

Procedures for the Use of Firearms and Weapons for Production and Performance Activities

This document covers the use of all firearms (replica, toy and real) and weapons in all production and performance activities.

The Faculty will only consider the use of real weapons in circumstances where approval has been requested through the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Head of Technical Services and approval has been granted. Approval can only be considered on receipt of the completed Project Information Form, Onsite Assessment Form, and Risk Assessment Evaluation Form that have been agreed and signed by the relevant Academic Tutor plus evidence that **all** procedures outlined in this document have been successfully met. If approval is given, training and advice from an authorised, competent person is essential e.g. a swords master.

At no time will permission be given for the use of actual firearms, regardless of the circumstances (this includes deactivated firearms).

What is a real weapon?

A real weapon is any object which is designed for the purpose of inflicting bodily harm such as crossbows, catapults, any sharp-edged instruments used in a fight sequence (swords and knives) or martial arts weapons (such as rice flails) and batons, battering rams, spears or longbows.

What is a firearm?

A firearm is defined as including live weapons, air weapons; blank firing weapons, and deactivated firearms.

What you are able to use without the above approval:

You are able to use replica weapons, imitation firearms, and props which are not designed specifically for the purpose of inflicting bodily harm.

All accurate replica weapons and imitation firearms must be securely locked in a suitable container and registered with the police. This includes when not in use during the activity i.e. whilst in-between scenes etc. This does not extend to plastic toy guns such as water pistols etc.

What you must do:

Step One:

Risk assessment - this must assess the risk of all involved or others who may be affected by your activities and determine the control measures necessary to avoid risk or reduce it to acceptable levels.

Note: Ensure you assess how passers-by may view your activity. Ensure that there is clear signage in place.

Your risk assessment will not be approved until you ensure you have carried out the following:

- Coordinate safety;
- Assess the risk of sequences and direct action sequences safely;
- Exchange information with others, including the person in control of the weapon/firearm and other colleagues, staff, premises managers etc. If on campus notify Security and the Deputy Director of Campus and Residential Services;
- Ensure that there is cooperation and communication with the owners of the premises or location being used;
- Ensure that all control measures identified are implemented and all who may be affected are aware of them;
- Plan which technical set-up/ filming methods to use to reduce the risk to those involved;
- Schedule rehearsals, safety briefings and reassessment of the hazards and risks if any changes are proposed.

Step Two:

Notify the Local police

If a replica weapon is to be used, heard or seen in or from a public place or where the public have rite of passage, you must make sure that the police have been fully informed and that a point of contact for them is nominated. Keeping the police informed will prevent possible misunderstandings involving police armed response units and reduce the likelihood of public distress and possible breaches of the peace.

The North Yorkshire Police contact details can be found here:

<http://www.northyorkshire.police.uk/contact>

ⁱ In the event of approval being given by the Faculty for the use of a real weapon you must follow all of the procedures outlined below as well as the above.

1. You will need a weapons expert and be able to prove that they:
 - i. Are competent and hold the necessary licenses;
 - ii. Have been provided with adequate information about the sequences;
 - iii. Have provided a written assessment of the risks and identified the controls needed and have agreed to specify and/or supply the protective measures identified in the assessment.
2. You will need to prove that all controls needed are agreed with the weapons expert, actors and crew (as appropriate).
3. You will need to ensure that the agreed controls identified in the assessment and with the competent person are put in place and communicated to those who may be affected by the activity.
4. There are adequate arrangements for emergencies.