



# Location Filming Code of Practice

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# 1. Aim and scope

This Code of Practice provides essential safety management standards for all location filming approved by the Department of Media Arts, including practice teaching and training, research, and student-initiated projects approved by means of the Department's Project Proposal Form process. The scope of this Code of Practice covers all self-managed filming work, whether on or off College premises, and includes related activities such as photography, sound recording, preparation of sets and props, conducting location reces, and travel to and from locations.

The Code of Practice requires a sufficient level of planning to ensure adequate management systems are in place to protect your own safety, and that of your crew, cast members, contributors and others who may be affected by the filming, including members of the public.

Furthermore, the Code of Practice operates within the *College Off-site Activities Policy and Procedures*, which covers activities such as field trips and conferences.

Generally speaking, depending on the nature of the task, filming is conducted in relatively small groups formed within a class, so for example the 1<sup>st</sup> year practice students work in groups of 6 students, plus any actors or contributors.

It is useful to note that Film London defines a small crew as being 5 members or less, including cast, for the purposes of applying for street filming permission in the Greater London boroughs. Consequently, Media Arts crews may be considered as being either small or large and different application processes apply depending on the number of people involved.

## 2. Risk assessment

Risk assessment is essential to effective health and safety management. For our purposes, this is a two-tier process, comprising the following stages:

(1) A [General Risk Assessment \(GRA\)](#) has been conducted by our Departmental Health & Safety Coordinator in accordance with the College policy and procedure. This applies to the use of the Department's location filming equipment when used in relatively stable operating environments, such as the Williams Practice Teaching Space, and filming simple actions, such as standing, sitting, reading, walking across the room, still life objects, etc.. The GRA for using Location Filming Equipment is appended and forms part of this Code of Practice.

(2) Owing to the extremely variable nature of film locations and filming action, whether or not you are working with real or imaginary situations, it is necessary to conduct a further level of risk assessment, which may be specific to a particular scene and location, or which can be used for a sequence of work, such as for a documentary or art production. Two types of *Location Safety Form* have been devised to serve this second level of risk assessment and blank forms can be downloaded from [the Media Arts information page](#).

### 3. Training and ability

As a pre-requisite to approving any self-managed location filming work, all practice students are at the earliest and most appropriate opportunity given location safety instruction comprising two levels:

(1) Location Safety Management training, which covers the legal context and the department's operating procedures, including how to complete the Location Safety Forms.

(2) A practical workshop about using the department's lighting, electrical and grip equipment, popularly referred to as a LEG course.

For both levels, students are required to sign a declaration to acknowledge they have received this training and these are kept on file by the Departmental Health & Safety Coordinator. For some courses, students need to pass a test in order to progress to a subsequent level of study.

In addition, good health & safety practice is reinforced during practice skills workshops and other practice sessions as an integral part of the various taught programmes. In accordance with the Media Arts Centre Rules, it is essential that you attend any

sessions that cover location safety and fully understand the process of location assessment before you embark on any location recording work. If you have not attended such a session, or are not confident in undertaking the necessary location assessment, including health & safety risk assessment, then you must contact the Departmental Health & Safety Coordinator to arrange further training before planning any location work.

Get to know your fellow crew members in terms of any skills and abilities that may come in useful during filming, for example if you have a qualified First Aider on the team who may be able to take appropriate action in the event of an emergency.

It is also useful to be aware of any pre-existing conditions that people have in case their condition may be triggered or aggravated during filming, or if they have particular difficulties with certain situations such as height or confined spaces. Often, people may be unwilling to disclose such conditions so you will need to be sensitive to this when planning any work that may cause such difficulties.

## 4. Responsibility

Everyone involved in a location shoot is responsible for ensuring filming is conducted safely. Under the [College's Health & Safety Policy](#), all students are required to act in accordance with the health and safety information, training, and instruction they have received.

In accordance with the [Departmental Health & Safety Policy](#), for location filming, one student from the crew (effectively the Line Producer) must be responsible for the management of the production's health & safety arrangements, including conducting location research and recce, safety risk assessment, completion of location safety forms, seeking specialist safety advice as necessary, and ensuring stated control measures are effectively communicated to all participants or affected parties prior to filming.

This designated student will seek permission to film from their Course Tutor, who is responsible for reading their location safety form, ensuring an adequate safety risk assessment has been conducted, providing practical advice as necessary and informing the Location Store that they have approved the planned filming activity.

In certain cases, for example in which the level of expected safety risk is rated as high (including all requests for overseas filming), authorization will need to be escalated to the Head of Department.

The Location Store will only allow equipment bookings for activities that have been specifically authorized by the relevant academic tutor or, if required, the Head of Department.

Whether or not you have specific responsibility for health & safety for any production, you must read and apply the following general guidance in any production work.

Be aware that you will often be using professional, rather than consumer, equipment and therefore you will be regarded by the authorities as being a professional film crew rather than, say, a tourist.

Furthermore, be aware that in terms of how you and your film crew are perceived you are building the professional reputation of yourself and your crew, and in addition the Department, the College, and indeed the profession as a whole.

