**Air Traffic Control work experience**

Now that I am back at school, I have time to reflect on my week at ATC. During my work experience I overseen the roles of an ATC operator, this not only involves the approach and departure system of an aircraft; you also have daily briefings on safety with all services connected to the airport, routine face to face handovers between controllers. This was both interesting and educational as it has opened my eyes to what would be a very fascinating and challenging role where I hope to follow and succeed. The control team that I worked with were very helpful and welcomed me so professionally it made the whole starting process very easy for myself to integrate. Each day was different as there was a new challenge and different learning opportunities such as filling in information on aircraft, which was writing in the ‘squawk’. This is where the aircraft will have a four digit code which is given out on radar service in order to differentiate different vessels. While in the control tower, as well as picking up information it was very clear to see what a dedicated team they were, everyone knew their specific role which would be carried out meticulously and also the ability to multi-task while working at such an intense level.

One of my days I was involved in safety checks of a search and rescue helicopter along with the pilot and co-pilot, these checks were carried out on a daily basis and it was good to see what was involved on such a high spec piece of equipment absolute nothing is left to chance. All this opens your eyes to a different level of safety. The fire crews showed me the importance of their role that is carried out on a daily basis which is safety checks on fire vehicles, safety equipment ranging from PPE(personal protective equipment), breathing apparatus, pumps, hoses and water cannons and the safety fire drills which they carry out routinely. All these safety checks help to keep passengers, crew, aircraft and all vehicles encountering the airport safe.

On my visit with the ops team, people could take for granted the simple thing of birds flying around the airport not too seriously, however if it wasn’t for the checks that ops carry out which are playing recordings of the specific birds that are in the area which is like bird language to scare them away, and checking runways are clear of debris, all runway and taxiway lights are all in working order.

All these activities have shown me what an important role they play in the airport, they all come together as one big team. The skills I have gained from this experience is how to work as a team and to communicate clearly and effectively with others, all in all I had a great experience and I look forward to my next encounter at Air Traffic Control.

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