar tender saw it, so he asked manager to come over. So the manager come over and bring me away and asked the drunk customer to behave and order the waiter to bring it back to his room. It’s so scary when I got this incident. It’s my first time and I found that it’s really very scary. I request the manager, saying that may I not work for a late-night shift in the bar section, because....erm, it’s quite scary for the girl and the manager say yes.”

The thematic analysis showed where elements of the theoretical framework were present in the incidents and also in which contexts and situations they manifest. Full discussion of all 57 incidents against the theoretical framework is offered in Chapter 5.

After completing the stimulated recall, additional themes were also seen arising from the additional incidents:

- Using Humour as a coping mechanism,
- Stress and Pressure affecting work,
- Contractual and legislation frameworks at work,
- Customers demanding different products from those specified on the menu.

These additional themes are known components of the reports published by People 1st (2011; 2013). However, they were noted by participants as being key to understanding and dealing with customers and colleagues. A full discussion of this analysis is offered in the following chapter.

After the stimulated recalls, participants completed a semi-structured interview in relation to their previous education and how they felt this had prepared them for their industry roles. Again, these interviews were transcribed and thematic analysis was conducted using the theoretical framework; a discussion of this analysis can be seen in Chapter 5.

4.4 Participant and researcher reflections on the methodology

As noted in Chapter 3, the methodology used for this study is innovative. Critical incidents are usually narrated during an interview, instead of being offered
separately. Reflections on the critical incident technique before and during the stimulated recall will now be discussed. This is concluded using my own reflections on the whole methodology. At the beginning of the stimulated recall I asked for Participant feedback on critical incident narration and gathering to understand their feelings on this method:

“I actually feel like I could do 10 more now. When I finished I was like, ‘I could get WAY more examples’, as I felt more comfortable now.” (P2)

None of the participants reported problems in recording or thinking about incidents which would relate to customer demands present in their roles. Even though P2 was initially anxious about thinking of any, they found it easy once they had started. This was also confirmed by the 19 additional incidents offered in stimulated recalls.

By gathering recordings from participants during one week at work, I was able to hear where and when they were recorded. P5 noted in one incident that she was recording at 0330 hrs in the morning (following a shift). P3 stated: “sat in my car after work.” During P6’s recordings you can hear background noise from the pub in which he worked, and P2’s had a radio on in the background, as she recorded hers in her own bedroom. In incident 3 from P4, I noticed the sound of papers rustling. I asked P4 what these were during the stimulated recall and P4 responded: “I’d made notes during the day.” These were to help her narrate the incident later. These notes were useful, as she “didn’t have time to do it (in work), so just quickly made notes”. This confirms that, besides the choice of recording device, the recording was at a time and place suitable for each participant. This meant that the recordings were immediately after the incident and that participants could talk freely without my input or presence. P6 also used recording incident 4 as a way in which to relieve stress from the incident: “I got a bit wound up.” Therefore, he went and “recorded it in the kitchen”. The other incidents from P6 were recorded in his office in the pub a while after the incident. Incident 4, which was recorded immediately in the kitchen, showed how P6 was using the recording to enable himself to vent his feelings about the incident immediately. However, this also identifies that Participant safety when recording the incidents is also crucial. Some participants were not able to record during work and if they recorded them in public, they could be overheard by colleagues or customers. Therefore, one reflection on this methodology is that it is
best to let participants choose where to narrate, but that they need to consider their safety and security when choosing a location.

One problem noted by P4 was that she felt awkward in the stimulated recall when listening to her own voice: “Oh, this is embarrassing. I hate my voice.” P4 informed me of this and I was able to reassure her. I let her know that it was only for the duration of the stimulated recall and that it was important to listen to her incidents together in order to understand the meaning and context of each incident. This reflection from P4 may have been different if the participant had not known me. P4 also said: “Sorry, I’m just waffling on.” She continued: “I’m just cringing at myself.” This frank account of her feelings in the stimulated recall ensured that I knew how she was feeling and reacted promptly to ensure that the stimulated recall could operate efficiently.

When listening to P5’s incidents before the stimulated recall, I noticed that none of her incidents related to customers. I probed her on this in the stimulated recall and she responded: “I was waiting for that, but it didn’t happen.” That noted, P5 offered nine additional incidents in the stimulated recall, of which five were based on customer demands. Therefore, by staggering the collection of these data, P5 was able to offer more and more detail and information on her perspective of customer demands.

An interesting point noted from P6’s narrated incidents was that he consistently said “resolved” at the end of each incident. I questioned him on this in the stimulated recall. P6 said that he was not sure how to “finish it off”.

“I just didn’t know what to say, so just said ‘resolved’ to clarify the end of the incident.”

Probing this final statement in the stimulated recall meant that I was able to understand how P6 had seen each incident. Whether or not it was fully resolved as an incident is also noted in the following chapter.
A further point noted from P6’s incidents was that on 12th July he offered five incidents, all of which were from one shift at work. This shows the extent to which these demands and encounters are present. Gaining an additional 17 from the stimulated recall also shows how participants can easily recall incidents from work to discuss key issues.

An important point to note from the stimulated recall is that even though all participants had control over playing back each incident from their audio devices, none of them stopped the recording to offer more information themselves. I informed them that this was accepted at the start of the recall and clarified that if they had further comment or discussion that they were welcome to stop the play back and discuss their thoughts. The only times the recordings were paused were when I had a question about the content and asked them to pause it. This suggests that participants did not want to offer any further content or information but that, through my probing, I was able to illuminate key misunderstandings and glean even more incidents from within the stimulated recall.

My own reflections on using the stimulated recall subsequent to receiving incident narration will now be offered. Gaining incidents individually and separating into interviews were vital to this study. The incidents were not simple or devoid of emotion; therefore, reflecting and making notes on these prior to the stimulated recall were paramount to the stimulated recall’s success. By giving myself time during which to reflect on the content and meaning of each incident, I was able to be transparent with my own opinions on the incidents as well as check my own understanding of each one. For example, I asked P4 to whom she was referring when she said “she” in incident 5. This checking of content and meaning meant that my knowledge and understanding of incidents from participants’ perspective were of a high standard. I also used the stimulated recall to understand the processes in the incident more clearly. P4’s fifth incident was very complicated due to internal business processes being involved. This meant that, where I had no business knowledge, I could also learn from participants about their day-to-day role.
Summary
This chapter has offered a full account of how I gathered and analysed the data offered for this study. Using LinkedIn, I was able to recruit six participants for the study and gather 57 critical incidents and 6 semi-structured interviews. These were analysed via transcription and thematic analysis. The following chapter will now discuss the analysed data in full.
Chapter 5
Discussion of the Key Findings

Introduction
This chapter offers a comprehensive outline of the key findings from the study. To begin, Appendix 18 identifies discussion of all analysis completed with all data collected from the study. Analysis of all data enabled identification of the key findings to be explored in this Chapter. An opening section tabulating all findings is offered to clarify the gaps found between the skills and knowledge needed by graduates and those supported by the theoretical framework used for the study (as outlined in Chapter 2). Following sections then discuss each of the three key findings: Staff to Staff elements in Customer Service Encounters, Intercultural Sensitivity in Customer Service Encounters and changes needed in Leisure UK HE to support graduates completing Customer Service Encounters. The concluding chapter will then follow on from this.

5.1 Findings from analysis completed
In Chapter 4 I identified that the critical incidents were transcribed and that these were analysed using the theoretical framework. Examples of the written discussion of this analysis is offered in Appendix 18. Analysis of data gathered for this study enabled clarification of the skills and knowledge used by participants and also any emergent themes not currently addressed in the literature. For clarification, the following table identifies mis-matches seen from analysis of secondary and primary data gathered for this study (the participants/graduates are noted as staff here):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical area</th>
<th>Mismatch and problem arising from participant data compared to current literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service Encounters</td>
<td>Staff perceptions of customer service encounters is needed to fully understand customer requests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff to staff dynamic is missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff have culture shocks on customer questions raised in ICSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff can aid translations for other colleagues and customers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 28 Mis-matches identified from critical incident analysis
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Quality Theory</th>
<th>Management perceptions of staff, and staff perceptions of customer expectations is missing in the SQ model.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-production and Co-creation</td>
<td>Staff are also part of creating the experience and have their own needs and expectations which need to be met. Co-creation depends on staff willingness and motivation which can sometimes be lacking due to the pressure of work and customer attitude.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills and Knowledge</td>
<td>More complex skills are seen from staff in this study. Explicit knowledge is offered on customers preferences due to experience in service encounters. No Somantic Tacit Knowledge seen, but both Collective and Relational Tacit Knowledge were identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People 1st Skills needed</td>
<td>Team working also requires cross department knowledge. Customer handling requires you to make different products from the usual menu and requires graduates to cook and create dishes they may have never made before. Scripted service is determined by management and performed by staff, but may not be appropriate for all customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft Skills</td>
<td>Communication skills rely on more complex knowledge of forms of communication: verbal, non-verbal, language, phonetics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Labour</td>
<td>Fake emotions are required when real emotions are high. Acting may not always be possible in some situations. Empathy is used by graduates and is key to develop relationships as long as it is real and natural. Facial displays may not be easily managed when emotions are conflicting. Long working hours and stress means that emotional control is more difficult in Leisure roles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic Labour</td>
<td>Discrimination may come as a result of uniform worn in work. Focus of AL is seen in problems related to female staff being addressed by heterosexual men.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexualised Labour</td>
<td>Sexualised labour results in insulting and discriminatory comments from customers. Uniform can contradict the usual attire or style choices of staff making EL more difficult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural Sensitivity</td>
<td>Staff showed high Intercultural Sensitivity and customers did not. Customer encounters educated the customers on Intercultural Sensitivity due to communication with participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humour used as a coping mechanism</td>
<td>Staff may find the culture of the company makes colleagues perceive harassing, harmful and discriminatory incidents humorous rather than serious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress and pressure</td>
<td>Customer Service Encounters caused participants stress due to long working hours. Additional training was needed to cope with this stress. Physical, verbal and emotional abuse was felt by staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal frameworks do not always support staff</td>
<td>Laws in place to protect both staff and customers are not always adhered to. Skills are needed in knowing how to effectively use this knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers demanding different</td>
<td>Demands for different products can cause staff stress. Knowledge is needed on how to manage these requests professionally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The mismatches and problems arising from the participant data identified in Table 28 suggest that the current theory for leisure students’ skills and knowledge is incomplete. As noted in Chapter 2, previous research had neglected to investigate the staffs’ perspective in Customer Service Encounters and Service Quality Theory. Therefore, the mis-matches and gaps are varied. Although employee motivation and satisfaction is covered in human resource management theory (in both the QAA benchmark statements and classes taught in the institution in which participants studied), this theory is not specifically linked to the key skills and knowledge needed in service encounters in the industry. As the majority of the work completed by graduates requires them to manage Customer Service Encounters, it is evident from this study that participants need further training and insight to complete these.

Three key findings identified from the analysis are: Staff to Staff communication in Customer Service Encounters, Intercultural Sensitivity in Customer Service Encounters and changes required in Leisure UKHE to support Customer Service Encounters. These will now be discussed in full. These were noted as key findings as they are distinctive contributions to knowledge gained from research conducted for the study.

5.2 Key findings explored in depth
5.2.1 Staff to Staff communication in Customer Service Encounters

Customer Service Encounter literature noted in Chapter 2 identified that it requires “person-to-person” interaction with customers (Solomon et al., 1985; p.99). A key finding from this study is that the encounters also require staff to staff interaction. Appendix 18 offers the discussion of analysis completed on Customer Service Encounter theory and enabled identification of this emerging theme from participant data. This study contributes to knowledge on Customer Service Encounters as it acknowledges colleagues, management and suppliers as components of these encounters also. These other people are seen as part of Customer Service Encounter
theory as participants in this study had to satisfy and create experiences for them much like their customers:

“One of the clients in particular was a woman who wanted a conference for next week, so I had a very, very short lead time and she couldn't decide what she wanted. She kept ringing up and making changes and when I received the brief from my client yesterday, she had just added a lot more changes to the whole booking as well as added a load of bedrooms on, which proved to be a bit of a problem because in Bristol at the moment, which is where she wanted the conference, there is graduation going on. So they don't actually have enough space for everyone.

We managed to find a few hotels that actually could accommodate what she was looking for, and then she decided in the afternoon she wanted to change it again. Obviously my colleague was in her training session, so I have to solve it.” (P3 incident 1)

The example above serves as one example of many gained from this study to portray how graduates in Leisure roles have to satisfy a range of people in work as well as their customers. This data supports current knowledge on the intangible nature and problems associated with person-to-person service (Sparks and Greene, 1992; Bitner et al., 1990; Weiermair, 2000; Reimann et al., 2008; Nickson et al., 2007; Sparks & Callan, 1992, Ryoo; 2005; Surprenant et al. 1987; and Solomon et al., 1985), but the analysis of data from this study also suggests a gap in acknowledgment of other people concerned with Customer Service Encounters. Co-production (Rihova et al., 2015; Binkhorst, 2005; Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009) and Co-creation (Lovelock & Young, 1979; Chathoth et al., 2013) are also present between these people and a variety of interpersonal skills (Sparks & Callan, 1992) are used to deal with these people in maintaining and achieving Service Quality (Parasuraman et al. 1991).

Evidently results from this study supports aspects of current theory. However, it is clear from analysis of all data that previous focus between customer and staff in Customer Service Encounters does not do justice to the plethora of elements present. This section will identify how this key finding adds an additional dimension to current Customer Service Encounter theory, how it can be incorporated into new
models of service delivery, and how it can be incorporated into curricula for Leisure students in UKHE.

