



# **Production Safety Manual**

Valid from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2021

## **PREFACE**

It is the policy of Tallinn University Baltic Film, Media and Arts School (BFM) to maintain a reasonably safe environment for its students, academics, staff, and visitors. All operations shall be conducted in compliance with applicable regulations and with accepted health and safety standards.

The following Production Safety Manual gives an overview of the situations and conditions which are considered dangerous and therefore require special discussion with the faculty. All possible situations cannot be mentioned here. The common sense and general alertness will be your guide. The ultimate responsibility for safety lies with you and your fellow crew members.

If you have questions regarding this policy, please contact the instructor in your class.

**ALL BFM STUDENTS MUST READ AND ABIDE BY THE POLICIES LAID FORTH IN THIS SAFETY MANUAL. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL SUBJECT STUDENT TO DISCIPLINARY MEASURES, INCLUDING PROBATION AND/OR DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM.**

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# GENERAL SAFETY INFORMATION

Everyone is responsible for safety, but the ultimate responsibility stops with the **assistant director (AD)**. If you do not have an assistant director, then the **producer** (or **director**) is responsible for all safety decisions.

## EMERGENCY INFORMATION

- It's a good idea to have a basic **first aid kit** on set at all times for minor injuries.
- If someone on your crew is seriously injured on set, **STOP WORK**, and do not continue until that person has received proper medical attention.
- **CALL 112** for emergency medical help.
- Have a **cell phone** on set at all times for emergency communications.
- You should always **know the location of the nearest hospital** to your shooting location.

## ELECTRICITY

Never take electricity, electrical appliances or lighting units for granted. Take the time to respect the use of electricity by following these guidelines:

- Before leaving the Equipment Room with electrical equipment examine all cables for breaks or cuts in the insulation. The same examination should be made of cables on the stages prior to connecting power.
- Do not use damaged cables.
- Tape down electrical cables if you must lay them across doorways. If rubber matting is available, use it over cables and tape the matting down.
- Always hold the cable connector or plug when disconnecting a cable. Never pull from the cable.
- Examine all electrical equipment for signs of wear. Watch out for breaks or openings in any cable, any plug or any place where the cable attaches to a lamp.
- Do not overload a circuit. Know how much power you are drawing.
- Know the location of circuit breakers to be able to switch off the electricity in case of emergency.
- Always use grounded plugs. Older location structures which have only the two-prong type outlets (non-grounded) should be avoided.
- Do not "tie-in" to a location's power. Only a licensed electrician can "tie-in" to power.
- WATER CONDUCTS ELECTRICITY and is therefore a major hazard when working with electrical equipment:
  - Never touch electrical equipment with wet feet or hands.
  - Do not allow electrical cables or equipment to get wet.
  - Do not reach for an electrical appliance in water. Unplug it immediately.
  - If rain is imminent, stop and disconnect power before you and your equipment get wet.
  - Never touch two lights at the same time. A faulty wire could make you into a part of the circuit.

- IF SOMEONE IS ELECTROCUTED, DO NOT TOUCH THAT PERSON – you will also get electrocuted. Immediately terminate the source of electricity and get professional medical attention.

## **FIRE**

The use of fire – that is any open flame – constitutes a particularly hazardous situation on any film set. Candles, fireplaces, campfires, cigarette lighters and the like are potential disasters and extreme care must be taken to avoid endangering yourself and/or your cast and crew.

**Any use of an open flame must be discussed with a faculty person before shooting.**

- Designate a crew member as “Student Safety Officer”. They will assume primary responsibility for seeing that the open flame is kept under control.
- Make sure that an adequate number of proper fire extinguishers are at hand.
- Test the extinguishers before igniting any open flame to insure that they are in working condition.
- In special situations the BFM may require the presence of a qualified Special Effects Supervisor and/or a BFM faculty member on your set when fire is used.
- Consider that the illusion of fire can be created with a lighting effect.
- Be careful with loose clothing around open flame. Untreated fabric can ignite quickly and cause severe injury.

## **FIREARMS**

The use of firearms, or any weapons, in your film requires that you observe certain rules to insure your safety as well as the safety of those under your supervision. Even non-firing guns can create a hazardous situation if they are perceived as a “threat” by others.