## 5. Locations

For the purposes of this Code of Practice, filming locations may be considered under the following categories, requiring different processes and levels of management, and arrangements for obtaining the relevant filming permissions:

- (1) On College premises – please refer to the document '[How to arrange filming on campus](#)'
- (2) Off-campus on private property – many students choose to film in rented accommodation. It is essential to obtain the necessary permissions in writing from the owner or managing agent of the property in addition to the occupier as unauthorized filming may contravene the particular tenancy agreement, which has the potential for the occupier to be evicted. Charges may also apply.
- (3) Off-campus commercial or managed spaces such as shops, offices, railway premises, bus stations, galleries, museums, theatres, etc. – It is essential to obtain filming permission from the relevant manager prior to filming. Charges will often apply.
- (4) Street filming and other open spaces – If you are filming in the street, i.e. on the pavement, which is considered as being on the public highway, you must obtain permission from the relevant local authority office and inform the relevant local police station. Further details are appended. Charges may apply.

- (5) Locations requiring travel overseas – it is the department's policy only to allow overseas filming as an exceptional arrangement for postgraduate students and undergraduate finalists. Please refer to our [Policy on Using Equipment Overseas](#).

Some location hosts will request a copy of your Public Liability Insurance (PLI) certificate. All departmentally approved filming is covered by the College's Public Liability Insurance policy and a .pdf copy of the certificate can be downloaded from the [Media Arts website](#). Please be advised this link will only work on campus using your College log-in.

In the event of a claim being made against the College PLI there is an excess of £250, half of which must be paid by your production team via the crewmember with designated responsibility for health & safety management, the other half being borne by the Department.

## 6. Actors, performers and contributors

Although the Department sometimes employs professional actors for teaching workshops, student productions have no legal constitution to employ people and therefore need to cast volunteer actors. In UK employment law, being a volunteer means there are no contractual obligations on either party, including giving benefits in kind, though you should budget to reimburse any reasonable expenses they have incurred such as travel, overnight accommodation and subsistence.

Nevertheless, we encourage students to set the highest standards when casting actors and performers and to find the most suitable actors for the role. Work as a crew or sub-crew when meeting and screen testing your actors, rather than working alone.

Your actors, performers and contributors should be asked to sign a release form before any principal photography or recording commences. A [template Release Form](#) is provided on our website and you should keep a copy of the signed form in your production records.

It may be necessary to establish the credentials of factual contributors if they are not already known by a member of the production. If they have a trade or profession that involves activities that may pose significant risk to yourself and others engaged in the production, ensure they provide you with the necessary safety instructions and evidence of relevant qualifications, safety risk assessment and their own or their company's public liability insurance.

If your actor, performer or contributor is below the Minimum School Leaving Age (MSLA), you must operate in accordance with the department [policy statement on Children and Young Persons](#). In the UK children are of compulsory school age up to the last Friday in June in the academic year of their 16th birthday. After this they have reached the MSLA and they can apply for their National Insurance Number and work full time.

There are strict legal procedures that need to be adhered to and in the case of a 'directed performance' (which may include some factual productions) you will need to apply to the child's local authority for a licence or, if the authority deems that a licence is not required, then a notice of licensing exemption.

Always act in a professional manner with your actors, performers and contributors by being courteous and respectful at all times, ensuring you communicate all necessary information in a timely way and being punctual for any planned arrangements including call times for the shoot.

Always ensure your actors, performers and contributors receive a production credit and a copy of the final film.

## 7. Props, costumes, make-up and filmed action

As soon as you have completed your script breakdown and have a clear idea about the props and costumes you need for your production, you should contact the Department's Art & Design technicians to arrange a consultation meeting. The technicians will be able to advise about potential sources, including our own stock. In some instances, and when given sufficient advance notice, the technicians may be able to modify or construct props for your production, though you will need to pay for any materials supplied.

If you intend to use replica weapons, it is important that these are handled in accordance with the department's procedures. If you are borrowing a prop weapon from the Department's stock, you will need to have an approved Location Safety Form, including a risk assessment covering the planned replica weapon usage, and you will be asked to sign a declaration about the security, handling and use of the weapon. If you intend to use knives or other sharp implements as props, these must be blunted or modified by one of our technicians before use. Actors and anyone exposed to these props need to be properly briefed in their use.

If you are using any substances such as make-up products, fake blood, etc, these must be proprietary products that are approved for the purpose and these often fall within the [Department's procedures with regard to Control of Substances Hazardous to Health \(COSHH\)](#) legislation.

All action must be properly risk assessed and if there is a significantly high level of risk then you must seek tutorial advice to establish whether or not it is absolutely necessary to film the action in the planned way. Often, there will be creative ways of cutting or framing the action to reduce potential risks. Some actions will require special approval and possibly the use of suitably competent specialists such as stunt coordinators, animal handlers, weapons experts, etc., before the planned filming can proceed.

The Department has [published work methods](#) for planning high risk activities.

## 8. Planning (i)

Effective and timely planning is essential to safe working on location. If you are working as a production crew, one person must be identified as being responsible for sourcing and visiting locations, for risk assessing any filming work being planned, and for ensuring the planned control measures are applied during the shoot.

As a crew member, you are required to follow the health & safety procedures devised for the particular filming work and report any issues to the person with designated responsibility for health & safety management.

For certain recording activities, which will often include some forms of documentary production, some work for Contemporary Media Art, and also some Creative Sound Design work, you may be required to work alone and will effectively be the person responsible for health & safety management.