A new staff to staff dimension of Customer Service Encounters was seen in data collected for this study and identifies that staff to staff dynamics are present in the encounters as well as staff to customer. Surprenant et al. (1987, p.86) discussed in Chapter 2 noted that “service is something their customers want.” This position is confirmed from other literature on Customer Service Encounter (Bitner et al., 1990; Weiermair, 2000; Reimann et al., 2008; Nickson et al., 2007; Sparks & Callan, 1992, Ryoo; 2005; and Solomon et al., 1985). Previous research focussed on solely customer perspectives (and as research participants) and so current literature fails to understand or identify the staffs’ perspective and therefore others who also require service from the staff. This additional dimension is present in incidents from all participants. P1 had support from management and colleagues when serving guests, P2 supported her colleagues and translated customer requests, P3 completed a colleague’s work whilst she was in training, P4 trained colleagues on financial processes to aid customer billing, P5 trained new supervisors and P6 worked in different departments to support his colleagues. These examples (discussed in full in Appendix 18) support the Co-production (Rihova et al., 2015; Binkhorst, 2005; Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009) and Co-creation (Lovelock & Young, 1979; Chathoth et al., 2013) literature on how staff produce service in collaboration with others, but specifically identifies how team working skills and interdepartmental knowledge assisted participants in completing the service encounters (confirming People 1st, 2011b and 2013 reports). This study suggests three new types of face to face interaction to be included into current knowledge:

- Staff to colleague support (seen from P2, P3, P4, P5 and P6)
- Staff to management support (seen from P1, P2, P4, P5 and P6)
- Staff to supplier support (seen from P3, P4, and P6)

What follows now is identification of how these dimensions were present in the data gathered and how they could be incorporated into new models of service delivery.

Starting with staff to colleague support, P2s role as Door Host was specifically to support colleagues in completing service encounters. She greeted and seated all
customers arriving at the restaurant and linked them to their servers who would take their orders and serve their food. In this role she began the service for all customers and handed them over to colleagues noting any key requirements of service requested. P2 went further in this role and also identified how she would also “step in” and assist colleagues when they were seen to be struggling in service encounters. P4 also stepped in to help colleagues when she saw a customer with young children struggling to enter their hotel room. This supports the literature on Co-construction (Rihova et al., 2015; Binkhorst, 2005; Binkhorst and Dekker, 2009) and Co-creation (Lovelock and Young, 1979; Chathoth et al., 2013) but contributes further insight into how team-working knowledge and skills affect staff ability to produce these experiences. Continuing with supportive incidents from participants, and instead of calling for colleagues, P4 went to reception to get new keys cut and to the bar to collect drinks for the guests. In this way she was both supporting colleagues and assisting a customer who was in distress. These two examples from the data gained in this study show how graduates are not simply aware of customer requirements, but also aware of how to complete encounters with colleagues as well. This additional dimension to Customer Service Encounters brings about a wider range of skills and knowledge needed. Cross department knowledge and team working skills should therefore also be noted in service models for Customer Service Encounters and not simply skills needed from employers (as noted in People 1st 2011, 2013).

The second area seen in addition to current theory is that of staff to management support. P5 was most notable here as she was asked to train and support a new supervisor starting in the hotel. Here, P5 trained and monitored the work of a superior in order to manage the hotel restaurant on a daily basis. P5 also narrated in incident 3 that she talked to management about a colleagues pay. Here, P5s communication and knowledge of usual working practices was used to ask management for information relating to a colleagues wages. Both of these examples show how staff are not simply a component of a hierarchy in a Leisure business, but also work across management levels in order to support customer service and maintain business operations. If staff are required to train and support management they need recognition of this and skills to negotiate complex hierarchical roles which may need bending according to skills and abilities of new recruits into the business.
Finally, staff to supplier support was noted from the data. P3 liaised with venue management on a daily basis. This was a component of customer service encounters as P3 had to ascertain supplier costs and contractual details and inform customers of venue availability. P4 was also seen completing this as she had to liaise with external suppliers to pay bills and receive money from customers. These examples showed how customer service encounters utilise a much wider network of face-to-face interactions than current literature portrays. As service relies on products being consumed it stands to reason that some staff will also work with suppliers to book and create the service for their customers.

To clarify these points, the following model has been created to identify traditional, colleague, management and supplier Service Encounters:

**Figure 11 A new model of Customer Service Encounters**

The model above incorporates the traditional customer to staff interplay within service encounters and it is acknowledged that this was present in all incidents from participants. However, this study improves this dyadic approach by adding colleague, management and supplier encounters. This adds to the model of service delivery as it clarifies the others involved in creating and producing customer service
in Leisure settings. This addition is identified as a contribution to existing knowledge in the final concluding chapter.

In terms of curricula development, this key finding should be added to units on Human Resource Management and Employability. Students should not only learn how to manage people (customers and staff) and products in Leisure businesses, but understand the complex relationships and encounters they will complete on a daily basis. The QAA could support this by adding a new benchmark statement across all Leisure areas which reflects the diversity of encounters:

- To understand customer service encounters in Leisure contexts and reflect upon encounters with customers, colleagues, management and suppliers.

### 5.2.2 Intercultural Sensitivity in Customer Service Encounters

Intercultural sensitivity was noted by People 1st (2013) as a key skill of new applicants wanting to work in Leisure roles. Chapter 2 identified that there is presently one benchmark statement supporting this for Leisure student education: “understand the intercultural dimensions of tourism” (QAA, 2008, p.22)

As noted in Chapter 2 this benchmark statement was only present in requirements for Tourism Management programmes. Data from this study found Intercultural Sensitivity was both present and needed by graduates who had studied a range of Leisure courses (Hospitality, Events and Tourism Management). Although this study supports current literature on Intercultural Sensitivity the analysis suggests that Intercultural Sensitivity is needed in consideration of Customer Service Encounter theory as well. This section will identify the discreet details of Intercultural Sensitivity seen in Customer Service Encounters, add them to the new model of Customer Service Encounters noted in the previous section to identify how it can be incorporated into curricula more thoroughly.

When I probed P1 about her incidents relating to Intercultural Sensitivity she noted that culture is about:

“different things. You know about others, and not just focus on yours and think that you are right.”
This ethnorelative position (Bennett, 1986) was seen in all participants’ accounts of culture and difference. As noted in Chapter 2, Bennett (1986) defined Intercultural Sensitivity as being on a scale from Ethnocentric to Ethnorelative. All participants in this study appeared to have an Ethnorelative perspective on culture based on knowledge of a range of people and nationalities. In this way their Intercultural Sensitivity was seen as high as Bennett (1986) identified that Intercultural Sensitivity education is focussed on developing people to move from an Ethnocentric to an Ethnorelative perspective.

In analysis of Intercultural Service Encounter (ICSE) theory with data collected for this study it was also clear that Intercultural Sensitivity has parity with tenets of ICSEs. Participants experienced culture shocks within the incidents offered. Examples of these from the data include P1, P5 and P6 all being questioned by customers on her nationality and P2 was called a “racist” by her colleagues due to a stereotype associated with her nationality. These culture shocks seen in the data support Strauss and Mang’s (1999) research on Intercultural Service Encounters. However, part of this key finding is that the staff had these shocks as a result of customer comments or questions and not simply due to perceived difference. Further, and as this study analysed the staffs’ perspective, it is clear that culture shocks are not merely “ascribed stereotypes” (Barker and Härtel, 2004: p.4) viewed by customers and hindering service quality, but based on customer intrigue at notice of transnational employees within a Leisure business.

Intercultural Sensitivity in this study was clear in the following skills and knowledge present:
- Communication around culture, nationality and difference,
- Knowledge of difference (menu, drinks and linguistics),
- Empathy with different service preferences based on culture,
- Negotiation on service types and processes requested,

These have been added to the Customer Service Encounter model for additional clarification:
The figure above adds Intercultural Sensitivity to the model of Customer Service Encounters to clarify the previous (traditional) and new dimensions as a result of this study. By including this it is clear that due to the acknowledgement of ‘others’ in this encounter, Intercultural Sensitivity is not only needed of staff for their customers, but also for their colleagues, management and suppliers also. This is a contribution to existing knowledge and is acknowledged in the final concluding chapter.

5.2.3 Changes needed in Leisure UKHE to support graduates completing Customer Service Encounters

This study sought to address potential gaps in how Leisure graduates are prepared for their employment and how their University studies met these needs. Focussing on Customer Service Encounters, the findings noted in previous sections of this chapter identify gaps in current theory used in support of the education frameworks. This study is therefore a starting point from which to identify potential changes, to then
communicate these recommendations to the appropriate governing bodies associated with UKHE Leisure education. The findings from this study in support of Leisure UKHE fall into three areas: implementation of new benchmark statements, changes to current theory taught in the curriculum, and teaching resources to enhance curriculum delivery. This final section will now discuss each of these in turn.

As this study was exploratory in assessing the needs of graduates, matched to current education frameworks, it was seeking to address possible mis matches for Leisure students entering graduate employment. The following table of skills and knowledge was noted from analysis of all incidents:

Table 29 Skills and knowledge used in the customer service encounters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills: Interact with different people, communicate with different people, and manage different people. Maintaining professionalism: smiling appropriately, remaining calm, responding appropriately. Communication: Verbal and non-verbal forms. Entrepreneurial skills: Using initiative, adapting service to suit a range of guests, adhering to company standards whilst maintaining customer satisfaction. Society skills: Team working, awareness of others, adapting behaviour. Acting Positive attitude Numeracy: handling bills Professionalism</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge: Phonetic alphabet, Legal issues in hospitality, Human resource management, Components of certain drinks or food Opinions on customer types Nationality, culture and religion Health and Safety in the workplace Relational Tacit Knowledge: Empathy and understanding customers’ needs Collective Tacit Knowledge: Organisational cultures Customer behaviour Appropriate reaction and behaviour with others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The range of skills and knowledge used in Customer Service Encounters noted above supports the suggested benchmark statement as noted in 5.2.1:

- To understand customer service encounters in Leisure contexts and reflect upon encounters with customers, colleagues, management and suppliers.

A key finding from this study is that current Leisure UKHE neglects understanding of how staff manage encounters with others in their daily employment. This benchmark statement will communicate this need to Leisure academics and enable
student understanding and reflection. This benchmark statement could be included in all Leisure management areas (Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, Tourism and Events) to ensure that educators on these courses address graduate and employer requirements in managing the daily encounters seen in participant data from this study.

Gaps between current theory published in relation to Leisure, skills and knowledge and skills and knowledge needed by graduates has been identified in Table 29 in this chapter. Although Service Quality, Co-production, Co-creation, Soft Skills, Emotional Labour, Aesthetic labour, Sexualised Labour and Intercultural Sensitivity are not explicit in the QAA (2008 and 2013) benchmark statements they were used as a theoretical framework in this study due to the employer needs noted from People 1st (2011 and 2013) reports. The gaps noted in these theories are findings which support a key finding in changes needed to Leisure UK Higher Education frameworks. This key finding suggests a new benchmark statement which, if implemented, will in turn influence theory presented in UKHE Leisure curriculum. This study also identified other themes in the use of humour, stress and pressure, legal frameworks and customers demanding different products. These findings will influence Leisure UKHE curriculum via publication of papers planned after publication of the thesis.

The final key finding in support of changes needed to Leisure UKHE is that of curriculum delivery. The methodology employed for this study allowed graduates to reflect upon their skills and knowledge and also contributed critical incidents to understand the typical demands faced by graduates. Therefore, Leisure UKHE academics can use critical incident narration as a method to assess or ask students to reflect on their abilities when completing Customer Service Encounter. The critical incidents received for this study can be used as case studies in class to allow student discussion on how they might address or manage a similar situation. Both of these suggestions will enhance current curriculum delivery and contribute to existing knowledge as they serve as reflective methods for student skills and knowledge development.
Summary

This chapter has offered information on the key findings from analysis of all data gathered for this study. The three key findings discussed in this chapter have identified that knowledge on staff to staff, intercultural sensitivity and education in support of Customer Service Encounters is incomplete at present. Using the theoretical framework from Chapter 2, I have identified links and mismatches in participants’ narrated incidents to reveal the skills and knowledge needed by graduates on leisure courses. The following Chapter will now conclude the thesis by answering all research questions, stating the contributions to knowledge and reflecting on the journey of completing this study.
Chapter 6
Conclusions

Introduction
This chapter concludes the report of my study. Each research question is firstly answered with key findings. This is followed with identification of the study’s contribution to knowledge, recommendations to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and finally, personal reflections on conducting the study.

6.1 Research questions answered
This section is structured around each of the three research questions posed for this study. For reference the research questions are stated again:

1. What skills and knowledge are currently needed by graduates completing a customer service encounter?
2. How do the skills and knowledge needed by graduates compare to my theoretical framework of skills and knowledge?
3. Is the current training and education provision for Leisure students in UK universities adequate for graduates completing customer service encounters in graduate employment?

All findings related to these questions are noted in Appendix 19 with just the key findings reported here. Key findings were discussed in Chapter 5 and are drawn from analysis and discussion of both primary and secondary data already presented in the thesis.

6.1.1 Research Question 1
Research question 1 inquired which skills and knowledge are needed by Leisure graduates completing a customer service encounter. In order to research this I firstly defined skills and knowledge in section 2.1 of Chapter 2. This clarified that interpersonal skills, entrepreneurial skills and society skills are needed by all graduates and that explicit and tacit knowledge is needed by all graduates. This was
followed with discussion on Customer Service Encounter and Intercultural Service Encounters (ICSEs) theory to identify the context within which my study focussed analysis of the skills and knowledge. A key finding from this study is that Customer Service Encounters also involve management, supplier and colleague encounters.

6.1.2 Research Question 2
The second research question sought to ascertain how the skills and knowledge identified in the theoretical framework linked to the skills and knowledge used in participant narrated incidents. Table 28 in Chapter 5 identified the mismatches perceived between the theoretical framework and participant data and this identified a number of findings (see Appendix 19). Table 29 in Chapter 5 then identified the skills and knowledge used by participants completing the encounters. In particular, there were missing skills and knowledge needed for managing Intercultural Sensitivity. A key finding from the study is that students need to develop the skills and knowledge to effectively manage service encounters which involve Intercultural Sensitivity.

6.1.3 Research question 3
The third research question was to identify whether current training and education provision for Leisure students in UK HE is adequate for graduates completing service encounters in their graduate employment. It was noted in analysis discussion in Appendix 18 that the demands and encounters offered by participants could be seen as generic people management incidents. Participants were unsure of how this could be taught as they were seen as usual face-to-face situations which could occur anywhere. This study highlights that even if they are usual or generic encounters, there are negative consequences possible. Harassment, victimisation, poor retention of staff, stress, fear and harm to customers were all negative consequences noted from incidents offered in the study. This shows that regardless of the type of encounter there are serious consequences for the people involved if the encounter is not managed appropriately. A key finding from this study is that the skills and knowledge needed for customer service encounters are not fully supported in current Leisure Higher Education frameworks and that these need amending to ensure academic staff can develop students and graduates to effectively deal with a variety of people in graduate employment.
6.2 Contribution to knowledge

Many contributions to knowledge were identified from this study. This was due to the exploratory nature of the study, plethora of theories underpinning the education for Customer Service Encounters and innovative methodology. Here, three contributions will be summarised as the core contributions to current knowledge.

