



A VIEW of Dover Coastguard Station

Application of the VIEW resource to the Applied GCSE for ICT

Evidence from Dover Coastguard Station was collected to support teachers delivering the Applied GCSE for ICT by providing students with access to the working areas of a Coastguard Station at the Dover site.

The **VIEW of Dover Coastguard Station** can be mainly used to support;

Unit 2: ICT in organisations,

and can contribute to **Unit 3: ICT in Society**

Dover Coastguard Station is based in a small physical area allowing students to explore and locate evidence of the use of ICT quickly and easily. The student will find ample explanation of the purposes and activities of the station in the area surrounding the building and the reception area inside the station. Brighter students can develop a deeper understanding of the organisation by accessing the Marine and Coastguard Agency website which places the Dover facility into the context of a national agency.

Inside the station the student can look around;

An **administration area** where there is evidence of the use of basic office applications. This is not extensive but indicates to the student that most organisations need administrative support whatever their function.

A small **server room** which offers an opportunity to see the area where the station data communications network interfaces with links to wider area networks and other means of communication including telephone, mobile phone, radio and radar systems.

An **operations room** where the 'watch' engages in the main activities of the station making significant use of ICT to monitor and communicate with vessels in the Dover Strait and beyond. The watch officers use workstations which present a 'live' image of the Strait and the vessels passing through it. The system offers access to data about all the vessels present in the Strait as well as data stored from past engagements. The operations room is the point where data is being gathered and processed and then communicated as part of the service provided to vessels and other agencies.

Unit 2: ICT in organisations is divided into;

How organisations use ICT

Evidence is provided to enable the student to see how and where ICT is deployed. The function of the ICT components is explained through images, narratives and some video excerpts.

Why organisations use ICT

The context for the use of ICT is provided from the very start with ample explanation of the problems faced by the busiest shipping lane in the world. The ‘need’ is made clear and the link to the subsequent deployment of an ‘air traffic control’ system of the seas is evident.

The main ICT components utilised

The basic components of the ICT systems are indicated and some detail provided. Many components are standard and recognisable but are employed in the unique working environment of the care of the Dover Strait.

The exploration of the station will contribute to the requirements of **Unit 3** since the provision of new ICT technology is changing the ways in which watch offices work and the skills they need. In addition, the collection and storage of data enabling the tracking of vessels across Europe, is a significant development with technological, legislative and privacy issues.

Interviews are provided with the Station manager, watch officers and administration staff. Each interview offers a user’s perspective on the application of ICT at the station and a better understanding of their work and career.

Dover Coastguard Station provides an interesting application of ICT in a public sector service that saves lives, supports cleaner seas and protects property. The convergence of analogue data from radar systems and transponders into a desktop digital graphic display is fascinating and the link to a database offers a refreshing change to the study of these applications in more common situations.

A VIEW of Dover Coastguard Station offers an insight into a public sector organisation which may be of interest to students studying Applied GCSE Business as well as offering a contribution to the requirements of careers education and citizenship.