HSLU Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts

Business

Major in International Tourism Management

Master of Science in Business Administration

More info
hslu.ch/master-tourism

FH Zentralschweiz

Lucerne School of Business

We develop top talent for companies, public institutions and not-for-profits with our demanding, practical and research-based bachelor's and master's programmes. Our range of continuing and executive education programmes make us the largest provider of continuing education among the Schools of Business of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences.

Our research and development projects emerge in dialogue between research, business and the public.

Clients from all areas of society benefit from our experts' extensive specialist knowledge.

We are perfectly situated and rooted in Central Switzerland and our large national and international network allows us to open doors to the world.

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Welcome!

Tourism is one of the most dynamic industries and continually reinventing itself. It brings together people from all parts of the worlds, bridges cultures and enriches our lives.

This Major offers a perfect entry point into the exciting world of tourism or a launchpad to take your career to the next level. And what place could be more suitable for your studies than Lucerne, which has ranked among the world's major tourism destinations for more than 200 years?

In this degree programme, you will study the industry's current and future challenges. You will learn about the significance of sustainability in tourism, how the industry addresses overtourism, and how destinations prepare for the future with innovative products. These include energy-self-sufficient lodgings, digital detoxing programmes and hybrid immersive experiences.

Balancing theory and practical, hands-on experience was a key objective in our design of the programme curriculum. Just like the tourism business itself, we constantly adapt our products to accommodate current requirements. Depending on their needs, students can, for instance, choose to start the programme in spring or in autumn. The Master's programme has been recognised with the coveted "UN Tourism TedQual" of the United Nation's World Tourism Organization for its ongoing improvement efforts. What is more, the Lucerne School of Business has won AACSB accreditation, which is listed regularly in the annual FT Ranking.

Tourism's global reach as an industry is also reflected in our programme's international orientation: both our lecturers and your fellow students come from all parts of the world. The resulting blend of cultures greatly enriches this Major.

Did this spark your interest? We would be delighted to welcome you at the Lucerne School of Business soon.

Anna Para
Head of the Major
in International
Tourism Management
Lucerne School of Business

Lorena Wespi
Administration

Why choose the Master's in Business Administration with Major in International Tourism Management

The MSc Business Administration with a Major in International Tourism Management prepares graduates with skills and knowledge for an international career.

Graduates enjoy favourable career and development opportunities because the programme enables them to assume challenging roles in project work, and management. Entry level functions include leadership positions in digital transformation; heading the marketing unit of a small organisation; managing product, sales, or sustainability projects; or assisting executives or association heads. The curriculum prepares future workforce to engage in international settings and launch their career in a globally encompassing and dynamic field.

Applied and practical
The programme was created with close industry consultation and the teaching continues to reflect this. Teaching content is constantly updated to reflect industry dynamics delivered by academic staff and guest lecturers from the sector. Swiss and international excursions enrich everyday student life throughout the programme.

Very up to date and well connected
The Institute of Tourism and Mobility ITM is Switzerland's leading centre of applied research in the field of tourism and mobility. The publications of various staff are integrated in the teaching programme. Several lecturers also hold board positions or are from relevant tourism organizations. Some courses are taught by academic staff from international partner universities.

High quality study in a personal atmosphere
The small study groups, personal support and the direct exchange with professors and tourism professionals enable for a high study quality education in a personal atmosphere.

Location: Lucerne
Lucerne can be reached in less than an hour from Zurich, Basel, and Berne. Lucerne is known as a world-class tourism destination, located in a historically leading vacation area in Central Switzerland.

Diverse career paths in tourism and service management
Graduates today work for destination management organizations, tourism businesses, airlines and transportation companies, hospitality, consulting, or in events, marketing, and communications departments of companies in many industries. Our graduates take on jobs in Switzerland and abroad.

Co-designing the study
In addition to their own study management, there are many opportunities for students to help shape their studies. Among other things, this includes active learning in small groups and in the classroom, a digital learning platform, going on an internal exchange semester abroad, partaking in a dual degree programme or working with a sponsor for the master's thesis.

Your skills profile after graduation

Expertise in Travel & Tourism
- Market-oriented travel and tourism management
- Development of innovative products and services
- Sustainable tourism management
- Digital skills and innovative marketing knowledge
- International and intercultural market development
- Insights in various tourism fields, e.g., hotels, tour operating, events, airline, etc.)