**Students must get approval from faculty before using a weapon.**

- Students may only use rubber or plastic replica WITHOUT operating parts.
- Squibs and bullet-hits are not permitted.
- Blank-firing weapons are not permitted.
- Live ammunition is not permitted.
- The use of pyrotechnics, gun powder, detonators, or any explosive devices is not permitted.
- Appoint a student on your crew to act as “Safety Officer” to transport and supervise the safe use and handling of the weapon(s).
- Make certain the neighbours surrounding the location are aware of the use of prop weapons in your filming. Posting signs “Student Filming in Progress” may be required.
- Be aware that those who do not know what you are doing may misinterpret your behaviour and call the police. Communicate.
- If police or other authorities show up at your set, drop your weapon, even if it is not real. They will not know if your weapon is real.

## **GLASS**

The use of locations, sets, set dressing or props which involve the handling of, or working in close proximity to, glass objects or architectural/structural glass creates a potentially hazardous situation for cast, crew and spectators.

- It is advised that all architectural and/or structural glass be checked carefully to assure that it is approved safety glass.
- ALL glass doors and panels and other large areas of glass at or near ground level – or at entryways – should be marked with large, white tape “X’s” to enhance their visibility.

## **KNIVES AND SHARP-EDGED OBJECTS**

Knives and other sharp-edged objects must be handled with care at all times, especially if used as props. This applies to knives, swords, sharp projectiles, martial arts weapons, and any other object which may cut or puncture.

**Use of any weapon must be pre-approved by a BFM faculty member.**

- Designate a crew member to transport and supervise the use of all sharp-edged props.
- A fake or prop knife should be used whenever possible.
- Never use a real knife as a weapon against an actor.
- All “fight” scenes should be choreographed by a professional or with the approval and supervision of a faculty member.
- All sharp-edged objects should be properly stored when not in use. Do not leave sharp objects lying around a set unattended.

## **MOVING VEHICLES**

The BFM does not insure vehicles. You must provide your own insurance for any vehicle in your production.

**Filming moving vehicles in a student film is permitted only with faculty approval.**

- Filming in, around, or from boats and aircraft is not permitted without prior faculty approval.
- The complexity and potential danger of filming moving vehicles – even on a professional level – requires extensive planning, costly special equipment, considerable training and experience and a commitment to safety at all times.
- Shots inside a moving car may only be filmed with faculty approval. The driver must devote all attention to driving and observe all vehicle codes.
- FILMMAKERS ARE REQUIRED TO OBSERVE ALL STATE VEHICLE CODES at all times.
- When using any automotive vehicle whether on-camera or as a production vehicle SEAT BELTS WILL BE USED AT ALL TIMES.
- FILMMAKERS ARE NOT EMPOWERED TO DIRECT OR CONTROL TRAFFIC IN ANY WAY. The law prohibits controlling or limiting the natural flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic on a public thoroughfare. Budget for adequate police assistance if necessary.

## **STUNTS**

Physical action requiring an actor to fight, fall, jump, run and, in general, perform in an athletic manner and/or in hazardous situations may require the services of a stunt player to double the actor.

Inexperienced actors will often assure directors that they are capable of performing their own stunts. They are not. Stunts, safely performed, require training, experience and natural ability.

Similarly, most directors are not stunt coordinators. Coordinating stunts requires specific knowledge and safety considerations.

### **For these reason, students must observe the following rules:**

- Any potentially hazardous or stunt-like activity must have prior approval from a faculty member.
- Students are not allowed to put actors in dangerous situations.
- Students are not allowed to put crew in dangerous situations.
- Leave the performing of the stunts for professionals. Ask the contacts from Tehcnical Director.

## **LENGTH OF WORKDAY MAXIMUM 12 HOURS**

- Student filmmakers are required to limit the shooting day to **maximum 12 hours**.
- The 12 hours begin at "crew call" and end at "wrap."
- A break is mandatory for at least 30 minutes, after 6 hours.
- Even the greatest exertion of will cannot prevent sleep-deprived drivers from falling asleep in an instant.
- The capacity to concentrate at the wheel is reduced by more than 30 percent as a result of sleep-deprivation.
- Studies show that driving sleepy is as dangerous as driving drunk.