You will normally be expected to visit and do a 'recce' of all of the locations you are considering, well in advance of any planned recording, so you can assess their suitability and identify any hazards associated with the particular work environment. You should use the Location Safety Form template as a checklist during your visit. If you are unable to do a recce, then you will need to provide your course tutor with evidence of an appropriate level of location research, for example correspondence with an appropriate location contact.

In addition to the location set, you should also view any parking, loading, storage and transporting areas, dressing room space, access to WCs, access to food and drink (and a suitable place to consume them) and any secure storage requirements that may be needed, including personal belongings.

It is essential that you liaise closely with a local contact for your location. This person should be clearly identified and their name and contact details included in the Location Safety Form.

If it is a public facility such as a railway station, airport, museum or anywhere 'out on the street' or public highway, you must contact the relevant authority, seek any necessary permissions and ensure you understand and observe the local contact's safety management requirements.

Your local contact should also brief you on fire evacuation and other operational procedures, etc. If you are unable to find readily available information about who to contact, then ask at the Media Arts Location Store.

If you are recording in a private dwelling, pay particular attention to potential hazards occurring frequently in domestic environments, such as:

- steep staircases
- unmarked steps
- low beams and doorways
- slippery surfaces
- tripping on loose floor coverings, toys and other loose articles
- kitchen hazards such as hot liquids, glassware, knives, etc.
- unruly children or pets
- substandard electrical mains installations

You will also need to identify suitable exit routes that can be used if an emergency such as a house fire occurs. You must agree with the local contact suitable means of keeping these routes free from obstruction during the shoot and arrange for any doors or windows serving as emergency exits to be readily usable to allow unimpeded exit.

## 8. Planning (ii)

If your shoot is complex in terms of needing to use specialist lighting equipment, tracks & dollies, etc. you will find it helpful to draw a scale floor plan of the location so you can plan blocking of shots (i.e. positions and moves of cameras and actors) and any required control areas for safe operation of equipment, storage of cases, designated safe walkways and emergency exits, cable runs including those to local mains power supplies, etc.

You may need to hire or borrow additional items of safety equipment, particularly if you need to restrict access to the set and work area if it is normally used by members of the public and suchlike. Ask your local contact if any barriers are readily available.

The Location Safety Form will also prompt you to seek useful information in terms of proximity to local public transport facilities, the local accident and emergency department, parking and access arrangements, where to obtain food and drink, etc.

Make a note of any operating conditions that may vary from those encountered during your 'recce', for example changes in traffic or parking, lighting conditions, weather, etc.

The key section of the Location Safety Form is the risk assessment section. This comprises a checklist of generic hazards to assist you with identifying the ones most likely to occur during your shoot. While the appended General Risk Assessment applies to operation of the Department's filming equipment, you will normally need to complete Location Safety Forms in order to assess and manage any hazards presented by the nature of the action being filmed and the environment you are filming in.

The purpose of the risk assessment is to enable you to safeguard the wellbeing of all participants in the location recording event and of anyone who may incidentally be affected by the work, such as a member of the public or bystander who works in an adjacent area.

Any hazards unlikely to occur should be marked 'N/A' to show you have considered them and believe they do not apply to the particular shoot.

For each hazard you think applies, you should enter the following details:

- (1) who will be exposed to the hazard;
- (2) a brief description explaining how an accident or illness is likely to occur and what kind of injury might result;
- (3) your assessment as to the probability of the hazard occurring, expressed in terms of 'Low', 'Medium' and 'High' probability;
- (4) your assessment of the consequence of an injury occurring, expressed in terms of 'Low', 'Medium' and 'High' impact;
- (5) a brief description of the control measures you intend to put in place to eliminate the hazard or reduce the level of risk involved.

You may need to seek specialist advice from your course tutor, the relevant local contact, the departmental Health & Safety Coordinator, the College Health & Safety Advisers, or a specialist adviser.

## 8. Planning (iii)

In the case of certain production activities, such as [recordings involving stunts, visual effects, fights and weapons](#), or where they involve [work at height, children and young persons, vehicles](#) and other high risk activities or operating environments, special arrangements apply in accordance with the relevant [Work Method Statement](#).

You will need to discuss with your course tutor the necessity of including such activities in your production in the context of your coursework assessment and will require the Head of Department's agreement before doing any further planning work to manage such high risk activities.

It is unlikely that any such filming will be approved without the involvement (during planning and filming) of an expert with relevant qualifications, experience and insurance, such as a stunt coordinator, firearms expert, animal handler, etc. This will incur a cost that will have to be met by the production.

If the Head of Department has given approval for further work in relation to a high risk activity, you will need to conduct a more detailed risk assessment to consider fully the relevant standards and systems of control, with the assistance of the relevant specialist advisers. In some cases, you may be required to sign a duty of care declaration.

Before submitting your Location Safety Form, it is important to read and understand the declaration when, by sending an electronic version of the form to your course tutor from your College email account, you accept full responsibility for implementing the health & safety arrangements for the shoot.

You are required to submit your form no less than two working days before the planned shoot but, preferably, as early as possible. This is to provide sufficient opportunity for the course tutor to discuss any operational aspects with you, and to allow time to seek any further advice needed and process the form.