1. This study identifies that the dyadic approach (staff/customer) in the model of service delivery needs to be revised to include colleague, management and supplier encounters which in turn should be reflected in improved HE training;
2. This study finds that graduates/staff need Intercultural Sensitivity within Customer Service Encounters and therefore students require knowledge and skills to manage a range of encounters with customers, colleagues, management and suppliers;
3. This study suggests that current knowledge and documentation on Leisure curriculum can be improved with the addition of a new benchmark statement. The incidents received from participants in this study also contribute to curriculum delivery in support of student skill and knowledge development for Customer Service Encounters.

6.3 Recommendations

Recommendations are offered to both the education governing body for Leisure courses and also to Leisure Educators in UK HE.

Recommendations to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA):

1. Review and amend the current Benchmark statements for Leisure courses and ensure they are fit for purpose. It is recommended that more general benchmark statements are included across the discipline areas to ensure all students have the same basic Leisure education.
2. A benchmark statement is needed to support understanding and development of skills associated with Intercultural Sensitivity. This is suggested as follows
To understand customer service encounters in Leisure contexts and reflect upon encounters with customers, colleagues, management and suppliers.

Recommendations to Leisure Educators:

1. From critique of current theory this study recommends that Leisure Educators consider the staff in customer service encounters and not just the customers. Without staff consideration, graduates could enter employment and face demands which make them feel harassed, victimised or even discriminated.

2. This study has highlighted the need for students to experience customer service encounters in order to fully evaluate customer satisfaction and demands in industry. I would recommend that Leisure Educators consider its course placement provision and ensure that if students do not complete work experience during their course that they provide ample references of previous work to confirm that service encounters have been completed in Leisure.

3. In terms of Leisure research completed by academic colleagues, this study recommends that future research consider staff perspectives in Leisure and not solely customer ones.

It is hoped that as result of actioning these recommendations the Leisure industry will see direct benefits. Graduates from Leisure courses will be more prepared to face the demands from a range of people in their Leisure employment and in turn this will support development of high service quality.

6.4 Reflections on completing the PhD

From completing this study I am now going to offer reflections on my PhD journey. As a Leisure educator working in UK Higher Education this study sought to answer questions in support of my professional practice. Reflections attend to the innovative methodology, inspirational data gained, future publications and my own professional development as a Leisure lecturer in UK Higher Education.

Researching with an Interpretivist Epistemology I conducted analysis of secondary sources to enable creation of a Theoretical Framework to fully explore potential mis-
matches for my graduates. This desk based analysis developed my understanding of current theory and supported by professional development in conducting a large scale literature review. My professional practice is concentrated on the students I teach and I was surprised that other researchers had not explored staff perceptions of the skills and knowledge needed in Customer Service Encounters. My epistemology and professional practice thus informed the research design to conduct primary research. Although I had aimed at gaining more participants, the data gathered from the six study participants evidenced all skills and knowledge used for Customer Service Encounters. Their narrated incidents inspired me and I was honoured to learn more about their experiences as graduates in industry. If I was to conduct the study again I could seek to obtain customer, management and supplier narrations on the same incidents to verify participant observations. However, in gaining staff perceptions this study I am satisfied that the data offers a rich and in depth account of the skills and knowledge Leisure graduates need to navigate the various demands made in industry employment.

The incidents were offered from participants due to our prior relationship and showed me not only their extensive knowledge and skill set, but their need for further reflection, understanding and development to succeed in their graduate roles. Their data made me reflect on my own curriculum content and delivery and I changed some of my own teaching and assessment to ensure my current students benefitted from findings from the study prior to publication.

This study has informed my plans for future publication. I plan to use the key findings to support Leisure Higher Education in the UK through future publications and presentations to the governing and academic community. Although I conducted an academic study, it did at times feel like my duty to clarify and offer the staff perspective and this will be reflected in future publications. These personal motivations are based on my own experiences studying, working and then teaching in the Leisure sectors. With this background I was not only able to understand participant data, but empathise and relate my own professional experiences. As such, my PhD journey has been exploratory, professional, personal and inspirational.
Another Limerick

There was once a lecturer called Miri,
Who came up with a work based query,
For as she taught,
And sought out new thought,
She saw her Leisure students grow weary.

From completing this study on graduate skills,
It’s clear that my graduates experience the chills,
For lots of guests,
Leave them worried and stressed,
And this study wants to give them more thrills.

Colleagues in Leisure and VET and afar,
Please use this study and set a higher bar,
Let’s get students equipped,
To manage customer whips,
And ensure their education is the best so far.

So thank you to my supervisors, examiners and friends,
I hope I acknowledge everyone or I will have to make amends,
For in person I enthuse,
But on paper am subdued,
And ultimately this study aims to inspire and defend.

Armstrong, M., 2014. A handbook of human resource management practice,


Bateman, J., 2014. Developing an employability skills portal,


Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2015. *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*,


Research, Social Science 496 pages.


Johannessen, D., 2004. Handbook of Research on Educational Communications and Technology,


Manchester City Council, 2011a. Change in country of birth, 2001-2011 Census,
Manchester City Council, 2011b. Graduate Employment and Retention,
Manchester City Council, 2014a. *Manchester Factsheet*,
New Economy, 2013. *Hospitality and Tourism in Greater Manchester*,
QAA, 2008. Subject benchmark statements: Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism, Available at: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/benchmark/statements/HLST08.asp.


Visit Manchester, 2014. Manchester Leisure Visitor Survey 2014,


Whatley, J., 2011. *Employability skills through Project Based Learning*,


Appendices
Appendix 1 Benchmark statements for Leisure courses from QAA

EVENTS

1. explain, interpret and challenge theories and concepts which are used to understand the origin, purpose, meanings and development of events from a range of critical perspectives
2. display an insight into the structure of event providers and their sectors, and analyse the political, technological, social, environmental and economic factors which affect, or impact upon, the supply of, and demand for, events
3. analyse and reflect on the different cultural and business concepts, intercultural and international dimensions of events
4. demonstrate a critical awareness and understanding of how core values, for example, ethics, integration, sustainability, creativity, strategy, and continuous improvement, relate to, and are reflected in, events.
5. demonstrate a critical awareness and understanding of appropriate domains including administration, design, operations, marketing and risk, and how they apply to the phases of events, such as administration, design, operations, marketing and risk
6. operate and effectively manage resources, including human (paid or volunteer), financial, venue, and subcontracted and technical resources
7. display critical knowledge, understanding and application of risk management and the legal, ethical and regulatory frameworks that affect event management
8. plan, control, analyse and evaluate events, support service provision and their logistics
9. design events, including the programming of spectacle, exhibition, ritual, performance and hospitality
10. engage with, contribute to and produce events, based on an acquisition and understanding of appropriate vocabularies, skills, working methods and professional business communications.
11. analyse the nature, characteristics, needs and expectations of different consumers through applying consumer behaviour theories and concepts
12. generate creative ideas/concepts, proposals, pitches and solutions to meet differing needs
13. analyse and evaluate the quality of the event experience and its impact on the event consumer and/or client and the wider organisation
14. evaluate the importance of cultural and other diversities in developing access to, and participation in, events by specific target groups
15. demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which attendees behave at events and within the venue and surrounding destination.
16. evaluate the contribution and impacts of events in social, economic, environmental, political, cultural, technological and other terms
17. appreciate the ethical and sustainability issues associated with the operation and development of events
18. write and critique event plans, event strategies and to recognise and meet the needs of specific stakeholders
19. critically reflect upon the role of those organisations and structures charged with a responsibility for the promotion of, or the training of practitioners in events
20. demonstrate a critical awareness and appreciation of existing and emerging standards, policies, initiatives, frameworks and contemporary issues.

HOSPITALITY

1. critically reflect upon the origin, meanings and development of hospitality
2. analyse and reflect on the different cultural concepts of hospitality
demonstrate a critical awareness of the boundaries of hospitality
3. operate and manage human and technical resources
4. apply theory to the solution of complex problems within the core areas of hospitality
5. analyse and evaluate food, beverage and/or accommodation service systems, their implementation and operation.
6. evaluate and apply operations management finance and management accounting
7. evaluate and apply human resources and organisational behaviour services marketing
8. evaluate and apply information systems and technology strategic management.
9. display an insight into the structure of the hospitality industry and the contribution that it makes to the global economy
10. analyse and reflect upon the environmental influences which impact on hospitality organisations
11. evaluate the factors which influence the development of organisations operating within the hospitality industry
12. review and analyse the political, technological, social and economic factors which affect the supply of and demand for hospitality.
13. understand and apply the theories and concepts underpinning consumer behaviour within the hospitality context
14. analyse the needs and expectations of different hospitality consumers and develop appropriate responses
15. analyse the quality of the service encounter and its impact on the hospitality consumer and the service provider.
16. identify and respond appropriately to the diversity that prevails within the hospitality industry in relation to stakeholders, such as hospitality consumers, hospitality staff, hospitality organisations, government and external agencies.

LEISURE

1. demonstrate an ability to synthesise interdisciplinary approaches to issues of consumption and consumerism in Leisure markets
2. critically reflect on the impact of Leisure in the lives of individuals and analyse barriers to participation
3. evaluate the importance of cultural and other diversities in developing access to participation in Leisure by specific target groups.
4. critically evaluate the notion of praxis derived from generic disciplines and apply these to a specific Leisure context
5. analyse and reflect upon the environment in which Leisure operations take place
6. review and analyse the political and economic factors which affect the supply of, and demands for, Leisure
7. critically reflect on the nature of policies for Leisure across sectoral and administrative boundaries
8. critically evaluate the role and impact of global and local Leisure structures and organisations.
9. operationalise concepts of social, public and business policy and critically analyse their role in Leisure supply
10. write and critically evaluate Leisure plans, development plans and recognise and meet the Leisure needs of specific communities
11. critically reflect upon the role of those organisations and structures charged with a responsibility for the promotion of Leisure or the training of practitioners in Leisure.
12. critically reflect upon what it means to work in Leisure
13. evaluate the impact and role of Leisure events in everyday life
14. demonstrate the skills necessary both to deliver and reflect upon a Leisure experience aimed at a specific group, for example an event or a competition.

SPORT

1. making effective use of knowledge and understanding of the disciplines underpinning human structure and function
2. appraising and evaluating the effects of sport and exercise intervention on the participant
3. showing evidence of the skills required to monitor and evaluate human responses to sport and/or exercise
4. providing a critical appreciation of the relationship between sport and exercise activity and intervention in a variety of participant groups; this could include special populations such as senior citizens, disabled people and children.
5. monitoring, analysing, diagnosing and prescribing action to enhance the learning and performance of the component elements of sport
6. showing evidence of the skills required to monitor and evaluate sports performance in laboratories and/or field settings
7. displaying a critical appreciation of the integration of the variables involved in the delivery (teaching, instructing and coaching) of enhanced sport performance.
8. displaying an awareness of current government policy on disease prevention and the relevance of exercise
9. showing evidence of an ability to monitor health through exercise and prescribe appropriate interventions
10. displaying a broad range of skills, including awareness of health and safety, ethical considerations, exercise prescription, population differences and the role of education, health and sports bodies in improving the health of the nation.
11. displaying a critical insight into the organisations and structures responsible for sport, and the political ramifications arising from these
12. employing social, economic and political theory to explain the development and differentiation of sport throughout society
13. demonstrating the application of the social and cultural meanings attached to sport and their impact on participation and regulation.
14. understanding and applying the theories, concepts and principles of practice from the generic management areas of operations, finance, human resources, economics and marketing to sports facilities and events
15. employing strategic planning and development planning skills in analysing, understanding and addressing the development needs and intentions of sport organisations and communities
16. demonstrating a critical appreciation of sport development and facilitation principles in at least one vocational context.