Project management and organisational skills
- Successful planning, management and evaluation of complex and cross-organizational projects
- Competent interaction with people from different disciplines
- Ability to perceive group processes, help shape them and lead groups or teams

Applied research skills
- Collection, evaluation and addressee-oriented presentation of results from research projects, taking into account research principles potential business impact

Analysis and problem-solving skills
- Analysis of complex business opportunities and problems
- Identification of solution variants
- Successful implementation and evaluation of problem-solving strategies

Expressive and presentation skills
- Appropriate oral and written communication skills, with clear and engaging presentation and explanation of complex specialist content in front of client and expert audiences

Reflection and judgment
- Responsible and self-critical reflection on one's own actions
- Beneficial and sustainable use of findings from the analysis of business practice

«Variety's the very spice of life, that gives it all its flavour.»

William Cowper (1785)

10 reasons why you should study at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts

1 High-quality study experience
The small, focused study groups, our personal tuition and direct access to lecturers are the key ingredients of a high-quality study experience in a personal atmosphere.

2 Innovative teaching practice
We rely on innovative learning settings and creative — and often digital — learning methods. Among other things, we develop our own simulation games or online assessments and promote interdisciplinary collaboration.

3 Practical relevance
Our programme distinguishes itself through its practical, entrepreneurial focus. In addition to the exploration of topical and relevant issues, talks by guest speakers from the management of leading companies enrich the curriculum.

4 Leading-edge and well connected
The lecturers at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts infuse their teaching with their valuable practical and research experience. As a student, you will benefit from the mutual transfer of knowledge between science and business as well as from a broad, varied and well-cultivated network.

5 Co-creating the programme
Make it your own personal programme by combining relevant modules and selecting your preferred Major. You will also set the topics for your semester and project assignments and for your Master's Thesis. You can also plan study trips and stays abroad to suit your needs.

6 Work-study options
A compact timetable and block instruction allow for professional activity of up to 2.5 days per week. This gives you the opportunity to advance your practical skills over the course of the programme.

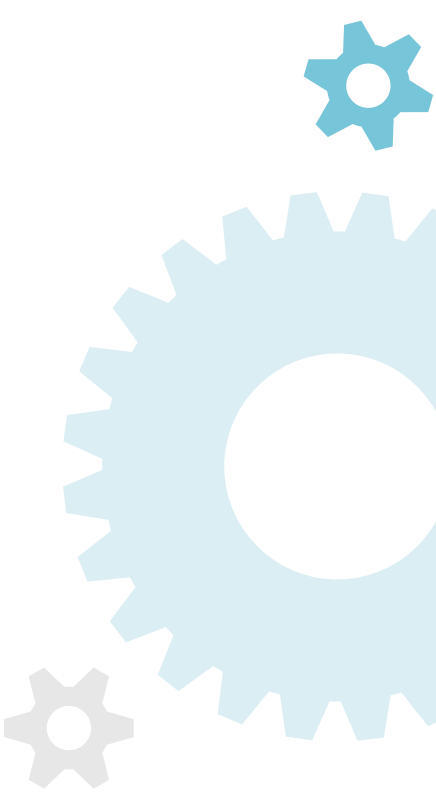
7 Three-semester study option
If you wish to complete the programme in three semesters, our schedule is for you. It is intense and compatible with professional activity of one to 1.5 days per week.

8 Flexible start date
In addition to the duration of study and depending on your needs, you can also choose between a start date in spring or in autumn.

9 Continuous exchanges
Flexibility is a key feature of the MSc in Business Administration. Our heads of programme, lecturers and administrative staff will be happy to discuss any questions you may have. Benefit from continuous close specialist and personal exchange with your fellow students and lecturers.

10 Perfectly located in Lucerne
The course venues are located directly by Lucerne main station. The Lucerne campus offers many connecting points to internationally active companies and public institutions.

Programme Structure



Foundation Modules
Research Methods

Foundation Modules
Management

Master's Thesis

Majors

Pre-Master's Modules

Gathering, analysing, interpreting and communicating data.

– Research Theory & Ethics
– Qualitative Research Methods
– Quantitative Research Methods

Understanding, interpreting and applying selected management principles and theories.