If your course tutor, after considering the contents of the form, is willing to agree to your carrying out the location filming, they will forward it to the Location Store to confirm that equipment may be booked for the planned shoot, subject to availability. As soon as they have agreed this, you should then go and make the booking in the Location Store.

When booking the equipment, seek advice from the practice support staff on choosing the most appropriate equipment to use for the task. This may assist in eliminating the need for unnecessary lifting and carrying.

## 9. Using third party sources and services

You will need to club together and set up a budget to pay for your production costs. It is recommended you do this before commencing rehearsals, or at least prior to principal photography, and agree fair apportionment of costs between members of your crew in order to avoid unnecessary arguments.

Buying in third party services and sourced items (i.e. not supplied by the department) includes actors, performers, food, electrical and mechanical equipment and props, transport, accommodation, etc..

Owing to financial constraints, there is a temptation to go for the cheapest option rather than best value. This is likely to present quality issues which may introduce potential health & safety hazards.

As a fundamental principle, you must ensure that all third party service providers or suppliers have a recognised trading status and are willing to provide on request the necessary certificates with regard to health and safety assurance. They should also have public liability insurance cover for the services they provide.

There may be a temptation for crews to provide do-it-yourself catering in order to save on outlay, but this creates potential issues regarding standards of food hygiene, storage at correct temperature, preparation, cooking, serving, consuming within required time limits, etc. You will not be covered by the College Public Liability Insurance in the event of your actor claiming against you for food poisoning!

Any electrical or mechanical equipment supplied by a third party must be properly checked, including valid Portable Appliance Test (PAT), appropriately maintained, and fit for its intended use. The consequences of error could be potentially fatal. If in doubt, find an alternative supplier.

## 10. Preparing for the shoot day (i)

Scripted pieces must be rehearsed in advance of the shoot to ensure actors and presenters are fully prepared and have walked through their actions. This will assist with planning the layout of the set and adjacent work areas and also with your scene blocking. Effective preparation at this stage will avoid having to manage problems on location with the associated time pressures normally imposed by the filming process.

Before collecting the equipment, you must ensure your crew, cast or other participants are fully briefed on the operational requirements for the shoot. This will include circulating copies of the relevant risk assessments and communicating associated details in relation to any control measures that must be implemented, especially the fire exit route(s).

You should draw up an itinerary for the shoot, including cast and crew call times, return travel arrangements, shooting schedule, break times, etc. Arrangements should allow realistic times for travel (taking into account the need to avoid people having to drive home fatigued after a long shoot day) and for the set up and break down of the equipment, remembering that lights will take a while to cool down enough, ready for packing away. Also, be aware that many shoots will over run, so try to take this into account.

You must ensure there are a sufficient number of people to fulfil all tasks in the time available and that they have a clear understanding of their responsibilities, particularly concerning the health & safety controls you intend to implement during the shoot. This includes having an appropriate number of people available at the time of both collection and return to lift and carry any items of equipment you intend to use.

If you intend to use your own vehicle to transport members of cast, crew and/or equipment for the shoot, you are personally responsible for making certain it is suitable for the task, is in road worthy condition with the necessary certification, and that you have the correct driving licence classifications and level of motor insurance cover to allow you to use the vehicle for the purpose. Similarly, anyone else driving or providing vehicles for the production must adopt the same standard. Further information is contained in [work method statement on Using Vehicles](#).

Monitor the weather forecasts, particularly if adverse conditions are likely to increase safety risks. If it is an interior shoot, remember adverse weather conditions are likely to affect any loading or transporting work.

Examples of relevant hazards include rain, which will increase the incidence of slips or exposure to electric shock, gusts of wind blowing equipment over or causing debris to fall from any structures above the work area, exposure to sun, heat or cold over a period of several hours. You may need to make special arrangements for shelter, protective clothing, sun cream, etc.

These considerations must be managed and clear directions given to minimise tensions between achieving creative aims and ensuring safe working. There are also a number of personal preparations you need to make.

Wear appropriate footwear for the task, the exact nature will depend on the terrain you are planning to work on, but shoes offering some overall protection with flexible soles and good grip will suit the more usual applications. Bear in mind you will need to wear them for several hours at a time so they need to be comfortable and worn-in, and ensure they don't cause unwanted noise if you are required to walk during a take.

## 10. Preparing for the shoot day (ii)

For filming purposes it is desirable for crew members to wear dark clothing to avoid causing reflections, made from fabric that doesn't generate noise when moving. However, there may be overriding safety requirements to consider, such as the need for waterproof clothing (which is often quite noisy), light clothing to reduce heat absorption and hi viz clothing in areas where there may be moving vehicles.

Make certain you take with you a practical quantity of drinking water and any healthy snacks to maintain energy levels, especially if catering facilities are unlikely to be readily accessible. Ensure you have made adequate provision for any cast or crew members who have nut allergies, diabetes or other conditions that may be aggravated by certain food contents.

Ensure your mobile phone is fully charged and your account has sufficient credit to make any required calls. Programme in any relevant numbers, as identified in your Location Safety Form, so you can make rapid contact in the event of an emergency.

Personal contacts need to be made aware that you will have to switch your phone off during recording and it is helpful to indicate a time when you may next be able to respond to any messages in order to avoid causing unnecessary concern.