Tourism

1. understand and appreciate the potential contributions of disciplines that help to explain the nature and development of tourism
2. explain and challenge theories and concepts which are used to understand tourism explain and challenge the definitions, nature and operations of tourism
3. demonstrate an understanding of the domestic and international nature and dimensions of tourism
4. utilise a range of source material in investigating tourism
5. demonstrate an awareness of the dynamic nature of tourism in modern societies
6. understand the intercultural dimensions of tourism.
7. be able to explain the patterns and characteristics of tourism demand and the influences on such demand
8. have an understanding of the ways in which tourists behave at destinations
9. understand the cultural significance of tourism for tourists and societies.
10. demonstrate an understanding of the structure, operation and organisation of the public, private and not-for-profit sectors and their activities
11. evaluate the factors that influence the development of organisations operating in tourism
12. analyse relations between consumers of tourism and the providers of tourism services.
13. being able to evaluate the contribution and impacts of tourism in social, economic, environmental, political, cultural and other terms
14. having an understanding of, and being able to evaluate, the approaches to managing the development of tourism through concepts of policy and planning
15. appreciating the ethical issues associated with the operation and development of tourism
16. having an understanding of the issues and principles of sustainability and social responsibility in the context of tourism.
## Appendix 2 Example of an Events Management Course in UK HE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Teaching strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4     | Business Accounting | 1) Understand and interpret a set of final accounts using appropriate ratios.  
2) Use financial Forecasting techniques.  
3) Organise data for input into a spreadsheet and complete computerised accounting. | 40% = 1500 word Coursework  
60% = Exam | 24 lectures  
24 seminars |
|       | Event Destinations | 1) Demonstrate a critical awareness and appreciation of existing and emerging standards, policies, initiatives, framework and contemporary issues within a destination framework.  
2) Explain and interpret theories and concepts which are used to understand the origin, purpose, meanings and development of events within a destination perspective.  
3) Plan, design, execute and communicate a sustained piece of independent intellectual work which provides evidence of critical engagement with and interpretation of, appropriate data. | 50% = 1500 word report  
50% = Exam | 24 lectures  
24 seminars |
|       | Event Marketing Environment | 1) Comprehend the nature, characteristics, needs and expectations of different consumers through applying consumer behaviour theories and concepts.  
2) Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which attendees behave at events and within the venue and surrounding destination.  
3) Understand and evaluate the diverse nature of the industry.  
4) Interpret information and data relevant to a professional or vocational context. | 50% = Report  
50% = Exam | 24 lectures  
24 seminars |
|       | Event Risk and Legal Implications | 1) Display knowledge, understanding and application of risk management for the events industry  
2) Explain the responsibility of all stakeholders in managing risk  
3) Recognise and apply key principles of law with regard to the events industry  
4) Identify and discuss the importance of a range of legislation key to the events industry. | 40% = Presentation linked to portfolio  
60% = Exam | 24 lectures  
24 seminars |
|       | Facilities Management | 1) Understand and interpret the systems and procedures for operating and controlling sites / venues facilities and activities in a variety of operational settings  
2) Understand the design and building process for event venues and facilities: including the need for creative solutions to problems.  
3) Evaluate the factors affecting the design and management of event facilities. | 50% = 1500 word report  
50% = Exam | 24 lectures  
24 seminars |
|       | The Event Industry | 1) Identify and evaluate the different components that make up the event industry, this will include but not limited to, conferences, festivals, exhibitions, functions, corporate and sporting events  
2) Evaluate an event, this will include the event objectives and scope; event staging, themes and format, event site or venue requirements, event protocols, and event technologies.  
3) Show understanding of a range of event management issues and outcomes, this will include economical, social, political and environmental impacts of events, event resources and sponsorship, spectator and employee management with reference to current industry practice. | 20% = 750 word essay  
20% = 1000 word group project  
60% = Exam | 24 lectures  
24 seminars |
| 5     | Business Planning | 1) Identify and evaluate the factors needed to set-up, develop and resource a sustainable business for the events or hospitality industry  
2) Develop business planning skills with particular reference to Marketing, Operating and Financial planning.  
3) Evaluate and apply the concepts of entrepreneurial financial | 70% = business plan  
1500 words  
30% = Exam | 24 Lectures  
12 seminars  
12 computer sessions |
|--------|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
|        | 1) Employ the skills required for making effective applications for employment within the events industry.  
2) Analyse the skills necessary to become and remain employable within the events industry.  
3) Reflect critically on personal employability and career paths within the events industry. | 1) Critically examine Event Management responsibilities with regards to Human Resources and its effect on the customer service experience.  
2) Investigate and critique Event Human Resource Management UK legislation when recruiting and retaining employee.  
3) Analyse a range of learning styles in relation to employee training and professional development.  
4) Describe and evaluate disciplinary and termination policies within the Events Industry. | 1) Describe, synthesise, interpret, analyse and evaluate information and data relevant to a professional or vocational context  
2) Explain, interpret and challenge theories and concepts which are used to understand the origin, purpose, meanings and development of events from a range of perspectives.  
3) Display an insight into the structure of event providers and their sectors, and analyse the political, technological, social, environmental and economic factors which affect or impact of the supply and demand for events.  
4) Demonstrate a critical awareness and understanding of marketing within a services and relationship context. | 1) Plan, control, analyse and evaluate events, support service provision and their logistics.  
2) Possess the skills to write and review event plans, event strategies and to recognise and meet the need of specific stakeholders.  
3) Analyse and evaluate the quality of the event experience and its impact on the event consumer and/or client and the wider organisation.  
4) Work effectively independently and with others | 1) Appreciate secondary and primary research  
2) Understand and discriminate between the various research instruments used in event research  
3) Analyse qualitative and quantitative event industry data | 1) Demonstrate the ability to produce an event brief based on an understanding of the needs of clients and suppliers for an event.  
2) Manage a project according to pre-determined standards, displaying the necessary skills to work as an effective team member and ensure that a project is operated within risk management guidelines and is delivered on time and in budget.  
3) Evaluate the success of an event by assessing key operational factors. |
|        | 100% = coursework on personal development plan | 40% = 1500 word essay  
60% = Exam | 60% = Report  
40% = Exam | 40% = 1500 word report  
60% = exam | 100% = 2000 word research report | 20% = Presentation  
40% = Live event  
40% = management report |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Teaching strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>1) Plan, design, execute and communicate a sustained piece of independent intellectual work which provides evidence of critical engagement with and interpretation of, appropriate data&lt;br&gt;2) Demonstrate the development of their conceptual understanding and critical capacity; identify, use and evaluate appropriate research methods&lt;br&gt;3) Demonstrate evidence of personal initiative, responsibility and decision making; work independently, organise and manage time and resources, and operationalise ideas;&lt;br&gt;demonstrate the extension of their of their project management and research skills&lt;br&gt;4) Reflect critically on achievement of the dissertation’s aim and objectives and the unit’s learning outcomes.</td>
<td>100% = Dissertation report</td>
<td>24 lectures 6 seminars 6 hours of data collection workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management of Organisations</td>
<td>1. Apply theoretical and philosophical foundations of management theory to analyse managerial work and behaviour of organisations&lt;br&gt;2. Identify and appraise issues that impact on companies and the management of an organisation&lt;br&gt;3. Critically evaluate an organisation engaged in the events industry and produce strategic management recommendations from issues identified.</td>
<td>60% = Coursework&lt;br&gt;40% = Exam</td>
<td>24 lectures 24 seminars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Operations Strategy</td>
<td>1) Critically analyse theoretical frameworks applicable to operational aspects of the hospitality / events industry&lt;br&gt;2) Critically evaluate operational strategies and their influence upon principal sectors of the hospitality / events industry&lt;br&gt;3) Critically evaluate solutions derived from the application of operations research techniques and other problem solving methodologies applicable to core operational decision areas</td>
<td>50% = in class tests&lt;br&gt;50% = exam</td>
<td>24 lectures 24 seminars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sponsorship and Funding for Events</td>
<td>1) Analyse and evaluate the quality of the event experience and its impact on the event consumer and/or client and wider organisation&lt;br&gt;2) Demonstrate a critical awareness and appreciation of existing and emerging standards, policies, initiatives, frameworks and contemporary issues.&lt;br&gt;3) Evaluate the contribution and impacts of events in social, economic, environmental, political, technological and other terms.</td>
<td>40% = report&lt;br&gt;60% = exam</td>
<td>24 lectures 24 seminars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustainability and Strategic Issues for Events</td>
<td>1) Explain, interpret and challenge theories and concepts which are used to understand the origin, purpose, meaning and development of events from a range of critical perspectives.&lt;br&gt;2) Analyse and reflect on the different cultural and business concepts, inter-cultural and international dimensions, of events.&lt;br&gt;3) Demonstrate a critical awareness and understanding of how core values, for example, ethics, integration, sustainability, creativity, strategic and continuous improvement, relate to and are reflected in, events. Appraise the ethical and sustainability issues associated with the operation and development of events.</td>
<td>50% = report&lt;br&gt;50% = exam/presentation</td>
<td>24 lectures 20 seminars Presentations completed in the remaining 4 seminars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 3 Examples of SQMs in leisure research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors and Year</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Leisure Business</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Other SQMs in Leisure Studies Considered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heung et al. (2000)</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>Airport Restaurants</td>
<td>Recommendations to use interviews with customers rather than a survey. Results cannot be applied more widely, as customers dined in a variety of restaurant types: fast food and fine dining.</td>
<td>Bojanic and Rosen (1994), Stevens et al. (1995), Lee and Hing (1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas and Connor (2003)</td>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>Although the SQM is critiqued, its application in Leisure is still warranted due to the outcomes of the survey. Modification of SQMs is required for Leisure to ensure that facets of these services and facilities are adhered to in questioning consumers. Focus should be on partnership in the encounter so that the consumer is empowered as part of the service to ensure that it is satisfactory.</td>
<td>Saleh and Ryan (1990), Fick and Ritchie (1991), Bojanjic and Rosen (1994), Wuest et al. (1996), Gabbie and O’Neil (1997)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4 'Tangible' service quality items linked to staff responses in service encounters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Saleh and Ryan’s Tangible scale</th>
<th>Staff response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Well dressed and neat</td>
<td>Staff aesthetics and maintaining a professional appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Have up-to-date equipment</td>
<td>Staff trained in using business equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Exhibit good manners</td>
<td>10. Dependable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Show enthusiasm at work</td>
<td>8. Helpful even while busy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Smile at work</td>
<td>20. Polite to guests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Avoid chewing gum</td>
<td>22. Kind and cordial tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Supportive</td>
<td>28. Respect guests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30. Communicate with employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Service when promised, Responsiveness</td>
<td>Staff delivering the expected service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Inform about service</td>
<td>Staff having the correct information to answer customer queries on all possible services and demands they have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Inform about activities</td>
<td>Staff being able to understand what satisfies guests and resolve any problems in their satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Knowledgeable</td>
<td>Staff being responsive to every customer in good time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Check guest satisfaction</td>
<td>Staff resolving customer issues quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Greet guests as soon as possible</td>
<td>Staff demonstrating knowledge and empathy to satisfy guests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Prompt service, Solve complaints</td>
<td>Staff effectively communicating with all guests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Trustworthy</td>
<td>Staff persuading and selling services to guests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Communicate with guests</td>
<td>Staff solving a problem and not beginning lengthy discussions on service failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Advise undecided guests</td>
<td>Staff understanding what different customers want and need in their experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Don't narrate problems</td>
<td>Staff having to treat and serve guests as individuals who have individual demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Anticipate guests' needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Cater services to guests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Individual treatment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Serve individual needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Address guests by name, attention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Individual attention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Saleh and Ryan, 1991, p.340)

---

7 This item does not have a number attached in Saleh and Ryan’s (1991) paper
## Appendix 5 Skills and Knowledge in Leisure Benchmark Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENTS</th>
<th>Explicit knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21. explain, interpret and challenge theories and concepts which are used to understand the origin, purpose, meanings and development of events from a range of critical perspectives</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. display an insight into the structure of event providers and their sectors, and analyse the political, technological, social, environmental and economic factors which affect, or impact upon, the supply of, and demand for, events</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Society Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. analyse and reflect on the different cultural and business concepts, intercultural and international dimensions of events</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Society Skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. demonstrate a critical awareness and understanding of how core values, for example, ethics, integration, sustainability, creativity, strategy, and continuous improvement, relate to, and are reflected in, events.</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Collective tacit knowledge Society Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. demonstrate a critical awareness and understanding of appropriate domains including administration, design, operations, marketing and risk, and how they apply to the phases of events, such as administration, design, operations, marketing and risk</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Relational and collective tacit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. operate and effectively manage resources, including human (paid or volunteer), financial, venue, and subcontracted and technical resources</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Collective and relational TK Interpersonal Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. display critical knowledge, understanding and application of risk management and the legal, ethical and regulatory frameworks that affect event management</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. plan, control, analyse and evaluate events, support service provision and their logistics</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Entrepreneurial skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. design events, including the programming of spectacle, exhibition, ritual, performance and hospitality</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Entrepreneurial skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. engage with, contribute to and produce events, based on an acquisition and understanding of appropriate vocabularies, skills, working methods and professional business communications.</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Relational and collective TK Interpersonal Skills Entrepreneurial skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. analyse the nature, characteristics, needs and expectations of different consumers through applying consumer behaviour theories and concepts</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. generate creative ideas/concepts, proposals, pitches and solutions to meet differing needs</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. analyse and evaluate the quality of the event experience and its impact on the event consumer and/or client and the wider organisation</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. evaluate the importance of cultural and other diversities in developing access to, and participation in, events by specific target groups</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which attendees behave at events and within the venue and surrounding destination.</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. evaluate the contribution and impacts of events in social, economic, environmental, political, cultural, technological and other terms</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. appreciate the ethical and sustainability issues associated with the operation and development of events</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. write and critique event plans, event strategies and to recognise and meet the needs of specific stakeholders</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. critically reflect upon the role of those organisations and structures charged with a responsibility for the promotion of, or the training of practitioners in events</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. demonstrate a critical awareness and appreciation of existing and emerging standards, policies, initiatives, frameworks and contemporary issues.</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HOSPITALITY**