– Digital Customer Management
– Strategic Network & Ecosystem Management
– Organisational Transformation & Change

Researching a major-specific topic using research methods to make a contribution to theory and practice.

Theoretically exploring and practically experiencing and implementing major-specific topics.

– Business Innovation & Entrepreneurship
– Online Business and Marketing
– People Management and Organisation
– Public and Non-profit Management
– International Tourism Management

Strategy, Operational Management, Marketing, Accounting & Financial Management, Economics possibility of post-qualification for the fulfilment of admission criteria

The architecture of the Master of Science in Business Administration programme meets the highest requirements of a business programme. On one hand, it provides the necessary breadth to create extensive know-how in relevant business management topics and on the other, it allows for a profound exploration of a chosen topic through individual specialisation. The latest trends in practice and new research findings are reflected in the analytical and strategic content, which thus offer the perfect tools for a high-profile career at home or abroad. Interlinked module types (see diagram) ensure a continuous synergy of theory and practice. They remain a defining feature throughout your programme. This programme design allows for concurrent professional activity of up to 2.5 days a week.

Programme Content

In the first semester of study, the selected management topics “Strategic Network & Ecosystem Management”, “Digital Customer Management” and “Organisational Transformation & Change” are developed and applied at master’s level. From the very beginning the focus is on case studies which are analysed in a practically oriented manner. Research methods also relevant to this practically oriented approach are included in the programme. These are specifically incorporated into project work in order to ensure the reliability and validity of the outcomes.

1st semester	**Digital Customer Management** 6 Credits	**Organisational Transformation & Change** 6 Credits	**Strategic Network & Ecosystem Management** 6 Credits
2nd semester	**Applied Research Project & Colloquium** 9 Credits	**Sustainability Management in Tourism & Events*** 6 Credits	**International Tourism Development** 3 Credits
3rd semester	**Tourism Mobilities** 3 Credits	**Strategic Management of Tourism Destinations** 6 Credits	**Tourism Marketing Lifecycle** 6 Credits
4th semester	**Start-Up & Entrepreneurship** with study tour to Berlin in March 6 Credits	**Tourism Futures** 3 Credits	**Innovative Product Design** 3 Credits

The second part of the programme is dedicated to aspects of relevance for the sector and to the direct application of foundational skills and knowledge in a tourism setting.

It is possible to select an elective module amounting to 6 ECTS credits from another major if this attracts you and fits into your desired degree profile.

Qualitative Research Methods 3 Credits	**Quantitative Research Methods** 3 Credits	**Research Theory & Ethics** 3 Credits

Digital Experiences
3 Credits

Preliminary Study for the Master's Thesis
3 Credits

Master's Thesis
12 Credits

*** or an elective module from a different Major:**

- Entrepreneurial Management
- Digital Transformation in Society & the Economy
- People Management and Digital Transformation

Please note: This graphic shows the programme with a September start. The programme design is slightly different for a February start and very different over 3 semesters. Credits = ECTS credits (1 credit = 30 hrs of student work)

Programme Modules

Digital Customer Management
In most cases, the customer is considered to be the main source of corporate success. Across industries, customer-centred company management is therefore the "leitmotif" for companies of all sizes. Customer Relationship Management has proven its validity as an approach that can secure long-term profitable customer relationships through the cross-functional coordination of strategies, processes and measures. This module teaches operational methodological skills and knowledge and, in doing so, teaches ways to shape the customer orientation of a company.

6 credits, 1st semester

Organisational Transformation & Change
This module considers the intersection of the company and its markets from a dynamic and development-oriented perspective. Changes are seen as a source of innovative technologies, services and processes and thus as a condition for securing the long-term resilience of public and private organisations. The task is to identify what needs to be changed and to plan, supervise, steer and evaluate change processes.

6 credits, 1st semester

Strategic Network & Ecosystem Management
This module discusses strategic management in network contexts. Building on the strategic management process in organisations, students explore the specifics of management in networks and business ecosystems. They analyse the dissolution of traditionally contradictory concepts like "co-operation" and "competition" or "market" and "hierarchy". Moreover, they learn how to create viable strategies and processes to secure the long-term success of a company and its partners within the network.