In addition to the technical equipment you are borrowing from the department, you will find it helpful to assemble a location kit containing the following items:

- Production papers (including LSFs, evidence of filming permission, important contacts information, some blank sheets of plain A4 paper, etc.)
- Notebook and pens
- Waterproof wallet to keep papers in
- Camera tape
- Gaffer tape
- Torch
- Work gloves
- Marker pens
- Lens cloth
- Lens cleaner
- a roll of dustbin bags
- Camera rain cover
- Copy of equipment operating manual
- Mobile phone (charged and in credit)
- Utility toolkit including scissors, penknife, screwdrivers and pliers
- Spare batteries and blank recording media
- Traveller's First Aid kit
- Anything else that you wished you had taken on your previous shoot
- Waterproof holdall in which to keep all of the above

## 11. Collecting and transporting the equipment

If you are using your own vehicle to collect equipment from the Media Arts Centre, you must park temporarily in the area designated for loading. Keep building exits free from obstruction and any emergency vehicle access routes clear at all times.

When the equipment is being set aside for issue, you need to check it is consistent with your booking request.

You must inspect the equipment, particularly all electrical cables and connectors, to make certain it is free from any signs of damage or disrepair. You also need to test the equipment to make certain it is fully operational.

Ensure you have been issued with any additional safety items required for the shoot, for examples RCDs to use with lighting kits, work gloves for adjusting lighting equipment, hi viz jackets for working near moving vehicles, etc.

If you identify any issues with the condition of the equipment you should report it to the member of staff who is assisting you so it may be set aside for repair or replacement. While we will attempt to replace any item of equipment you have reported as being in a state of disrepair, realistically we operate with a narrow margin of error and ultimately we may be unable to fulfil the full booking requirement. In such cases, we can discuss the difficulty with your course tutor to assess the consequences in the context of your coursework.

You must exercise due care when lifting and carrying equipment, taking into consideration the weight and size of any items or combination of items, the position of any carrying straps or handles, and any hard corners or projections.

There are trolleys available to assist in transporting heavy items of equipment to the loading area so please ask for help when you need to use them.

If you are using any vehicles, refer back to the guidance given in Section 10.

If you are carrying equipment on public transport, ensure you have an adequate number of people to share the load and avoid causing injury to other passengers when moving and stowing any items. Keep alert for any suspicious activity that may pose a threat to your personal wellbeing and that of your crew members. Always keep any items of baggage attended and in view, and comply with any directions given by official transport personnel, especially if they advise your baggage handling arrangements are deemed to be causing safety or security issues.

## 12. Setting up (i)

On arrival at the location, check the layout and operation of the work environment to ensure there are no unexpected conditions that will affect the health & safety controls you intend to operate. For scripted productions, your check will include any dressing room facilities being provided by the location.

Ensure the work area is clear of any slip or trip hazards and any people who are not directly involved in setting up equipment, scene dressing and props.

The work area must be evenly lit to a suitable level to allow effective working. Prepare any supplementary lighting that may be required off-set to illuminate work areas that will become dark when the general lighting is extinguished for rehearsal and recording.

Mark out spaces that will be used for specific functions, in particular the film set itself, off-set work areas where equipment stands may be set up, tracks laid, etc., other work areas where cases and other non-operational items can be stored without causing trips, and safe interconnecting walkways that will be used when entering or leaving the set.

Ensure that any lighting positions are well clear of any adjacent surfaces, structures and in particular soft furnishings such as curtains or drapes. This will allow the heat from lighting equipment to dissipate freely and minimise the risk of a fire being caused by igniting any fabrics or other flammable materials.

You should adopt the following principles with regard to use of gels, diffusers, reflectors and proximity to potentially flammable materials:

(1) Ensure any **gels, diffusers and filters** attached to barn doors or otherwise used in close proximity to the luminaire are fully compliant with BS 3944-1:1992 '*Colour and diffusion filter material for theatre, television and similar entertainment purposes. Specification for flammability and dimensional stability*'. All gels supplied by the Location Store will comply with this standard.

(2) Any **material used or falling within the light beam**, including props, set dressing and devices or materials used for reflecting and flagging light, these should be kept at least 3 metres away from luminaires.

(3) When placing luminaires, ensure that they are at least 1 metre away from **ALL adjacent surfaces and materials**, including walls, ceilings, painted, papered or plastic covered surfaces, cyclorama, curtains and other fabrics, so as to reduce the risk of browning, melting or ignition, and to allow sufficient air circulation around the unit.

Take care when erecting stands. Check for any overhead fixtures and fittings, including lighting and other electrical installations that could pose a hazard. Telescopic systems can collapse if left improperly secured and stand legs can cause trips if poorly positioned. Also be aware the higher you extend a stand, the less stable the structure becomes. This is a particular risk with lighting units, which often have to be set above head height. Risks can be reduced by weighing the stand legs down with sand bags, ensuring cables are kept free from tripping, and securing stands or light units to firm structures using proprietary ties.

Use white camera tape to mark the ends of any microphone stands, flag stands and similar pointed objects so they are still visible after working lights are dimmed.

## 12. Setting up (ii)

Cables should be routed so there are vertical drops to the floor from any connecting points and then run flat across the floor, preferably running between points in straight lines. Any excess lengths should be coiled up and stowed under the base of an equipment stand or similar dead space to avoid causing trips. All cables running across or along any walkways must be secured to the floor using gaffer tape.