17. critically reflect upon the origin, meanings and development of hospitality | Explicit knowledge |
18. analyse and reflect on the different cultural concepts of hospitality demonstrate a critical awareness of the boundaries of hospitality | Explicit knowledge | Society Skills | Entrepreneurial skills |
19. operate and manage human and technical resources | Explicit knowledge | I Skills | Entrepreneurial skills |
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>apply theory to the solution of complex problems within the core areas of hospitality</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Relational and collective TK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>analyse and evaluate food, beverage and/or accommodation service systems, their implementation and operation.</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Interpersonal skills Entrepreneurial skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>evaluate and apply operations management finance and management accounting</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>evaluate and apply human resources and organisational behaviour services marketing</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>evaluate and apply information systems and technology strategic management.</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>display an insight into the structure of the hospitality industry and the contribution that it makes to the global economy</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Society Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>analyse and reflect upon the environmental influences which impact on hospitality organisations</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Society Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>evaluate the factors which influence the development of organisations operating within the hospitality industry</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>review and analyse the political, technological, social and economic factors which affect the supply of and demand for hospitality.</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Society Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>understand and apply the theories and concepts underpinning consumer behaviour within the hospitality context</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Interpersonal Skills Relational and collective TK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>analyse the needs and expectations of different hospitality consumers and develop appropriate responses</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Relational and collective TK Interpersonal Skills Entrepreneurial skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>analyse the quality of the service encounter and its impact on the hospitality consumer and the service provider.</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Interpersonal Skills Entrepreneurial skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>identify and respond appropriately to the diversity that prevails within the hospitality industry in relation to stakeholders, such as hospitality consumers, hospitality staff, hospitality organisations, government and external agencies.</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Relational and collective TK Interpersonal Skills Entrepreneurial skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEISURE</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. demonstrate an ability to synthesise interdisciplinary approaches to issues of consumption and consumerism in Leisure markets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. critically reflect on the impact of Leisure in the lives of individuals and analyse barriers to participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. evaluate the importance of cultural and other diversities in developing access to participation in Leisure by specific target groups.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. critically evaluate the notion of praxis derived from generic disciplines and apply these to a specific Leisure context</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. analyse and reflect upon the environment in which Leisure operations take place</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. review and analyse the political and economic factors which affect the supply of, and demands for, Leisure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. critically reflect on the nature of policies for Leisure across sectoral and administrative boundaries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. critically evaluate the role and impact of global and local Leisure structures and organisations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. operationalise concepts of social, public and business policy and critically analyse their role in Leisure supply</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. write and critically evaluate Leisure plans, development plans and recognise and meet the Leisure needs of specific communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. critically reflect upon the role of those organisations and structures charged with a responsibility for the promotion of Leisure or the training of practitioners in Leisure.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. critically reflect upon what it means to work in Leisure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. evaluate the impact and role of Leisure events in everyday life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 28. | demonstrate the skills necessary both to deliver and reflect upon a Leisure experience aimed at a specific group, for example an event or a competition. | Explicit knowledge  
Interpersonal Skills  
Entrepreneurial skills |
|---|---|---|
| **SPORT** | 17. making effective use of knowledge and understanding of the disciplines underpinning human structure and function | Explicit knowledge  
Tacit knowledge |
| | 18. appraising and evaluating the effects of sport and exercise intervention on the participant | Explicit knowledge  
Relational and collective TK |
| | 19. showing evidence of the skills required to monitor and evaluate human responses to sport and/or exercise | Explicit knowledge  
Interpersonal Skills |
| | 20. providing a critical appreciation of the relationship between sport and exercise activity and intervention in a variety of participant groups; this could include special populations such as senior citizens, disabled people and children. | Explicit knowledge  
Society Skills  
Entrepreneurial skills |
| | 21. monitoring, analysing, diagnosing and prescribing action to enhance the learning and performance of the component elements of sport | Explicit knowledge  
Interpersonal skills |
| | 22. showing evidence of the skills required to monitor and evaluate sports performance in laboratories and/or field settings | Explicit knowledge  
Interpersonal Skills |
| | 23. displaying a critical appreciation of the integration of the variables involved in the delivery (teaching, instructing and coaching) of enhanced sport performance. | Explicit knowledge  
Relational and collective TK  
Interpersonal Skills |
| | 24. displaying an awareness of current government policy on disease prevention and the relevance of exercise | Explicit knowledge |
| | 25. showing evidence of an ability to monitor health through exercise and prescribe appropriate interventions | Explicit knowledge  
Relational and collective TK  
Entrepreneurial skills |
| | 26. displaying a broad range of skills, including awareness of health and safety, ethical considerations, exercise prescription, population differences and the role of education, health and sports bodies in improving the health of the nation. | Explicit knowledge  
Relational and collective TK  
Society Skills |
<p>| | 27. displaying a critical insight into the organisations and structures responsible for sport, and the political ramifications arising from these | Explicit knowledge |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>employing social, economic and political theory to explain the development and differentiation of sport throughout society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Society Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>demonstrating the application of the social and cultural meanings attached to sport and their impact on participation and regulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Relational and collective TK Society Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>understanding and applying the theories, concepts and principles of practice from the generic management areas of operations, finance, human resources, economics and marketing to sports facilities and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>employing strategic planning and development planning skills in analysing, understanding and addressing the development needs and intentions of sport organisations and communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Relational and collective TK Society Skills Entrepreneurial skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>demonstrating a critical appreciation of sport development and facilitation principles in at least one vocational context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Relational and collective TK Interpersonal Skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tourism**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>understand and appreciate the potential contributions of disciplines that help to explain the nature and development of tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>explain and challenge theories and concepts which are used to understand tourism explain and challenge the definitions, nature and operations of tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>demonstrate an understanding of the domestic and international nature and dimensions of tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Society skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>utilise a range of source material in investigating tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>demonstrate an awareness of the dynamic nature of tourism in modern societies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Society skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>understand the intercultural dimensions of tourism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Society Skills Interpersonal Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>be able to explain the patterns and characteristics of tourism demand and the influences on such demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit knowledge Entrepreneurial skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>have an understanding of the ways in which tourists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>understand the cultural significance of tourism for tourists and societies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>demonstrate an understanding of the structure, operation and organisation of the public, private and not-for-profit sectors and their activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>evaluate the factors that influence the development of organisations operating in tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>analyse relations between consumers of tourism and the providers of tourism services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>being able to evaluate the contribution and impacts of tourism in social, economic, environmental, political, cultural and other terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>having an understanding of, and being able to evaluate, the approaches to managing the development of tourism through concepts of policy and planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>appreciating the ethical issues associated with the operation and development of tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>having an understanding of the issues and principles of sustainability and social responsibility in the context of tourism.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 6 Critical Synopsis Questions with Secondary material (an example)

Text:

1. Why am I reading this?
   This is one of Baum’s earlier texts on skills and I am interested in learning what his position was on skills just after the 1992 education reform.

2. What are the authors trying to do in writing this?
   Baum is arguing that even though hospitality skills are seen as unskilled the skills needed to work in international hospitality roles are high level skills. He is trying to combat the negative perceptions and support the industry and educators.

3. What are the authors saying that is relevant to what I want to find out
   Baum confirms my own knowledge that there are poor perceptions of the skills needed for this industry. He also confirms there is a skills debate present in Leisure.

4. How convincing is what the authors are saying?
   Without primary data this paper lacks full rigorous research to support his claims. However, his argument is based on previous research and his style is convincing.

5. In conclusion, what I make of this?
   This is a useful source to use in support of the skilling debate for leisure as well as identify a historically poor perception of skills for Leisure areas.
Appendix 7 Leisure companies to contact to source participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Hospitality</strong></th>
<th><strong>Tourism</strong></th>
<th><strong>Events</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria and Albert Hotel</td>
<td>STA Travel, Deansgate</td>
<td>Ear to the Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowry Hotel</td>
<td>Thomas Cook, Market Street</td>
<td>Ticketline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Place Apartments</td>
<td>Thomson, Manchester</td>
<td>Manchester Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacDonald Hotel, Piccadilly</td>
<td>Flight Centre, Piccadilly</td>
<td>WRG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thistle at Portland</td>
<td>Omega Travel</td>
<td>Kendal Calling 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilton, Deansgate</td>
<td>Thomas Cook sporting operations</td>
<td>Parklife 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoubleTree Hilton, Piccadilly</td>
<td>STA Travel, Oxford Road</td>
<td>Jodrell Bank 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester United FC</td>
<td>Flight Centre</td>
<td>Contact Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester City FC</td>
<td>HRG UK</td>
<td>Bridgewater Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grill on the Alley</td>
<td>Sundowners Travel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carluccios</td>
<td>ITS Pilgrim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert’s of Didsbury</td>
<td>Trailfinders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality Action</td>
<td>Kanoo Travel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abode – Michael Caines Cafe Bar &amp; Grill Manager</td>
<td>Citi Travel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Ventures Restaurants</td>
<td>Virgin Holidays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malmaison Hotel</td>
<td>Co-op Travel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester 235</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 8 Poster sent to employers
Appendix 9 Email content sent to Leisure Students

Dear Student,

I am a PhD student at the University of Manchester completing a PhD in Education and want to request your participation in my study. I have lectured in Events, Hospitality and Tourism since 2008 and as such I am interested in your experiences working in industry.

Participation in the study requires you to submit recorded incidents over the course of one week in work and then complete an interview with me based on the incidents you submit.

You will be paid all expenses in travel to and from the research location and offered a £20 gift voucher on completion of your participation. If you are interested please let me know and I can send you the information sheet for the study.

Kind regards,

Miriam Firth

Miriam Firth | MA FHEA PGCAP BA(hons) | GTRA Post Holder and PhD Candidate
| School of Education | Ellen Wilkinson Building | The University of Manchester | Oxford Road | Manchester M13 9PL
Tel +44 (0)7803816732 | Fax +44 (0)161 275 3528 | @mistyfirth | miriam.firth@manchester.ac.uk
Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study as part of a student project that has two research aims:

1. It aims to enable me to better understand the current demands perceived by staff within Hospitality, Tourism and Events Management.

2. It aims to enable me to better understand whether or not the current education provision meets those demands through current education and training.

Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

**Who will conduct the research?**
Miriam Firth, University of Manchester, Ellen Wilkinson Building, Oxford Road, Room A1.23, miriam.firth@manchester.ac.uk

**Why have I been chosen?**
You are a member of staff within the Hospitality, Tourism and Events Industry and can offer me insights into incidents in industry where customer service encounters and customer demands are present.

**What would I be asked to do if I took part?**
Attend a briefing meeting to fully discuss your participation and informed consent. Then over the course of one week at work you would be asked to narrate incidents into a Dictaphone. These incidents will be situations where you feel you have encountered customer demands. After recording these I will collect them and then we would complete an interview where you will play back your narrations and comment on them. A final interview will be completed after this to ascertain what training and education prepare you for these demands.

**What payments can I receive and how will these be managed?**
As this study requires your personal time to attend meetings at the University of Manchester I can offer you reimbursement for your travel to and from these occasions. Public transport tickets and car parking receipts need to be kept and given to me in order for these costs to be paid back to you. Please note the costs for this needs to be reasonable (please do not park in a central NCP all day for the meeting if this is not necessary). On completion of the research you need to let me know where you would like the £20 gift voucher to be from and I will post this directly to you.

**What happens to the data collected?**
All data collected will remain on my own computer devices which are locked and accessible to me only. No other party will be able to review your data unless you personally give permission.

**How is confidentiality maintained?**
All data is gathered at the participants consent. Any information written based on your data will be checked by you prior to write up and dissemination. You can remain anonymous or have a pseudonym.

**What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?**
*It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself.*

**Will I be paid for participating in the research?**
*Yes, see previous question.*

**What is the duration of the research?**
*1 x half hour briefing session. 1 x afternoon or morning to complete the stimulated recall and interview.*

**Where will the research be conducted?**
*Meetings and interviews to be completed at the University of Manchester.*

**Will the outcomes of the research be published?**
*Outcomes of the research will be submitted as part of my PhD. Other outcomes may be published to the Higher Education Academy and Quality Assurance Agency.*

**Contact for further information**
*Miriam Firth, University of Manchester, Ellen Wilkinson Building, Oxford Road, Room A1.23, miriam.firth@manchester.ac.uk*

**What if something goes wrong?**
*If there are any issues regarding this research that you would prefer not to discuss with members of the research team, please contact the Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator by either writing to ‘The Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL’, by emailing: Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk, or by telephoning 0161 275 7583 or 275 8093*
CONSENT FORM

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

3. I understand that the Dictaphone is the property of the University of Manchester and I must return it in good working order on completion of the research. I am also aware it is worth £50 and I will be liable to pay for any damages.

4. I understand that the interviews will be audio recorded

5. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes

6. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers

7. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers

8. I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.

I agree to take part in the above project

Name of participant  Date  Signature

Name of person taking consent  Date  Signature
Appendix 11 Interview Questions

1. When did you graduate?
2. What units did you complete whilst at university (if you cannot remember please can you email me this list?)
3. Did you complete a placement year?
4. Do you feel your education prepared you for the demands and encounters offered in your incidents?
5. Within these studies can you remember being assessed for any of the demands present in your incidents?
6. How do you think these skills and knowledge could be taught in university?
7. Where did the content from these courses come from? (industry experience of books?)
8. Did your teachers have experience working in industry?
OK so today is Tuesday …and …erm… today we had the system turned off at work … erm… we had the whole of the property management system was turned off the PDQ machines, the credit card terminals turned off we had no telephones just so that they could reinstall the… build the new system back up and reinstall the new system that we’ll be having which will be starting next week …urm… it’s really difficult because without the system obviously we have to work manually and getting everyone on that kind of, you know working without having computers is really difficult and we thought that we would be fine, briefed all of the team, ready with our emergency reports for everything, and…we…then... realised the phones were going down also. Nobody had actually informed us that that was going to be happening so we had no way of reaching guests and they weren’t able to contact us for room service or for any emergencies and we didn’t know this until the point when they turned them off. We had to send out letters to guests with a mobile telephone number on where they could ring the desk and then because we were unable to access the till system we weren’t able to process anything. It was all meant to last a maximum of 8 hours…erm…which would have been fine but then it didn’t come back up …so I’m hoping that by tomorrow that it has actually come back up and that the system is working and everything is ok…erm the new system won’t be in until next week but it’s really difficult to work and serve people working manually, even though my team are all trained to do it and we all know what we need to do, but it’s just actually putting that into practice and actually dealing with guests in a situation like that where its busy where there’s a lot of demands from guests and obviously they don’t take that into consideration so it’s a lot of pressure and there’s a lot of expectations from my team to give them the answers although they should be able to cope in a situation where we are working manually and our systems aren’t down because those times will happen. But it’s just hard on the team because there are a lot of demands from guests and making sure everything runs smoothly, but so far, so good. Like we’ve managed to, erm, we’ve managed to make sure the guests are informed of what’s going on erm and just keeping on top of it that’s the best that we can do and that’s what I told my guys that, you know, there’s only so much that you can do before it becomes something completely out of our control and there’s only so much you can do as a team we can do and know not to take it too personally or too on themselves to solve the whole issue because at the end of the day (yawn) it’s something that they can’t deal with you know the bigger issue is something that they have no control over so it’s important that they don’t lose any confidence in what they’re doing and making sure I can just tell them that they’re doing a really good job and that they’re actually dealing with everything correctly but it is a challenging situation so yep, ok. That is today done.
Appendix 13 Ethical approval

Dear Miriam,

Ref: PGR-8106516-A1

I am pleased to confirm that your ethics application has now been approved by the School Research Integrity Committee (RIC) against a pre-approved UREC template.

If anything untoward happens during your research then please ensure you make your supervisor aware who can then raise it with the RIC on your behalf.

This approval is only for the Ethical Approval Application, you are still required to have received approval from your Panel before carrying out any research.