## **SPECIAL EQUIPMENT**

The use of any special equipment (dollies with jib arms, lifts, condors, cranes and generators) for which the BFM HAS NOT PROVIDED specific training in the proper and safe use – is prohibited.

- In general, the faculty should discuss the use of such equipment with the student filmmaker. If there is agreement that the student will be allowed to use the special equipment then the student must arrange with the vendor to be trained in the use of the special equipment.
- Be aware that property insurance for such equipment may be required. Students are responsible for getting the insurance for special equipment. For questions concerning the insurance students can turn to Technical Director.

# STUDIO SAFETY

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- Never work alone in the studio. Work with a partner who can find help if needed.
- Appropriate medical care must be given at once for all injuries.
- **Medical assistance can be obtained by calling Emergency at 112.**
  - Any injury requiring first aid or other medical treatment must be reported to the Technical Director by the next working day.
- Students are expected to have adequate medical insurance. The BFM has no financial responsibility for emergency or other medical care. Students are expected to make provisions for proper medical coverage through individual medical insurance plans.
- **Smoking is prohibited in all BFM facilities.**
  - Keep the floor around the machine and work area free from debris and scraps.
  - While operating any power tool absolute concentration is a must. Talking or allowing others to talk to you while performing a job can distract. If a conversation is necessary, turn off the machine.
  - Any machine or hand tool found to be out of order should be reported immediately to the Technical Specialist. Do not attempt to repair tools yourself.
  - Wear hard soled shoes. No sandals, open toed footwear or high heels, or bare feet permitted.
  - Tie back loose clothing and hair, remove jewelry, and roll up sleeves when working with power tools.
  - Wear a safety shield or goggles when using any power tool.
  - Any work done in the studio must be cleaned up before leaving.

## POWER TOOLS

Power tools include large fixed machine tools in addition to portable hand operated power tools. These tools can be dangerous, as they have electrically operated blades and cutters. Extreme caution should be used when operating and making adjustments to these tools. You must have safety training for a power tool before using it.

- Never carry a portable power tool by the cord.
- Never yank the cord from an outlet, disconnect it by pulling on the plug.
- Keep cords, hands and clothing away from moving parts of the tool (blades, bits, and cutters).
- Make any necessary adjustments to power tools with the power turned off.
- Do not use a damaged tool, turn it in to your supervisor. Do not repair it yourself.
- Inspect materials before use. Remove screws, nails, staples or other material before cutting into used woods.
- Hold tool firmly with both hands. Use a clamp to hold work whenever possible.
- Wear safety goggles when using any power tool.



## **FLOORS**

Floors in the studios are often covered with many hazards and obstructions.

- At a minimum, a 1,5 meter perimeter should be kept clear around the interior of the studio walls.
- Clean up tools, materials, and obstructions when finished with a project or when leaving it for an extended period of time.
- Block off entrances to wet painted floor areas.
- Do not block of exits.
- Do not block aisles, hallways, fire exits, doorways, fire doors, fire equipment or electrical panels.
- Do not put any object to block the doors.
- Use caution when moving objects in, around and out of the studio area.
- Notify studio supervisor of any unsafe condition promptly.

## **CHEMICALS**

Many solvents, adhesives, and spray paints are used in the studio area. Many of these chemicals produce toxic fumes and gasses and are extremely flammable.

- Know what you are working with. Read the Instruction of Use on chemical before using it.
- Wear proper protective clothing and equipment recommended in the Instruction of Use by the manufacturer for the job.
- Prevent ingestion of chemicals. Wash your hands. Do not eat, drink or smoke around chemicals.
- An approved respirator is required when spraying latex and acrylic paints.
- Protective gloves must be worn when handling chemicals.
- Eye protection must be worn when handling chemicals.
- Open flame is not permitted when working with chemicals.
- Waste chemicals must be disposed of properly. See the Technical Specialist.