6 credits, 1st semester

Qualitative Research Methods
The focus of the module is on conducting a model qualitative research project and going through the steps of a qualitative research process. The students get to know selected qualitative data collection and data analysis methods. They formulate their own research question, develop a suitable research design, collect and interpret data and present the results appropriately. Furthermore, they reflect on the quality of their research using the quality criteria of scientific research.

3 credits, 1st semester

Quantitative Research Methods
Quantitative empirical methods and statistics help future-oriented companies to initiate projects, to lead them successfully and to achieve profitable results. In this module basic concepts of quantitative methods and applied data analysis are taught as well as applied with the software R. In the classroom the contents and techniques are introduced, in tutorials exercises are worked on with support. Quantitative methods are a means to the end of finding reliable answers to business questions.

3 credits, 1st semester

Research Theory & Ethics
Students know and understand the salient aspects of the philosophies underlying current research methods. Students can describe, evaluate and design research approaches in the context of this understanding. This includes the ability to use and reflect on suitable theoretical research paradigms. Students use appropriate quality criteria to evaluate research outcomes. Research ethical considerations form an important part of the module throughout.

3 credits, 1st semester

Applied Research Project & Colloquium
Major-specific problems are brought in by external clients for investigation using a research-based approach in this module. The resulting research papers are written in groups, under the supervision of lecturers and with input supplied by clients. The practical problems involved are reformulated into research questions and answered with the help of research methods. Various research designs, data analysis tools and reflection on the approach chosen are the focus of the accompanying colloquium.

9 credits, 2nd semester

Sustainability Management in Tourism & Events (elective module)
This module covers the principles of sustainability business management necessary to devise robust strategic and operational solutions to common socio-economic and environmental challenges in the travel, tourism and event industries. In addition to learning the relevant concepts and theories, students discuss case studies showing the successful, responsible and sustainable management of small tourism businesses and events.

6 credits, 2nd semester

International Tourism Development
Sustainable tourism is considered an instrument of development cooperation. Students build and consolidate skills and knowledge around sustainable tourism development through real-life case studies and collaboration with international partners. They familiarise themselves with the relevant concepts and methods and learn to apply them in practice. They also learn to recognise, and reflect on, challenges in the context of development cooperation and to develop effective solutions.

3 credits, 2nd semester

Digital Experiences
This module explores the evolving role of digital technologies in shaping tourism experiences. Students discuss core concepts such as digitisation, digitalisation and digital transformation, as well as the fundamentals of the experience economy. The module focuses on the digital customer journey, covering both online and on-site touchpoints including websites, apps, wearables and sensors. Students examine how emerging tools such as immersive realities, AI, gamification, storytelling, and personalisation enhance and even redefine the visitor experience. Case studies and practical examples offer insight into smart destinations, digital fatigue and technology acceptance.

3 credits, 2nd semester

Tourism Mobilities
Amid the ongoing development of advanced transport technologies, travel is becoming more accessible and affordable for large swathes of the population worldwide. However, physical movement from A to B takes place in economic, social, cultural, and ecological contexts that may be different from those at home. While incentivising an ever-growing number of people to travel, the tourism industry is creating challenges for transport providers and tourism firms as well as for the authorities in charge of transport. This course examines the demand and supply sides of tourism mobilities and builds a comprehensive understanding of tourist travel behaviour, tourism transport service design and sustainable tourism mobility management.

3 credits, 3rd semester

Strategic Management of Tourism Destinations
Students will learn to cope with the challenges of tourism destination by applying different strategic, destination and stakeholder management tools. The module is based on theoretical concepts and international case studies from Asia, Europe, North America and Australia, and includes a resort excursion and a destination management game.

6 credits, 3rd semester

Tourism Marketing Lifecycle
This module takes an in-depth look at tourism marketing around the full marketing life cycle, covering the traditional main tourism marketing disciplines as well as new tools and methods that are emerging thanks to new technologies and data. Students gain theoretical knowledge and practical skills in equal measure, with numerous case studies and real-world examples providing deep insight into contemporary marketing strategies. The course content is complemented by external industry experts sharing hands-on experience and professional insights.

6 credits, 3rd semester

Preliminary Study for the Master's Thesis
The preliminary study is the first part of the Master's Thesis Project, for which it forms the basis. In their Master's Thesis Project, students prove that they are capable of independently and expertly addressing a real-life practical problem within a set period of time, with a focus on practicability and solution-finding and commitment to scientific principles.