Regards,

Gail

Gail Divall | PGT & Quality Assurance Administrator | Room B3.8 | School of Education | Ellen Wilkinson Building | The University of Manchester | Oxford Road | Manchester | M13 9PL
Tel +44(0)161 275 3390 | www.education.manchester.ac.uk | School Ethics www.education.manchester.ac.uk/intranet/ethics/

For information on ethical research within the University, please refer to www.researchsupport.manchester.ac.uk/Governance/Ethics
Appendix 14 Respondent list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Replied?</th>
<th>Accepted?</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08/04/13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Too busy at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/04/13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Emailed on 22/04. Works at MEN. Emailed again on 9th July.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Does not work in the industries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Emailed 10/06. Had reply in June. Going on placement. Still interested, but not avail until nearer september.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Emailed on 22/04. Studying hospitality but working in Selfridges. Ruled out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Emailed on 22/04 and 10/06 Emailed on 09/06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Emailed on 22/04. She thinks that she is not the right person to participate. I have asked for an informal chat to answer any questions she has.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chased on 23/04 no reply.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Emailed on 22/04. Worried exams are priority so does not have the time. He asked questions so I answered. Emailed again on 9th July.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Seeing on 17th April at 4. Didn’t show. Emailed on 17th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Emailed on 22/04. Responded immediately. Did transcribing on 19th and 20th June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/04/13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Emailed on 22/04. No shifts at G4S so cannot complete. Facebook message on 9th July. Meeting on 12th July. Works at G4S security as a temporary worker. Sporadic work so may take longer for incidents. Delayed meeting as he is going to denmark for two weeks from 15th July.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Emailed on 22/04 Emailed on 9th July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Summer placement in America. Wants to concentrate on studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/04/13</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Emailed on 22/04 and 9th July</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/04/13</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Emailed on 10/06 and 9th July</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/04/13</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Emailed on 10/06 and 9th July</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/04/13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Emailed on 10/06. Gone home so cannot complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Met on 13/06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/06/13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Arranged to meet on 19/06 but delayed until 23/06 Emailed on 02/07 Meeting week beginning 8th July. Cannot meet due to two jobs. Phoning me on 8th July. Spoke on the phone on 8th July and emailed documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>21/06/13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>02/07/13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>02/07/13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>02/07/13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>04/07/13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>08/07/13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>08/07/13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>13/07/13</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 15 Risk assessment for incidents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Likelihood (5)</th>
<th>Severity (5)</th>
<th>Contingency</th>
<th>Old and New score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants do not offer incidents due to feeling uncomfortable sharing the information</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>At the briefing discuss types of incidents and confirm my knowledge of industry practice. Clarify there are no right or wrong incidents and that all information remains anonymous and confidential. <em>(2 L)</em></td>
<td>15 and 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants feel distressed about an incident in work and uncomfortable discussing this with me</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>This could happen regardless to their participation in the research. I will confirm that they can choose which incidents to offer for discussion so that they do not feel forced to discuss any emotionally charged incidents unless they choose to. <em>(1 L)</em></td>
<td>12 and 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants are emotional about an incident</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>This is possible due to the long working hours some of the participants may be completing. Again I will inform them of this possibility during the briefing and clarify their choice in participation and incident offering. <em>(2 L)</em></td>
<td>12 and 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants are worried about other people in an incident</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>I will inform participants that any other people referred to or discussed will remain anonymous in all publications of their data. <em>(1 L)</em></td>
<td>12 and 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants become emotional or distressed during the stimulated recall</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>If any participant becomes emotionally distressed in the stimulated recall I will stop the recording, offer them advice, identify a counsellor who they may wish to speak to and ask if they wish to remain as participant. <em>(1S)</em></td>
<td>15 and 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 16 Participant Incidents with Content Key Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Incident Number</th>
<th>Incident Title/Name</th>
<th>Content Key Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>You do not look European!</td>
<td>Restaurant, Customer, Participant, Language, Participant Competence vs Customer knowledge, Religion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Do you speak English?</td>
<td>Bar, Customer, Participant, Manager, Communication, and Misunderstanding, language and nationality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bring me what I want!</td>
<td>Restaurant, French customer, Participant, Customer perception of service, Customer expects to be able to change the menu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>A Drunk Guy</td>
<td>Bar, Customer, Participant, Manager, First time experience for participant, Sexual advances, physical contact, scary situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>5 (1)</td>
<td>That is not a baby!</td>
<td>Restaurant, Customer, Other staff, Mischief and making entertainment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 (2)</td>
<td>I’m not serving Asians!</td>
<td>Restaurant, Customer, Other staff, Tipping, Stereotyping customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 (3)</td>
<td>Those ‘English’</td>
<td>Restaurant, Customer, Other Staff, Manager, Participant, Communicating with different accents, Misunderstanding on a dish due to expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 (4)</td>
<td>Scripted hosting</td>
<td>Restaurant, Participant, Customer, Scripts, Feeling stupid, Informing guests of information or questions they already may know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>9 (1)</td>
<td>Crossover and booking stress</td>
<td>Office, Participant, Other staff, Additional work due to colleague off work for training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10(^a) (2)</td>
<td>Human error in successful business relationships</td>
<td>Office – phone, Participant, Customer, Human error on price, Communication used to solve pricing issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 (3)</td>
<td>Holding multiple venues</td>
<td>Office – phone, Participant, Customer, Demands from 10 venues on hold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12(^a) (4)</td>
<td>Last-minute group rooms</td>
<td>Office – phone, Participant, Customer, Venues, Group rooms for following Monday, Stress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13 (5)</td>
<td>Chasing, chasing, chasing</td>
<td>Office – phone, Participant, Customer, Venues, Chasing contracts from clients due to venue demand, Stress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14 (6)</td>
<td>Organised calm</td>
<td>Office, Participant, All contracts confirmed and signed, Reflecting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 (7)</td>
<td>Reflections after the storm</td>
<td>Office, Participant, Incorrect venue price, All okay, sorted, Reflecting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>16 (1)</td>
<td>Phonetically speaking</td>
<td>Office – phone, Participant, Difficulty communicating email address, Reflection on other staff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Incident 10 was included in the first narration from P3.

\(^b\) Incident 12 was included in the second narration from P3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Affected Parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 (2)</td>
<td>Do I have to pay for that?</td>
<td>Office – phone, Participant, Customer, Querying internet and parking on a bill for a major client.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 (3)</td>
<td>Going the extra mile</td>
<td>Hotel, Participant, Customer, Helping mother enter room and get drinks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 (4)</td>
<td>Computing interaction</td>
<td>Office – phone and email, Participant, Customer, Customer needed specific information on invoice, but computer did not have facility. Loggerheads with different software.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 (5)</td>
<td>Colleague confrontation</td>
<td>Office, Participant, Colleague/Friend, Error in communication chain from colleague.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 (6)</td>
<td>Rude Phone Conversation</td>
<td>Office – phone, Participant, Customer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>22 (1) Put your request in the bin</td>
<td>Office, Managers, Participant, Zero hours contract, not paid for holidays, requested holiday form, completed form, Manager said it should go in the bin, Participant emotional about Manager response.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 (2)</td>
<td>Maintaining privacy and professionalism</td>
<td>Supervisor, Participant, P5 was ill the previous day, Manager asked why P5 was absent in front of the rest of the staff, unprofessional request.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 (3)</td>
<td>Helping out a colleague</td>
<td>Supervisor, Participant, Employee, Payment for work not made on time for a colleague, P5 tried to help and asked Supervisor for support, support not given, P5 feels this is unfair.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 (4)</td>
<td>Tomato, Tomato[^10]</td>
<td>Supervisor, Participant, Soup of the day is Basil and Tomato, Supervisor wants P5 to pronounce Tomato like a Mancunian, debate over her ability after being in Manchester for years.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6 (13 incidents)</td>
<td>26 (1) You can’t put ice in my Whisky or a Shamrock on my Guinness!</td>
<td>Pub, Customer, Participant, drinks preferences, standard drinks versus personal preferences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 (2)</td>
<td>Let sleeping emotional customers lie</td>
<td>Pub, Customer, Participant, inebriation, sleeping, problems getting customer to leave.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 (3)</td>
<td>Fast talking</td>
<td>Pub, Polish Customer, Participant, Customer spoke too quickly for participant to understand, Participant communicated misunderstanding well.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 (4)</td>
<td>A ‘Coronaberg’, please!</td>
<td>Pub, Customer, Participant, misunderstanding of order, participant used body language in pointing to a product to clarify the order.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 (5)</td>
<td>Pointing at products</td>
<td>Pub, Customer, Participant, German customer, pointed to drinks he wanted as he could not communicate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^10]: Included in third incident
| 31 (6) | Can I have a charger with that? | Pub, Customer, Participant, loud atmosphere, additional services in the pub, miscommunication, charging phone for a customer, customer did not know which phone she had. |
| 32 (7) | I will come to you | Pub, Customer, Participant, offered table service for regular customers. |
| 33 (8) | Can I have the bottle? | Pub, Customer, Participant, Participant gave the customer the cordial bottle to allow him to choose how much to add to his drink. |
| 34 (9) | Dance Participant, Dance! | Hotel, Customer, Participant, unknown performance time, customer told participants at the last minute when to perform or not at all. |
| 35 (10) | Negotiating performance problems | Wedding, Customer, Participant, poorly dancer, negotiated discount due to last-minute injury of a dancer, participant uneasy at having one fewer dancer and getting less money. |
| 36 (11) | I can’t hear you! | Pub, Customer, Participant, cannot hear due to noise, participant refers to a drinks offer by pointing to a sign behind the bar. |
| 37 (12) | Customer sleeping on their own vomit | Pub, Customer, Participant, known group of men drinking, one customer fell asleep, customer had been sick on the floor underneath him. |
| 38 (13) | My drink is not cold enough! | Pub, Customer, Participant, bitter was not cold enough for the customer, offered another drink, customer accepted a discount on the drinks paid for. |
Appendix 17 Additional incidents offered in the stimulated recall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>I didn’t hear you upsell</td>
<td>Restaurant, Area manager, Participant, not using script, using own intelligence in not offering more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Stand by your post!</td>
<td>Restaurant, Participant, area manager reprimanded participant for picking up a napkin rather than standing by the door. When it is busy, P2 has to do many more jobs than this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41</td>
<td>You should be a pole dancer!</td>
<td>Woman walks past the front of the restaurant where P2 is working. Woman sees P2 and remarks on her outfit and states that P2 should be working with a pole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Little Dave</td>
<td>Participant, Staff, new employee called Dave. Referred to as Little Dave because he is smaller than another employee called Dave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Glastonbury is no fun</td>
<td>Participant, Friends, attended Glastonbury, did not enjoy it, left, could not explain, felt pressure to enjoy it but couldn’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Take those customers away</td>
<td>Participant, Employee, Participant shouted at by colleague in front of the customers, had to move their table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Who needs a contract?</td>
<td>Participant, customer, they will not sign the contract, chasing the contract, rude to the participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Customer demands on a daily basis</td>
<td>Participant, Customer, venue, customer added new rooms and changed the booking daily, joking with venue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Non-smokers wanting ‘smoking’ breaks</td>
<td>Hotel, Participant, Employee, Manager, Participant went for fresh air, colleague confronted her, brought manager out, unfair and unequal treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Praise from a mystery diner</td>
<td>Hotel, Participant, customer, P5 worked on all areas during an event, name was specifically mentioned in positive feedback, GM hit P5 on the arm and now keeps doing this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
<td>I am not paid to train others</td>
<td>Hotel, Participant, Employee, asked to train other staff on the bar when it is not her job, infuriates her, makes her miserable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>No time to eat</td>
<td>Hotel, Participant, Manager, no one available to cover her whilst she had lunch, so she had no food on shift.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Zeros training</td>
<td>Hotel, Participant, Supervisor, P5 training new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Quitting due to a racist</td>
<td>Hotel, Participant, Supervisor, Employee, an employee quits as he feels the supervisor is racist, P5 does not think this, P5 and the supervisor are both Polish (later Latvian?), so P5 thinks she understands the supervisor better.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Flirting with the owners</td>
<td>Hotel, participant, Hotel owners, owner is Scottish, P5 asks if he wears anything under his kilt, response makes P5 embarrassed, no one higher to talk to about this, conflict in P5’s question leading to owner’s response.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Say my name</td>
<td>Hotel, Participant, 3 customers, they ask where P5 is from due to name badge, P5 informs she is Latvian, informed P5 her English is good.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Poor Employee Rights</td>
<td>Nightclub, Participant, when she left her name was spelt wrong on her P45, so she could not get tax back, no contract, no holidays.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Scrambled Eggs</td>
<td>Pub, Participant, Customer, requested full English with scrambled eggs, P6 has never done this, asked colleague to help, colleague did the eggs for him.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Curdled Baileys and Lime</td>
<td>Pub, Participant, Customer, request for Baileys and Lime, drink offers experience of drink curdling when you drink it, you can become ill from it, used as a dare amongst friends.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 18 Findings linked to the theoretical framework

This section builds upon information in Table 29 by articulating the specific findings evident from the analysis completed.

Customer Service Encounters

Literature on customer service encounters identified that “person-to-person” situations are present in leisure services (Solomon et al. 1985, p99). This study identifies that the staff perceptions of customer service encounters, staff to staff dynamics in the encounter, and staff support for colleagues completing encounters is missing in this literature. Each one of these key findings will now be summarised:

- Participants in this study identified knowledge of customer requirements in customer service encounters which differed from management knowledge. For example, in P2s second incident she knew the customers were northern Irish and her manager referred to them as English. The breakdown in communication between the manager and customers was aided by P2 here and her manager needed to utilise P2s knowledge and skills to navigate the encounter. Educators and management need to be aware of student and graduate knowledge so that they support development of this knowledge and can better prepare graduates and staff to meet the needs of these customers. The mis-match with current literature is that current publications only focuses on customer needs and management knowledge rather than staff needs and staff knowledge in the encounter.

- Participants offered incidents where they had encounters with other colleagues. The staff to staff dynamic was clear in the data gathered for this study and suggests that customer service encounters cannot be devoid of staff to staff encounters (this discussed as a key finding later in this chapter). This dynamic caused issues for some participants. For example, in P4s fifth incident she noted how her colleague had completed the finance information incorrectly and that this needed changing in order for the customers to pay effectively. This “confrontation” felt by P4 was not only due to a lack of knowledge on her colleagues part, but also due to the fact that she considered her a “friend” and found it difficult to manage this colleague and get her to change her usual working practices.

- Staff support in delivering the service encounter was also clear from data gathered in this study. For example, in P1s fourth incident both her manager and colleague helped to support her in the service encounter. P4 completed work on behalf of a colleague
who needed to attend a training session. P6 cooked food for customers when his chef was poorly. This study therefore shows that participants were supported and also offered support to colleagues in completing the service encounters.

**Service Quality Theory**

Parasuraman et al.s (1988) Service Quality Theory and Model noted in Chapter 2 was offered due to Customer Service Encounter theory being based upon customer satisfaction. This theory and model was analysed in mind of the data gathered for this study to identify any mismatches. Two additions to knowledge were found: management perceptions of staff, and staff perceptions of customer expectations.

- P2 and P5 both noted how their management perceptions of their work hindered their ability to offer excellent service to their customers.

> “He also asked me why I didn't turn up to work in the middle of my conversation with some other people and it was just weird and inappropriate in that moment.”

(P2, incident 2)

This quotation from P2 exemplifies how management were seen to hinder, interrupt and cause problems when participants were completing their usual duties. This is an important consideration as Educators need to ensure students are able to deal with management perceptions of their service as well as deal with customer perceptions.