## **AIR QUALITY**

Air quality in the studio room can vary depending on several conditions. These conditions include but are not limited to: dust from power tools mists from water based latex and acrylic paints, smoke from welding operations, chemical and CO2 based fogs from fog machines.

- CO2 fog can be dangerous if breathed. It physically displaces oxygen necessary to support breathing. CO2 fog is heavier than air and seeks low areas.
- Do not lie down in the fog. Avoid breathing the fog.
- Use the protective mask when working in dusty environments or with chemicals.

## **LADDERS AND SCAFFOLDS**

Falls from ladders can cause severe injury to one's self, just as a falling object from a ladder can cause injury to one's self, as well as others. Safe ladder practices are essential at all times.

- Only one person on a ladder at a time.
- Do not stand or work on the top two steps of a ladder.
- Do not lean or overreach from a ladder or scaffold.
- Always face the ladder when ascending or descending.
- Do not place ladders on boxes to obtain extra height.
- Make sure the ladder is fully open and the spreader is locked. The outriggers must be in place and locked down when using scaffolding.
- Do not place a ladder or scaffold in front of a door that opens onto the ladder unless the door is blocked open, locked from access, or guarded.
- Do not use a ladder or scaffold on an uneven surface.
- Do not use a ladder without someone else present in the area.
- Store ladders in their proper location after use.

## **ELECTRICITY**

Electricity is present everywhere in the studio areas. The risk of electrical shock is present at all times due to the constant changes in work areas, lighting positions, and heavy use of electrical equipment and accessories.

All electrical repair work is only to be performed by trained and qualified staff employees (except changing the broken light bulbs).

- Only properly grounded tools, cords, and equipment may be used.
- Never run extension cords through doorways, windows or holes in walls where the cable can be damaged.
- Check all equipment and cords for damage before use.
- Remove damaged equipment from use and notify your supervisor.
- Be alert for extension cords on the floor and in work areas.
- Do not overload extension cords. Use one power tool per cord.
- Completely dry your hands before touching electrical switches, plugs or receptacles.
- Notify your supervisor of any hazardous electrical condition - protect others from accidental contact until the hazard is corrected.

## **LIGHTING EQUIPMENT**

With the use of lighting equipment in the studio comes the risk of electrical shock and burns from coming into contact with hot metal and glass. Do not use or handle any lighting equipment without proper training and authorization.

- Wear gloves when handling hot lighting equipment and changing lamps.
- Report any damaged equipment to technical specialist and label it "Damaged !!!".
- Unplug lighting instruments before changing lamps.
- Do not leave any kind of materials or other equipment on top of stair steps or on any size ladder.
- Do not leave gel frames, wrenches, tools or supplies on the top of scenery or anywhere they might fall and could create a very dangerous situation.
- Lighting equipment is to be hung from proper lighting pipes or bolted to fixtures which will accept lighting equipment (NOT water pipes, for example) and must be securely tightened.
- When hanging equipment over audience areas, a SAFETY CABLE is to be attached.

- Frayed electrical cords and exposed wires around electrical plugs, switches or plugs should be reported to a supervisor.

## **LOW LIGHT LEVELS**

- Use caution in low light level situations.
- Stop all hazardous activity during reduced light levels.
- If a blackout occurs and you can not see anything, stop where you are.
- Exit lights can not be covered or blocked.
- Exit doors and emergency exits and anywhere people may travel to exit a building must not be covered, chained shut, or blocked (inside or out) for any reason and must be kept clean, clear of obstructions and lighted at all times.

Participants are urged to **THINK SAFETY** at all times.  
Failure to follow the safety rules could result in serious injury or death.

Do not take chances.

If in doubt, **ASK**. If a procedure or situation in the studio seems dangerous, **ASK**.

Report all unsafe conditions to your supervisor or BFM staff member.



## **THE COMMITMENT TO PRODUCTION SAFETY**

I have read and understood the BFM Production Safety Manual and will follow its rules and guidelines. I further understand that the penalty for violating any of the procedures in the policy may result in disciplinary action taken against me, including probation and/or expulsion from the Tallinn University Baltic Film, Media and Arts School.

Name of student: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

Faculty Witness signature: .....