

**These guidance notes are intended** to be read in conjunction with the Location Filming Code of Practice and offer advice on completing our Location Safety Forms, or 'LSF's.

The intention of the forms is to ensure that you have considered all of the safety implications of your planned filming work and to help you minimise or eradicate any health and safety risks involved. It also provides evidence to third parties such as location facilities, local authorities, etc., that you have conducted a safety risk assessment and have planned and communicated the control measures you intend to operate.

The Location Filming Code of Practice already has a general risk assessment for using filming equipment, but only on the basis of simple action in a stable environment. It is necessary therefore to have an additional level of safety risk assessment which covers both the action (i.e. dramatic action, or a real life activity) and the filming environment (i.e. the location). The Location Safety Forms are there to serve this purpose, and to document other relevant information that inform the planning your shoot.

There are two types of Location Safety Form, one for **directed action**, such as a drama scene where you have control over the action and it is necessary to risk assess each location, and one for **documentary**, which is more about filming a sequence of real life events, including live performances, in a variety of locations. Please use the correct form for your intended purpose.

**Please note that the LSF is not an equipment booking form; you have to visit the Location Store to do this.**

## Procedure

1. It is recommended that you visit the location to do a recce, or at least do some research about the location, before you plan to film there. Find out what filming permissions are required and make notes about how the location operates, using the guidance given in the Location Filming Code of Practice. Be aware you may need to apply for licences, pay fees, and send evidence of risk assessment and proof of public liability insurance cover. Your course tutor may wish to see evidence of such permissions before approving filming.
2. You should aim to complete and submit your Location Safety Form well in advance of your shoot in case you need additional guidance and to ensure availability of equipment. You must in any case submit your form to your practice course tutor at the very latest by 17.00 hrs at least two working days before you plan to collect the equipment. Forms for weekend filming must be submitted before 17.00 hrs on the Wednesday to offer any possibility of a Friday collection.
3. Download the relevant template Location Safety Form (a Word document) from the department's information page: <http://www.rhul.ac.uk/mediaarts/informationforcurrentstudents/home.aspx>
4. Save your edited version of the form using a unique filename. Please use your name and the date you plan to collect the equipment, for example *HitchcockA010410.doc*.

5. Email your course tutor with your form(s) attached, with any relevant additional information in your covering message.
6. If your tutor approves the form, they will email confirmation to the Location Store, cc to you so you are aware you can book the equipment. Otherwise they will contact you.
7. Visit the Location Store during opening times to book the equipment as soon as you are aware that form has been approved.

## Filming Permissions

1. You must ensure that anyone appearing in the film is aware that they are being filmed for your course assessment, which may potentially be screened publically, including the internet. Use the [template release form](#) to ensure they have understood this fact and have granted permission to include their contribution. Keep a copy in case of future claims against your production.
2. For any film location, seek permission in writing from someone with the relevant authority. This person will often be your local contact for the location and can advise on any operational matters, such as safety procedures and restrictions.
3. If you are filming in a private house, including student accommodation, you will need to ask permission from the owner or managing agent for the property, as well as the occupiers affected by the filming. **Tenants can be in breach of their tenancy agreement if the landlord or managing agent has not granted permission in advance of the shoot.**
4. Be aware that members of the public may misinterpret dramatic action, including effects, as a real incident, so ensure your work plan includes advising the relevant police station about your filming work and that effective measures are in place to conceal action, prop weapons, smoke effects, sound effects, etc., from the public.

## Safety Risk Assessment

When completing this part of the form:

1. Use the list of hazards on your form to help you consider those that would be considered as 'reasonably foreseeable', i.e. that you would be expected to have identified.
2. Include hazards that may occur while transporting and setting equipment, props, etc, as well as those that may occur during the actual filming or recording work.
3. For any hazards that you think are irrelevant, put 'N/A' and leave the rest of the row blank.
4. Identify those persons who might be exposed to the hazard. This may include passers-by or other people working in or using the area, as well as actors, contributors and your crew members.

5. Describe how you anticipate the hazard might present itself and how the persons identified may be harmed. For example, don't just put 'cars', use a phrase such as 'actor may be hit by a passing car and suffer severe injuries'
6. Evaluate the level of risk. We use separate columns with basic values (low, medium, or high) to determine the chance and severity of an incident. As a general guide:

	<b>Chance of injury</b>	<b>Severity of injury</b>
<b>Low</b>	might happen, but unlikely	An injured person would be fit for work after minor attention
<b>Medium</b>	could happen	An injured person would be unable to work for 3 days or longer
<b>High</b>	will probably happen	Someone will suffer permanent injury or death

7. State what control measures you need to put in place to reduce the chance and/or the severity of an injury. So for example, 'keep your actor away from the passing car' would reduce the chance of an accident, and 'limit the speed of passing cars' would reduce the potential severity of an injury.
8. Use the Location Filming Code of Practice and other guidance information to inform your control measures. This often includes ensuring persons are competent in handling equipment, props, etc., or for performing actions. Note that there have been incidents of people overstating their skills to get the work, then having an accident or injuring others through their incompetence.
9. Ensure your safety controls are effectively communicated to anyone who you have identified in your risk assessment as potentially being affected by the stated hazards. This may include putting up work signs, giving people copies of risk assessments, and giving safety briefing instructions for more complex work. Sometimes it is necessary to write a work method statement and a supplementary form is provided to assist with this.
10. Be aware that Location Safety Forms contain personal information and fall within the Data Protection Act 1998. You must ensure therefore that:
  - a. personal information is only disclosed to those with the authority to require such information and it is otherwise treated as confidential – so, for example, names and telephone numbers will need to be obscured when forms are being sent outside the crew
  - b. personal data is accurate and relevant to the task
  - c. that forms containing personal information are kept secure
  - d. that forms are destroyed when there is no reasonable need to keep them any longer, for example no later than the end of the current academic year

## **Emergencies**

Even harmless looking locations can become lethal in the event of a fire outbreak or similar incident. Your Location Safety Form should document the procedures you will communicate to those involved in your filming so you and they know how to evacuate the area in an emergency, and where they need to assemble. Ensure with those responsible for operating the location that any designated exit routes can be open or unlocked instantly during an evacuation.

The Location Filming Code of Practice details procedures for emergencies involving injuries or sudden illness, and for reporting incidents under legislative requirements.

## **Declaration**

Ensure that you read the declaration on the form before emailing the form to your practice course tutor. The act of sending the form via email is recognized formally as a signature to the declaration.