If you are using mains power extensions, make certain they are of the appropriate rating for the load you intend to use. You can do this by assessing the total power output (in watts) required of any equipment items you plan to supply, then divide this by the supply voltage (UK consumer supply is 240 volts AC). For example, an extension block rated at 6 Amps, when connected to a conventional 13 Amp power socket in the UK, will allow a maximum total of 1,440 Watts.

If you exceed this loading by connecting too many appliances, you are at risk of overloading the circuit, which has associated fire and electrical safety hazards. It is wise to allow a reasonable margin of error rather than work to the maximum limit.

You need to ensure any mains extension reels are fully extended to prevent the cable from overheating. This however increases the potential for trips, so you must ensure any excess cable is laid out in a safe area.

You must prevent any electrical cables or connectors from being exposed to water, which includes puddles, spilled liquids, etc. It is useful to supply some paper towels and bin bags to clear spillages as soon as they occur.

Be aware that you may need to light the set using stand-ins for actors, presenters or guest participants to reduce their exposure to adverse conditions (i.e. glare of lights, heat, etc.). This may take crew members away from other tasks, so you need to ensure there are arrangements to maintain continuity of safety monitoring where work activities are left uncovered

## 13. During filming

During any location recording, there is a high risk of becoming preoccupied with the demands of getting a good take and this is when there is a greater chance of an accident occurring. Your shooting schedule should provide a clear sequence of work so that everyone involved can operate efficiently and there are effective contingency measures if work falls behind schedule.

All crew members should apply the relevant control measures put in place for the shoot and monitor safety arrangements continually for changing conditions. For example, when shooting outdoors you need to be aware of over exposure to sun, cold and heat over a period of time.

Work areas will often be dark in relation to any set where film lighting is in use. This makes trip hazards less visible so check the floor frequently and remove any items that may have been placed in work areas to a suitable safe place.

Rehearsals on set will normally consist of run-throughs to check that planned actions work at the location and to adjust lighting, camera framing and sound recording levels.

It may be necessary to simulate some actions that will be included in the performance to reduce exposure to hazards. For example, if a scene includes performed smoking (which will have been risk-assessed in advance using the Location Safety Form) then cigarettes must only be lit for the actual recording and not the rehearsal.

All mobile phones must be switched off during recording to avoid interference with sound recording equipment and to ensure work progress is not disrupted. You should refrain from unnecessary chatter, laughter, etc. as this can be very disruptive and, as a consequence, stressful when the production director, performers, and fully-occupied crew members are trying to focus on their work.

Be aware of where microphones and cables are placed and avoid making any sudden or loud noises. This includes accidentally knocking a boom pole or a lapel microphone you may be wearing, and pulling or treading on signal cables.

If you are responsible for recording sound, you need to adjust your headphone monitoring level to the minimum required, (1) to distinguish between sound the microphone(s) are receiving and any ambient sound heard through the structure of the headphones, and (2) to assess the quality of the sound that will be recorded. Ensure everyone in the recording area is aware of the placement of any microphones being used and zones they need to avoid.

If you are wearing a headset for sound recording, communications, etc., be vigilant in maintaining awareness of warnings you would otherwise normally be able to hear, such as the sound of an approaching vehicle.

## 14. Breakdown

After you have recorded your final take, it is very likely most of the cast and crew, including yourself, will be in a rush to leave. This puts everyone involved at greater risk and you must give proper consideration to striking any set safely.

Start by ensuring everyone leaves the set unless they are directly involved in clearing up as this will avoid obstructing the removal of equipment and props. Potential trip hazards, such as cables and tracks, should be removed before transporting any heavy objects.

Once all equipment, props, cables, etc. have been removed from the set, clear the rest of the location picking up any litter and cleaning up any spillages to prevent endangering subsequent users of the space.

Remember that you are likely to be tired after a long day's shoot and must therefore avoid the risk of falling asleep while driving or performing a similar high-risk activity until fully rested.

## 15. In the event of an accident or incident

If there is an accident or incident on set (whether or not it causes injury), you will need to take prompt action along the following lines:

1. Stay calm and take control of the situation
2. Ensure no one else (including yourself) is exposed to the hazard – this may require as far as is possible such measures as evacuation from the scene to a safe area, shutting off mains electrical supply, extinguishing potential sources of ignition, isolating the area, etc.
3. If a person falls ill, or is injured, **in the event of a life threatening emergency call 999**, otherwise seek urgent medical assistance by calling 111 for advisory support and if possible seek assistance from a qualified first-aider.
4. If the injured/sick person is taken away by ambulance, make certain you know which A&E department they are being taken to so that next of kin can be informed.
5. If the injured/sick person is unable to contact their next of kin themselves, then you should call the College Security Services on 01784 443063 (24hr service) and report the details of the incident so they may be forwarded to next of kin by the College authorities.
6. Inform your location contact (as designated in your LSF) that an incident has occurred. They may have local operating procedures that need to be followed.
7. If safe to do so, take photographs of the scene, obtain witness contact details and if possible isolate any relevant items that can be used as evidence in the event of an accident investigation.
8. Only resume filming if you are absolutely certain the events leading up to the incident will cause no further harm or injury to others.
9. As soon as possible, contact the Department Office to ensure that an Accident/ Incident report form is completed. The Health & Safety Coordinator can assist with this.
10. If you are contacted by the press or media in relation to the incident, you should not answer questions but refer enquiries to the College Press Office on 01784 443967 (email: [press@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:press@rhul.ac.uk))

In compliance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), and the associated College policy and procedure, all accidents, or any incident that could have resulted in an accident, must be reported as soon as possible using the relevant procedure and report form available from the Department Office.