- Participants also offered their own opinions and perceptions of customer expectations when talking about why they served customers in a particular way. These perceptions were sometimes incorrect. For example, P6 “obliged” one customer in becoming inebriated. This resulted in the customer falling asleep in the pub and needing a taxi home. It is important that SQT addressed problems between staff perceptions of customer needs and customers health and safety needs in future so that it critically evaluates the staffs perspective.

These two findings in the incidents offered by participants suggest that service quality models need to incorporate more gap analysis to include staff perspectives. The two new gaps proposed are:

1. Management perceptions on staff work
2. Staff perceptions on customer needs
Co-creation and Co-production

Co-creation and co-production were identified in Chapter 2 as part of emergent literature from Service Quality Theory and publications on the Experience Economy. There were two key findings noted in analysis of data gathered for this study:

1. Staff are a vital component in creating customer experiences and have their own needs and expectations which need to be met. This is not currently acknowledged in the co-creation and co-production literature. Humans, customers and management are acknowledged in the texts critiqued in Chapter 2, but the needs of staff are not fully outlined. For example, P3 consistently narrated how she needed her customers to sign contracts so that she could confirm events to venues holding spaces on her behalf. P3 was liaising between both customers and venue managers in order to create successful events. This study shows that customers needed more empathy and understanding on staff needs in order to create successful experiences for their guests. This was also seen in P4s data where she needed to consistently inform her guests of the financial terms and conditions of their stay in the hotel in order to complete her role effectively. Without considering the staff perspective in co-creation literature current research omits to mention how staff also have needs and expectations of the customers. This is important so that graduates are able to reflect on their participation in the experience and inform customers about actions and information they require from their customers.

2. Again linking to the lack of consideration for staff in current literature, this study suggests that co-creation and co-production needs further analysis of how staff contribute to the experience. This result is partly due to the study’s focus on staff, but with this lens is it apparent that staff motivation and willingness is a crucial skill in creating the customers experience. For example, P1 encountered a customer who demanded a typical French dish. Instead of simply informing the guests this was not possible, she offered to inform her head chef and request the item on the menu in future. This offers an example of how motivated and willing staff are able to create a more effective experience for their customers. This response was not due to scripted service either, it was a personal response from that member of staff. Alternatively, P4 narrated about a very rude customer who was demanding changes to her bill over the phone:

‘There the payments that I could understand if I was having rude phone calls about, but from working in accounts receivable myself, I know that sometimes
however hard somebody might try on the phone, if they can't make that payment, they physically can’t do it. There’s no point in being really rude to them. I just think sometimes attitudes like that, they just don't help the situation.” (P4, incident 6)

This excerpt from P4s sixth incident identifies how demanding customers made the encounter difficult for the staff and that poor customer communication hinders successful service. Staff motivation and willingness in the creation of experiences is therefore negatively affected by customers in some encounters.

These two findings from analysis of participant data again exemplify how the staff perspective is crucial in completing effective Customer Service Encounters. Both the Service Quality literature, and Co-creation and Co-production literature currently fail to consider these perspectives. Without acknowledgement of staff perspective, current research omits the other person/s involved in creating the service. Educating students on these elements and ensuring the use their empathy and patience to navigate the various customer demands will ensure the co-create and co-produce experiences in mind of customer needs and business requirements.

Skills and Knowledge

Skills and Knowledge were defined in Chapter 2 to clarify how they are seen by Education Governing bodies (like the QAA and HEA). Complex negotiation and persuasion skills were seen in the incidents offered by participants. Results from this study showed that staff use Explicit Knowledge on customer preferences and requirements, and Collective and Relational Tacit Knowledge to navigate their responses to customers and colleagues:

- Negotiation and persuasion was used by a number of participants in their incidents. P3 had to obtain signed contracts from customers in order to confirm bookings with venues, P4 negotiated prices and invoice requirements with customers to meet their and her business’s needs, P5 tried to negotiate with management for her colleague to be paid on time, and P6 had to negotiate prices and performance timings with customers. Negotiation and persuasion are classed, according to the QAA (2011), as Entrepreneurial skills but are not currently noted as priority skills by Leisure education reports from People 1st (2011, 2013) nor the education framework (QAA, 2008). This study therefore highlights negotiation and persuasion as important skills needed by Leisure graduates.

- Explicit knowledge was clear from participant’s statements on internal business process and customer needs. Examples of this included P4 relaying a thorough account of the internal financial processes completed in her role and P5 showed a good
knowledge of employment law. This confirms the necessity for explicit knowledge of legal and business process as noted in the benchmark statements for Leisure courses (QAA, 2008).

- P2 showed Relational Tacit Knowledge (RTK) by noting her understanding of how her colleagues reacted in certain situations. P1 also showed RTK by describing some customers as “stubborn” and “demanding” when ordering food. This form of RTK relates to staff ability to empathise and understand customer requirements in customer service, but current literature fails to identify how staff also have to relate and deal with colleagues in a similar manner. This has parity with professionalism in that staff need to act professionally in their employment (noted in QAA, 2011) but is not linked in the skilling literature on Soft Skills needed (reviewed later in this chapter).

- Collective Tacit Knowledge was seen in P2’s account of how workers in Hospitality just want to have a “good time” when completing a shift in the restaurant. Knowledge of how a team works in Leisure employment is important to aid effective team working, but this study also highlighted that there are negative consequences of this if colleagues treat racist or harassing comments as humorous (an arising theme addressed in section 5.3.9 in this Chapter). Team working is noted in the People 1st (2011, 2013) reports and Human Resource literature for students to use during their studies but the nuances within these internal teams and focus on having “good time” is not.

- There was no clear evidence of Somantic Tacit Knowledge from participant data. This could be due to participants narrating stories of interaction rather than stories of their ability to use products and create dishes.

**People 1st Skills needed**

There are two areas of Skills needed by employers from the People 1st (2011, 2013) reports pertinent and evident in the participant data: Team working skills and Customer handling Skills. People 1st (2013) reported that Team working skills were lacking in 53% of new applicants and that Customer handling skills were missing in 37%.

- Team working skills were evident in all participant’s data. This study suggests that specific cross department knowledge is needed in order to complete effective team working in graduate roles. Both P3 and P6 noted how they completed additional roles in order to support the business, but these required additional skills learnt either on the job or using “Google.”
• Customer handling skills are linked to Skills for Customer Service Encounters and Soft Skills. P6 in particular had a number of customer requests for different products meaning he used a great range of handling skills. He offered customers table service, gave them cordial bottles to serve their own drinks and even charged mobile phones for customers. These responses all ensured customers were satisfied, but differed from the usual service expected.

Although a range of skills were seen in data offered by participants in this study, the two most aptly linked with People 1st (2011, 2013) reports were that of Team working and Customer handling. This could be due to the methodology of the study in requiring incidents which naturally relate to dealing with others in employment. However, data in this study identifies that students use their critical thinking skills to adapt and use their own initiative to address customer requirements. The flexibility, adaptability and individual responses seen in the data mean that the two skills noted above are not formulaic, but reflexive dependent on the encounter the staff is completing.

Soft Skills
Soft skills are a key component of the skills needed for Leisure graduates. These were defined by articles from Burns (1997) and Baum (2002). It is clear that these are interpersonal and so link to the skilling categories from the QAA (2008) and employer needs noted by People 1st (2011, 2013). This study identified that the communication soft skills were complex. The following table clarifies the types of communication completed by participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Communication and People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Face to face, Colleague, Customer and Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Face to face, Colleague, Customer and Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Phone, Face to face, Colleague, and Customer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>Phone, Email, Face to face, Colleague and Customer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>Face to face, Colleague, Customer and Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>Face to face, Customers at two businesses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table confirms that participants communicated with a range of people using different mediums. P3 noted how knowledge of the Phonetic Alphabet greatly aided her
communication on the telephone with customers. P6 had to use body language and gestures in order to understand his customers in a loud and busy pub environment. These examples clarify the complex array of communication soft skills used by participants.

**Emotional, Aesthetic and Sexualised Labour**

Emotional, Aesthetic and Sexualised Labour were present in participant data offered for this study. Additional areas for consideration not currently noted in current theory will now be summarised in each of these areas.

Hochschild (2012) noted that Emotional Labour requires deep and surface acting when serving customers. Control of emotional displays are known to be important in face to face encounters, but this study highlights problems perceived by the staff in controlling these:

- This study suggests that fake emotions (surface acting) are used more than deep acting due to the personal emotions present when dealing with customers. Acting was also not possible for some participants due to the emotions felt in the situation. For example, when a passer-by told P2 she looked like a pole dancer she immediately laughed and seemed to think it was a compliment. The shock at hearing this comment made P2 unable to deal with her emotions and immediately made light of the situation. P5 noted her own difficulty in managing emotional displays when she felt “quite shitty.”

- Empathy was seen in a range of incidents. P4 helped a customer trying to get into her hotel room by getting her a new room key and drinks for her children. P3 and P4 showed empathy with customers who they perceived were being rude and demanding. These two examples show how participants both empathised with and showed empathy for the emotions felt by customers. This helped to develop better working relationships, but they needed to be real in order to fully satisfy customers.

- Smiling was noted by P6, but noted as “fake smiles.” This confirmed what Hochschild (2012) identified about a thin crust of display. This study clarified that staff smiling was seen as fake when customers were demanding, rude or ignorant of the communication offered from staff. This study identifies that staff need to know how to control this emotion and when it is appropriate to offer emotional displays.

- Participants noted how their long working hours resulted in a difficulty to manage their emotions in service encounters. This was seen as a correlation for participants
who struggled to manage their emotions. Educators and management need to be aware of this and train staff to respond appropriately even when they are working long shifts.

Aesthetic Labour was defined by Witz et al (2003) as a corporate display of appearance. It combines staff uniform and body image to market a company. This study suggests that discrimination may occur as a result of Aesthetic labour. P5 noted that she received inappropriate comments about her attire which was not overtly “abusive” but made her feel uncomfortable. P2 also noted her disliking of her uniform, which consisted of a short skirt, red lipstick and red flower in her hair. As well as contradicting her own style of dress, P2 felt it gave the “wrong impression” to customers. Results also confirm current literature in that refers mainly to female requirements and issues in appearance and not male attire. Even though the study only has one male participant, this male participant did not mention any incident relating to appearance and none of the other participants mentioned male colleague attire either. The gender representation was not important in addressing this aspect in this study, but it is recommended that future studies into Aesthetic Labour explore this issue in future.

Following on from Aesthetic Labour, Warhurst and Nickson (2009) then defined Sexualised Labour. Results from this study show that Sexualised labour is present in customer service encounters and that this results in insulting and discriminatory comments from customers to staff (P1 and P2 in particular). The uniform stipulated by management can also contradict staffs usual style or choices in clothing, making them feel uncomfortable at work and making Emotional labour more difficult to perform (drawn from P2s comments in the stimulated recall). Further, and as noted in Chapter 2, the incidents related to Sexualised labour were between male customers and female staff and thus heterosexual in nature. This confirms previous research but does not fully address or identify how homosexual elements of Sexualised labour may also require different knowledge of skills for graduates.

**Intercultural Sensitivity**

Intercultural Sensitivity was another area needed by employers but not fully supported by the education framework. Using Bennetts (1981) definition of Intercultural Sensitivity this study found that participants showed high Intercultural Sensitivity, but their customers and colleagues did not. P5 was consistently asked about her own nationality in encounters which
did not warrant this probing from customers. P2 witnessed ethnocentric behaviour from her colleagues about Irish customers, whom management referred to as English. P6 and P5 were both requested to change their pronunciation according to Mancunian or Irish accents and language.

This data confirms that ethnocentric beliefs and behaviour were present in Customer Service Encounters. However, as noted in review of Intercultural Service Encounter findings, the encounters identified customers and colleague as ethnocentric and enabled the graduates to educate and communicate ethnorelative positions clearly. This theme is addressed in more depth as a key issue apparent from analysis of data submitted for the study in section 5.5.

**New themes arising from the data**
As noted in Chapter 4 there were four new themes found arising from the data collected for this study: Using Humour as a Coping Mechanism, Stress and pressure felt as a result of the work, Legal frameworks might not support staff and Customers demanding different products than those specified on the menu. These will now be discussed.

Firstly, using humour as a coping mechanism was prevalent in the data. Encounters where participants were insulted, discriminated against and ignored were all seen by participants as humorous. This was also clear in the stimulated recall where I was able to probe further to illuminate their feelings:

“I get called a racist every day” *P2 stimulated recall*

“So, generally people are just trying to have a good time and anything that's funny, or anything that's remotely entertaining, we all let each other know and we all tease each other about it. That's what we do.” (P2 incident 1)

Data suggests that the use of humour was in encounters where their emotions were high, or they were stressed and that humour was used to release tension in the situation. However, due to the gravitas of incidents where humour was seen this study rises this as a key finding to be addresses. Students need to be aware of appropriate and inappropriate humour use to support their colleagues in industry.

Moving on and linking to the use of humour, stress and pressure was noted in the data from all participants. Examples of this are as follows: P3 felt “frustrated,” P1 found incidents “scary,” P3 found customers “stressed me out” and “worried” her, P4 found being asked to
complete different duties as “scary,” and when P5 trained her manager for a number of hours she felt “miserable doing that.” The severity of this stress differed according to the context and situation in which the participants were involved. There are some shocking accounts of bullying and harassment noted; some participants clearly felt that they were not getting their basic support and essential needs met from their management (like food during a shift). From my experiences in teaching in UK HE, I am aware that stress management is taught via human resource management theory for leisure (Armstrong 2014, p.840; Cole 2002, p.289: Price 2011, p.169). This noted, the theory in education seeks to ensure that students are aware of how staff members may become stressed and not how to deal with their own stress in the industry. Again, neither the People 1st reports nor the QAA (2008) benchmark statements allude to the potential problems of stress and pressure present in leisure roles. It is also salient to note that knowledge and skills about how to deal with ineffective managers are equally missing.

There were evident problems and demands present in several incidents, which I saw as being directly linked to people not following current employment laws. The majority of these were offered from P5, but as other participants also noted discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation it is clear that employment law was not fully adhered to in the incidents offered. P5s incidents were most notably related to how legal frameworks do not always support staff as she was “punched” by management, told her holiday form should go in the “bin,” asked to work over 35 hours in 3 days, not allowed holiday time when it had been accrued, and ridiculed by management in front of other staff for having a day off sick. Clearly P5s incidents could suggest that the management in her work needed further training, but as other participants had similar incidents it is seen that this is an important issue from the data. Employment law is noted in the Benchmark statements as “legal, ethical and regulatory frameworks,” (QAA, 2008). However, students need both knowledge of law, and skills to deal with problems linked to employment law. Employment law should support them in the workplace and if it is not being adhered to they need to know how to react professionally to any situation that could arise.