3 credits, 3rd semester

Start-up & Entrepreneurship
This module focuses on the development of a successful small business (SME) in the tourism industry amid today's dynamic and globalised environment. It has a strong applied focus and features, among other things, various guest speakers and a study trip to the ITB Berlin, the world's leading tourism fair, in early March. Another key topic is entrepreneurship. The module's practical focus is also reflected in the assessed assignments: students are tasked with developing a short pitch and a business plan.

6 credits, 4th semester

Tourism Futures
This capstone module invites students to critically reflect on the main global megatrends in tourism and their impact on the future of the industry. The course focuses on three central themes: (1) Crisis and Resilience, (2) Climate Change and (3) AI and the Digital Realm. Using the 2x2 matrix technique, students explore future developments and develop strategic scenarios together. The latter serve as a foundation on which to build innovative business models for the tourism sector. These can be innovative, novel concepts or based on real-world case studies in the consecutive Innovative Product Design module.

3 credits, 4rd semester

Innovative Product Design
Based on the different scenarios developed in the Tourism Futures module, this consecutive module seeks to further improve outcomes in applied tourism products and services. Students discuss which offerings will be required in the tourism sector in the context of future developments, as well as future customer trends and ways of addressing customer needs through product design. Applying design thinking methods, students will learn to conceptualise tourism products and services in alignment with future trends.

3 credits, 4rd semester

Master's Thesis
In the Master's Thesis, students independently examine a research question and consolidate the specialist, methodological and academic skills they have acquired. The Master's Thesis is the final assignment of the Master's programme.

12 credits, 4th semester

The Programme at a Glance

Basis: A bachelor's degree with at least a foundation knowledge of Business Administration (180 ECTS). It is possible to catch up on this knowledge before or during your master's studies

Internationally recognised degree from a public Swiss university-level institution: Master of Science (MSc) in Business Administration

The degree offers graduates attractive career prospects as team leaders or project managers in a tourism organisation or in a related area. It is accredited by UN Tourism TedQual.

- 4 semesters (also possible in 3, 8 maximum)
- 2,700 hours
- 90 ECTS credits

In-person instruction on two consequtive days (such as Mon and Tue). With the exception of certain block events and catch up modules.

Option to obtain a dual degree in cooperation with one of our partners Edinburgh Napier University in Scotland, United Kingdom or at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia.

Compatibility with gainful employment and family responsibilities:
- up to 2.5 days/week if completed in 4 semesters

- Language of instruction: English (C1 Level)
- International focus: students in a class usually originate from up to 15 countries.

Semester fees: CHF 800
Semester fees for foreign students: CHF 1300
(plus course materials and complementary events)

What our peers say

"Today's tourism sector offers many great possibilities for young and motivated talents. At the same time, the industry faces many challenges, which are calling for innovative and well elaborated solutions. Tourism needs the upcoming generation of well-educated, sustainablity-aware, and digitally-savvy minds to further move forward! The syllabus at the Lucerne School of Business provides the necessary skills and way of thinking to contribute to the sector's future development."

Wybcke Meier
Chief Executive Officer,
TUI Cruises GmbH

"The Major in International Tourism Management at the HSLU was a perfect blend of theory and practice and grounded in a genuine commitment to sustainability. Collaborating with my employer on my master's thesis was an incredible opportunity to tackle real-world challenges and directly apply what I had learned in my work. This hands-on approach not only enriched my studies; it continues to inspire me in my role as Manager of Sustainability at Basel Tourismus."

Valeria Briatico
Graduate of the Major in International Tourism Management, 2024
Sustainability Manager, Basel Tourismus

"The MSc in Business Administration with Major in International Tourism Management at HSLU gave me the confidence and a solid foundation to pursue a management role in tourism. Through the Dual Degree programme, I built a global network and earned a second master's at Edinburgh Napier University. This experience broadened my horizons and increased my passion for the festival and event industry. Despite the additional workload, I would wholeheartedly recommend this journey — it was truly life-changing."

Alexander Fumagalli
Graduate of the Major in International Tourism Management, 2023
Head of Sales, Kuoni Cruises

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Learn more about our Major in International Tourism Management

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