## 16. Useful information

### Recommended reading:

Robin Small *Production Safety for Film, Television and Video* (Focal Press, 2000)

The following guidance leaflets can be downloaded from the HSE website:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/theatre-tv/resources.htm>

[Health & safety in audio visual production: your legal duties](#)

[Safety in broadcasting sports events](#) 

[Violence to workers in broadcasting](#) 

[Working with animals in entertainment](#) 

[Working at heights in the broadcasting and entertainment industries](#) 

[Special or visual effects involving explosives or pyrotechnics used in film and television productions](#) 

[Stunts, fights and other potentially hazardous production activities](#) 

[Buildings used for locations and temporary studios in film, television and theatre](#) 

[Safe design and build of production sets used for film and television](#) 

[Management of firearms and other weapons in productions](#) 

[Safe filming and recording involving vehicles](#) 

### Useful links and contacts:

Media Arts Location Store: 01784 443733

Media Arts Department Office:  
01784 443734

[filmlondon.org.uk/](http://filmlondon.org.uk/)

[www.creativeengland.co.uk](http://www.creativeengland.co.uk)

[Surrey County Council – filming on the public highway in Surrey](#)

[Runnymede Borough Council \(Property Services for filming on Council property Tel: 01932 425692 \)](#)

[Filming in the Royal Parks](#)

[Filming and Photography in Windsor Great Park and The Royal Landscape](#)

[Filming on the tidal River Thames \(Port of London Authority\) or non-tidal from Teddington up to the Cotswolds contact: \[steve.east@environment-agency.gov.uk\]\(mailto:steve.east@environment-agency.gov.uk\).](#)

[Transport for London – Guide to Filming](#)

[Filming on Network Rail](#)

[Surrey County Council child employment information](#)

[www.hse.gov.uk/](http://www.hse.gov.uk/)

[www.skillset.org/](http://www.skillset.org/)

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) (use the red button and postcode to find the nearest centre that gives emergency care)

**ROYAL HOLLOWAY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**  
**Appendix to Location Filming Code of Practice**

Name of Person Undertaking Assessment		Date Conducted	Department / Area (including description of what is being assessed)					
Keith Buckman (Health & Safety Coordinator – Media Arts)		2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2013	Using location filming equipment - This risk assessment covers general operations when using equipment in relatively stable and managed environments such as flat teaching rooms for basic filmed action (still life or a person standing, sitting, reading, walking across room, etc.) but excludes location and action specific hazards which must be individually risk-assessed using the relevant Media Arts Location Safety Form					
Ref No	Hazard under review	No & Description of Staff/Students/ Others Involved	Existing Controls	Assessed Level of Risk*			Further Action Required	By (Date) + Review Date
				L	M	H		
2.1	Someone may trip over cables, tripod legs, stands, cases, props, personal belongings, etc. resulting in possible bruising or sprain	Any of: c.15 teaching staff 7 Technical staff c.300 students - sessional teachers, cast members, other film contributors, etc)	- Media Arts Work Method Statement No.1 ' <a href="#">Preventing Slips and Trips</a> ' - initial skills training (normally the Media Arts Centre's Lighting, Electrical & Grips course) followed by repeated practice and monitoring throughout course - <a href="#">Location Filming Code of Practice</a>	X			Ongoing monitoring and review	Sep 2014
2.2	Someone may suffer strain injury when lifting and carrying equipment or pushing/pulling equipment trolleys or wheeled cases	c.15 teaching staff 7 Technical staff c.300 students - sessional teachers, cast members, other film contributors, etc)	- Work method statement No 7 ' <a href="#">Manual Handling</a> ' - initial skills training followed by repeated practice and monitoring throughout course - heavy items labelled with gross weight and stored at appropriate level and trolleys provided for certain items - <a href="#">Location Filming Code of Practice</a>		X		Trained Manual Handling Assessor to review risk assessment and advise on any additional controls required  Review documentation	Sep 2014

General Risk Assessment Form  
R.H.F.

\* The assessed level of risk will be Low, Medium or High. If in doubt use the criterion for establishing which is appropriate. You will find this in the College Document "Guide to Conducting General Risk Assessments", which is in the Health and Safety Guidance Manual. 16.1.03.