Customers demanding different products than those specified on the menu was the fourth and final new issue arising from the data. Personalised service has been acknowledged in Service Quality discussion and findings, but this theme was seen as different as the customers specifically ordered different dishes than those available on the menu.
This section identified new issues arising from data collected for this study and highlights further skills and knowledge missing from the education framework and needed in completion of Customer Service Encounters. To now summarise how these skills and knowledge can be used in Education, the next section offers an account of the analysis of the semi-structured interviews completed after the stimulated recalls to identify the specific skills and knowledge needed for Leisure graduate entering Leisure roles.

**Education support needed for Leisure students**

From analysis of the six semi-structured interviews completed on participant education there were seven key findings which will now be identified.

1. To begin, only one of the six participants was working in an industry associated with the specific title of her degree.

**Participant degree and their graduate industry**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Graduate Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Events Management</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Tourism Management with Events</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Events Management</td>
<td>Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>Events Management</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>Events Management</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>Tourism Management with Events</td>
<td>Hospitality and Entertainment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above confirms that five of the six participants ended up working in a different sector of the Leisure industry than the one they had chosen to study in. As noted in Chapter 1 of this thesis, if the QAA continue to segment these areas and only use specific benchmark statements for each area graduates may end up working in an area of Leisure that they were not fully trained for.

2. When asked if they felt their education had prepared them for the Customer Service Encounter, 3 noted they did not feel their studies supported the encounters narrated. However, when I probed the 3 participants who did feel the education had supported
them, they referred to work experience and placements as being the area of support from their studies. This suggests that no theory or assessment specifically addressed their ability to deal with customer demands in service encounter contexts.

3. None of the participants could link Customer Service Encounter theory to a specific unit or module taught during their studies. They were unaware of the key term and had also not heard of Intercultural Service Encounters. As this is the focus of all service across Leisure sectors this key term needs adding to all benchmark statements stipulated by the QAA.

4. When asked for a list of the skills and knowledge they felt they had used, none of the participants offered a clear or comprehensive list even though they had just listened to their incidents in the recall. This suggests that the skills and knowledge was varied and complex, but also that participant’s were unable to fully reflect on their own skills and knowledge which is an important component of professional development planning.

5. From completing the study I was able to identify a list of skills and knowledge used by participants in the study:

Skills and knowledge used in the customer service encounters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills: Interact with different people, communicate with different people, and manage different people.</td>
<td>Explicit knowledge:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining professionalism: smiling appropriately, remaining calm, responding appropriately, Communication: Verbal and non-verbal forms.</td>
<td>Phonetic alphabet,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial skills: Using initiative, adapting service to suit a range of guests, adhering to company standards whilst maintaining customer satisfaction.</td>
<td>Legal issues in hospitality,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society skills: Team working, awareness of others, adapting behaviour.</td>
<td>Human resource management,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting</td>
<td>Components of certain drinks or food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opinions on customer types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nationality, culture and religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health and Safety in the workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relational Tacit Knowledge:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empathy and understanding customers’ needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collective Tacit Knowledge:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organisational cultures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Positive attitude
Numeracy: handling bills
Professionalism

Customer behaviour
Appropriate reaction and behaviour with others

6. As participants offered incidents from industry where demands were present, I was able to identify the customer and management specific demands made of participants. These suggest an array of demands made across leisure sectors:

Customer and management demands viewed by participants to be used in education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer demand</th>
<th>Management demand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Requesting a different dish, drink or menu item (P1 and P6)</td>
<td>1. Being asked to use scripted service (P2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Asking for a sexual service (P1)</td>
<td>2. Completing more work due to colleague holidays (P3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Stating the staff’s culture and language ability (P1)</td>
<td>3. Human error in pricing (P3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Inquiring about the staff’s background, (P1)</td>
<td>4. Unclear email address making work difficult (P4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Speaking with a different accent making it difficult to communicate, (P2 and P6)</td>
<td>5. Work in other departments and teams (P4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Unexpected customer behaviour (P2)</td>
<td>6. Not receiving holiday entitlement (P5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Not offering usual tips due to cultural background (P2)</td>
<td>7. Being asked for illness reason in front of colleagues (P5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Wanting to hold numerous venues on hold (P3)</td>
<td>8. Not being paid on time (P5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Not confirming a booking with a contract (P3)</td>
<td>9. Speak in a local accent (P5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Using phonetic alphabet to communicate clearly (P4)</td>
<td>10. Changes in work expectations (P6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Customers not wanting to pay their bill (P4)</td>
<td>11. Only required to do your job and not others (P2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Customers needing specific information to pay (P4)</td>
<td>12. Insulting nicknames given to staff (P2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14. Unfair treatment from management (P5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15. Staff training management (P5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16. Discrimination and racism (P5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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7. I asked participants where they felt development of the skills and knowledge used in the encounters could be places. Participants on this study suggested that using the Employability or Placement unit may be the most appropriate position to analyse and assess these skills. They also suggested using case studies in class or being directly informed that these types of incidents will occur would also benefit their transition into Leisure graduate roles.

Results from the semi-structured interview analysis show that students and graduates need more support for developing skills and knowledge for Customer Service Encounters. Without additional training, there will be continuing recruitment and retention problems as participants in this study raised concerns on harassment, bullying and racist treatment in Leisure roles from both customers and management which they were unable to deal with effectively in every situation. Telling students concretely that these types of incidents will occur will help to some extent, but it is also clear from this study that a new benchmark statement is needed to support students across the leisure areas.
Appendix 19 Findings linked to the research questions

Research question 1

In terms of the specific skills and knowledge used by participants, a great range was noted. Participants offered critical incidents from a variety of service encounters which enabled me to extrapolate the skills and knowledge they used. The skills and knowledge identified in table 32 previously offered in Chapter 5 suggests that a range of skills and knowledge were evident from participants. What was interesting was that none of the participants could offer this list or specify their skills and knowledge in the semi-structured interview. Even when they had offered incidents and listened to them in the stimulated recall, participants found it difficult to identify their own skills and knowledge. A finding from this study is that graduates cannot appraise their own skills or knowledge even after narrating incidents from industry.

It was evident from participant data that the skills used were flexible and adaptable according to the encounter each participant completed. Their ability to change their communication style or alter their performance meant that they were highly skilled at customer service encounters with a range of customers. In the stimulated recalls they could reflect easily on these and identify how these skills were used and changed also. These skills were demonstrated as participants completed a range of performed roles also. They acted as translators, counsellors, comforters, and educators. These varied roles meant that their repertoire of responses in offering intangible services also varied. The extent of communication skills and repertoire in responses seen from the 57 incidents are truly exceptional. A finding from this study is that participants have exceptional skills to perform a variety of roles in Leisure employment.

There were some incidents offered where participants were unable to use their skills and knowledge. These were seen when participants were under a lot of stress or faced with pressure from customers or colleagues. A finding from this study is that although participants had the skills to communicate effectively, the stress and pressure in their roles meant that they were emotionally imbalanced or inhibited when communicating to customers which meant their skills were more difficult to perform.
The knowledge used by participants in the incidents was also extensive. Explicit and tacit knowledge was identified in their incidents. What was interesting here was that Participants identified their knowledge, but then did not always use this knowledge when dealing with customers or colleagues. This identified that even with theoretical knowledge, Participants were not always able to use this effectively in their graduate roles. Knowledge of the processes and business operations were well used throughout Participant data. Their ability to navigate the various products and services was clear and they were all competent in service and management of their duties. A finding from this study is that participants had explicit and tacit knowledge of the processes, legal frameworks and skills needed to perform their roles, but that sometimes they disregarded this knowledge at the expense and potential harm to others.

Participants found their management actions and demands inhibited their ability to complete successful service encounters. Being asked to wear uniform which made participants uncomfortable, wearing name badges, being asked to speak with different accents, colleagues teasing them, and ignoring current legislation to maintain customer and staff safety were all areas noted in participant data. Although participants could evidence excellent skills and knowledge, some incidents narrated suggested that management actions and demands not only inhibited their abilities but also put themselves and customers at risk. A key finding from this study is that management action and behaviour was seen as unsupportive and sometimes detrimental to participant’s ability to use their skills and knowledge.

Research question 2

As noted in the previous section, participants had a range of explicit and tacit knowledge used to perform their roles in industry. Through discussion of their incidents in the stimulated recall I was able to extrapolate knowledge of the theoretical framework also. A finding from this study is that participants showed explicit knowledge of all areas in the theoretical framework even though the theories used are not specified in the education benchmark statements.

Although participants had knowledge of the theories used in my framework it was evident that participants did not always find the knowledge useful in their roles. A finding from this
study is that participants did not reflect or develop the use of their knowledge of key theory underpinning service encounters to make the encounters more efficient and effective.

Each theoretical area analysed in this study raised interesting additions to current theory. Additional research needed as a result of this study is acknowledged in section 6.6 at the end of this Chapter but it is salient to note that there were mismatches with each area of theory when viewed through participant incidents. A finding from this study is that current theory insufficiently addresses the great variety of skills and knowledge used by leisure graduates.

**Research question 3**

When I asked participants about whether they felt their university course had prepared them sufficiently they confirmed that it had not. Even though three participants said it had, they referred to placement or work experience opportunities as being the areas where significant skills and knowledge for the workplace were developed. This suggested that current Leisure based degree programmes do not fully prepare graduates for service encounters in industry. A key finding from this study is that Leisure UK HE courses need to utilise placements and work experience in order to ensure the student’s skills and knowledge are developed in real life working conditions.

As noted previously, none of the participants could identify a specific unit or module from their university course which had supported the customer service encounters completed in their graduate roles. All participants had completed analysis of customer service and satisfaction in their studies but they had not fully problematized their own reactions or feelings to customer demands present in industry. The methodology used for this study forced them to do this (see contribution to knowledge) but in Chapter 5 I also identified the units and classes appropriate for this education. A key finding from this study is that Leisure students require a specific unit in which to assess and test their reactions and feelings in customer service encounters to enable them to develop appropriate responses for graduate employment.

The rigid benchmark statements offered by the QAA are not fully supportive of Graduate transitions into all of the possible Leisure based roles. It was also noted that even though some Leisure students will not go into Leisure based roles or companies employers would nevertheless expect students to have a broader knowledge and skillset from a Leisure Degree.
Without generic Leisure benchmark statements stipulated across the degree areas graduates will not be fully prepared for any Leisure based graduate role. A key finding from this study is that the QAA benchmark statements for Leisure courses in UK HE are incomplete and they need review in consideration of the results noted from this study.
Appendix 20 A presentation of contributions to knowledge with suggestions for their application

The most significant contributions to knowledge are presented in the conclusion. There were several less significant contributions and this appendix identifies all emerging findings from the study whilst providing some suggestions for their application by academics and professionals. For clarity the contributions to knowledge are presented under four headings: Skills and Knowledge needed for Leisure Graduates, Curriculum development, Support for Vocational Education and Training and Methodological Contribution.

Skills and knowledge needed for leisure graduates

This study has identified the skills and knowledge needed for leisure graduates via immediate and direct reflection on graduate customer service encounters. As noted previously, other research considering the skills and knowledge for Leisure students have focussed upon the business or industry requirements of their staff in order to satisfy customers. As this study offers a different focus there are three contributions to knowledge noted below:

1. This study has created a new framework of skills and knowledge which brings together theories on Soft Skills, Emotional Labour, Aesthetic Labour, Sexualised labour, Intercultural Sensitivity and Service Quality. These areas are usually researched individually and without reference to the other areas. This study brought them together to ensure the analysis of data recognised all potential theoretical links and added to knowledge on these terms by offering a new perspective on them.
2. This study offers a new framework of skills and knowledge. This can be used by any educator as a teaching aid where their students may graduate into roles where customer encounters are prevalent.
3. The study proposes a new perspective of skills and knowledge by analysing graduate/staff perspectives instead of customer or management perspectives. This information through staff voice is particularly useful for HE lecturers and employers.

Curriculum development

This study provides opportunities for a number of resources for educators in Leisure disciplines to be developed. There are three particular contributions identified as follows:

1. Data and results from this study will be reported to the QAA to inform benchmark updates and development.
2. The 57 incidents offer 27 pages and 13,592 words of industry practice examples. This will be published so that educators can utilise the data gathered for their own classroom discussion or curriculum development in UK HE. This may also be useful as in-service training offered by employers.

3. Data from this study identifies a new perspective on skills and knowledge and suggests that staff satisfaction is essential. Current literature in education and industry neglects staff satisfaction in customer service encounters and findings from this study can be used to build awareness of the issues which effect staff ability to cope and manage the various demands present in industry.

Support for vocational education and training

Throughout this study I have made reference to other Vocational Education and Training (VET) in UK HE. I have made specific reference to Medical and Teaching programmes in UK HE in comparison to Leisure courses and it is these programmes that this study can also contribute further knowledge. This study has two contributions in support of VET:

1. This study offers an example of how a needs assessment frame in VET research can aid curriculum development for vocational learners. It is suggested that observing the needs of graduates is more beneficial than implementing and testing new curriculum as it ensures curriculum change is student informed and student led.

2. The study supports the need for student centred curriculum development which in turn will aid the National Student Survey (NSS) and the Destination for Leavers of Higher Education (DLHE) survey. At present the NSS only surveys final year students and the DLHE only analyses graduate destinations and wages. This study will support both of these metrics as it enables researchers to identify employment issues to support during the students’ education.

Contribution to methodology

The Methodology used for this study is innovative in that it utilises traditional qualitative methods (critical incidents and interviews) but with different approaches in gathering and reflecting on the data gathered. There are three contributions to knowledge seen in the methodology used:
1. The Critical Incident Technique was used in an innovative way. Asking participants to record their own data without researcher input ensures the data is pure in content and motive and also without research opinion or bias included or affecting it.

2. There is a contribution to knowledge on obtaining customer service encounter data and intercultural service encounter data. Most of the current theory uses customer opinions to frame recommendations to managers and educators and this study shows that by using staff or graduates as the participants it is possible to create a frame of skills and knowledge to support customer satisfaction.

3. Staggering the stimulated recalls and interviews with each participant enabled focussed analysis. This planning and organisation improved efficiency of completion of reflections and analysis.