**ROYAL HOLLOWAY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**  
**Appendix to Location Filming Code of Practice**

2..3	Someone may receive electric shock if electrical connections are damaged or become exposed to liquids during filming. Also risk of causing a fire.	c.15 teaching staff 7 Technical staff c.300 students - sessional teachers, cast members, other film contributors, etc)	- Work Method Statement No.4 'Electrical Safety' - also Media Arts Work Method Statement No.3 'Fire Safety' - Location Filming Code of Practice - initial skills training (normally the Media Arts Centre's Lighting, Electrical & Grips course) followed by repeated practice and monitoring throughout course - frequent visual inspection of equipment by Location Store team		X		Seek action from Facilities Management regarding next scheduled round of PAT inspection	Dec 2013
2.4	Someone may catch their hands when collapsing or operating telescopic or folding mechanisms (e.g. stands and tripods)	c.15 teaching staff 7 Technical staff c.300 students - sessional teachers, cast members, other film contributors, etc)	- Work method statement No.7 'Manual Handling' - Location Filming Code of Practice - initial skills training (normally the Media Arts Centre's Lighting, Electrical & Grips course) followed by repeated practice and monitoring throughout course - frequent visual inspection of equipment by Location Store team	X			Ongoing monitoring	Sep 2014
2.5	Someone may burn their fingers when adjusting portable lighting equipment	c.15 teaching staff 7 Technical staff c.200 students - sessional teachers, cast members, other film contributors, etc)	- initial skills training (normally the Media Arts Centre's Lighting, Electrical & Grips course) followed by repeated practice and monitoring throughout course - Instructional handouts - PPE (riggers gloves) provided with all lighting kits	X			Ongoing monitoring	Sep 2014

**ROYAL HOLLOWAY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**  
**Appendix to Location Filming Code of Practice**

2.6	Electrical overloading or hot lights igniting flammable materials may cause a fire on set.	c.15 teaching staff 7 Technical staff c.200 students - sessional teachers, cast members, other film contributors, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Media Arts Work Method Statement No.3 ‘<a href="#">Fire Safety</a>’</li> <li>- Media Arts Work Method Statement No.4 ‘<a href="#">Electrical Safety</a>’</li> <li>- - initial skills training (normally the Media Arts Centre’s Lighting, Electrical &amp; Grips course) followed by repeated practice and monitoring throughout course</li> <li>- Instructional handouts</li> <li><b>-gels, diffusers and filters</b> attached to barn doors or otherwise used in close proximity to the luminaire are fully compliant with BS 3944-1:1992</li> <li>- any <b>material used or falling within the light beam</b>, including props, set dressing and devices or materials used for reflecting and flagging light, these should be kept at least 3 metres away from luminaires.</li> <li>- ensure luminaires are at least 1 metre away from <b>ALL adjacent surfaces and materials</b>, including walls, ceilings, painted, papered or plastic covered surfaces, cyclorama, curtains and other fabrics, so as to reduce the risk of browning, melting or ignition, and to allow sufficient air circulation around the unit.</li> </ul>		X	<p>Monitor purchasing arrangements with particular regard to gels, filters, diffusers, props, etc.</p> <p>Ensure new policy on gels, diffusers, etc is included in LEG training workshop.</p>	Sep 2014
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**ROYAL HOLLOWAY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**  
**Appendix to Location Filming Code of Practice**

2.7	A stand might fall on top of someone if it is pulled over or knocked down	c.15 teaching staff 7 Technical staff c.300 students - sessional teachers, cast members, other film contributors, etc)	- Control of trip hazard as in 2.1 - initial skills training (normally the Media Arts Centre's Lighting, Electrical & Grips course) followed by repeated practice and monitoring throughout course - proprietary sandbags available to stabilize stands	X			Ongoing monitoring	Jan 2014
2.8	Someone may trip over or strike equipment or other persons when working in dark areas of the film set.	c.15 teaching staff 7 Technical staff c.300 students - sessional teachers, cast members, other film contributors, etc)	- Control of trips as in 2.1 - <a href="#">Location Filming Code of Practice</a> - initial skills training (normally the Media Arts Centre's Lighting, Electrical & Grips course) followed by repeated practice and monitoring throughout course - white camera tape and hazard tape available for highlighting protruding ends of equipment	X			Ongoing monitoring	Jan 2014
2.9	Someone may catch their fingers when setting up and operating track and dolly systems	c.2 teaching staff 7 Technical staff c.30 students	-Limited to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Directing Screen Fiction and Moving Pictures students - Work method No.7 ' <a href="#">Manual Handling</a> ' - Media Arts Guides: Safe - initial skills training (normally the Media Arts Centre's Lighting, Electrical & Grips course) followed by repeated practice and monitoring throughout course	X			Ongoing monitoring	Jan 2014

**ROYAL HOLLOWAY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**  
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2.10	Someone may trip over tracks that have been laid in filming area	c.2 teaching staff 7 Technical staff c.30 students - sessional teachers, cast members, other film contributors, etc) - visitors during open day demonstrations, etc.	-Normal set-up and operation limited to suitably trained 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Directing Screen Fiction and Moving Pictures students - initial skills training followed by repeated practice and monitoring throughout course - cones available to mark out exclusion zones where tracks are laid	X			Ongoing monitoring	Sep 2014
2.11	Someone may suffer hearing damage if exposed to poorly controlled signal level on headphones	c.15 teaching staff 7 Technical staff c.300 students - sessional teachers	- short duration exposure levels - initial skills training followed by repeated practice and monitoring throughout course	X			Ongoing monitoring	Sep 2014
2.12	Someone may fall off an improvised platform when seeking a higher camera view point, or fall onto bystander, resulting in potential bruising, fracture or head injury.	Any of: c.15 teaching staff 7 Technical staff c.300 students - sessional teachers, bystanders, etc)	- Media Arts Work Method Statement No.5 ' <a href="#">Working at Height</a> - initial skills training followed by repeated practice and monitoring throughout course.	X			Ongoing monitoring	Sep 2014