

Guidance Note - Working Off Site Guidelines

Introduction

Leeds Arts University encourages students to engage with outside agencies and to collaborate with professionals, other students and members of the public. Students must note that in these situations they are representing the University and must act professionally, ethically and responsibly in all their contact beyond the programme. The following guidelines indicate key areas to consider when working offsite.

Public Liability

The University has public liability insurance which covers students working off site. The off-site project should be part of your programme of studies and carried out in agreement with your course leader. You should make your course leader aware of any unusual events so that the University can inform our insurers. For example, a group of students putting on exhibitions should provide details of the projects, including who and what was involved and for how long.

General Health and Safety

Any work you wish to install on University premises should be cleared with the Risk and Safety Manager. Work you are producing offsite should not endanger yourself or the public, or cause damage. You should always obtain the necessary permissions for any site-based work.

Personal Safety

It is vital that you take your safety seriously. Potential risks to your safety come under two broad headings:

1. Dangers which are already present within the locations you visit e.g. other people, traffic, trip hazards. Don't get out of your depth - we are all different and you must make your own decisions about what kind of places you consider to be safe. Don't allow yourself to drift into places in which you wouldn't normally feel safe.
2. Dangers which arise from your own behaviour e.g. climbing onto things to take photos. Don't expose yourself to unusual levels of risk. Again this can only be judged against your own personal standards of behaviour. In particular we would recommend that you don't work alone if you are (a) in an environment you would not normally visit, or (b) with a person you do not already trust.

Public Safety

This is a very important aspect of risk assessment and is far less subjective than personal safety. You have a responsibility to avoid placing members of the public at risk and you are likely to be held legally responsible if someone is injured as a result of your actions. When assessing the potential riskiness of any action consider how it might affect the most vulnerable members of the public e.g. small children, people with visual impairments, people with impaired mobility etc. If you think an action of yours could present a risk to the public don't do it.

General and Ethical Conduct

1. Ensure you are clear what you are doing, why you are doing it and what you aim to do with any information or images you obtain (always take a copy of your University brief along with you).
2. Look the part. Three potential ways of approaching this would be:
 - i) Look professional - make yourself visible, wear bright, visible clothing, carry clipboards etc. - think TV news crew.
 - ii) Look like students - people often expect students to be doing things which other people wouldn't and make allowances for this.
 - iii) Be totally inconspicuous - soak up the atmosphere without other people knowing you are there. When using this approach you must ensure you are not seen to be spying on people and it is best not to gather material which people would be likely to resent your having recorded. e.g. it is probably fine to make notes of overheard conversations but not to secretly record them.

Taking Photographs and Shooting Video

In general it is okay to take photos of anyone and anything in a public place. However be aware that it is also entirely reasonable for any member of the public to ask what you are doing - so expect this and have a clear explanation ready. This point is less clear-cut in the case of close-ups. Most people will understandably protest if you appear to be taking a picture of them specifically, rather than including them in a wide shot. In practice most people will let you take pictures of them if you ask and explain why you are taking them and what you intend to use them for. If you are particularly keen to get un-posed images of people the best option is to find a way to take pictures inconspicuously and then approach the subject to ask for consent (preferably offer to show the subject the images wherever possible).

If you want to take images on private property (train station, shopping centre etc.) you will need to ask for permission in advance - this is often easy to get. The biggest grey area is taking images of private property and/or people within private property from the vantage point of public property. You can be fairly sure that you cannot stand in the street and, using a zoom lens, take pictures of someone through their bedroom window. At the other extreme generally you would be fine taking a picture of a shopping street where you can just about see the insides of some of the shops. If you feel like you are prying, you probably are.

You should not use photos of people where the context has been significantly changed without asking for consent; e.g. If you take a photo of someone laughing at a street performer, you cannot then collage them into an image where they appear to be laughing at a dying child unless you get their consent. You can get written consent in advance for this kind of usage by giving a broad description of how you intend to use the images.

You should not take photos of anyone under the age of 16 without written consent from their guardian. This is an offence under the Child Protection Act. Since the London Tube Bombings the level of security around government buildings and facilities has increased significantly. We would therefore suggest that you do not photograph buildings such as the law courts or police stations without asking for permission in advance (this may well involve nothing more than asking someone on reception).

Video documentation

Sometime programmes require that your offsite or time-based work (events, performances, workshops, etc.) should be video documented, where possible, for assessment. You should make course staff aware of live events before they take place so

they have the option of attending in person. Still photography may not be wholly sufficient for documenting live events for assessment. If required, documentation of offsite or time-based work should be handed in with the rest of your work for the assessment deadline.

Vox Pops and Questionnaires

The Data Protection Act dictates that if you are collecting data from people you must give them an explanation of what the information you are collecting will be used for. If you are using questionnaires, either as part of your research or your actual projects, you should first show any information and/or questions to a member of staff (after checking grammar and spelling yourself). The same applies for letters to outside agencies. Once checked by a member of staff, you may use letter-headed University paper. Also note that any information gathered should be stored and disposed of safely. You must not pass on this information to another party and you should only keep it for a limited period before destroying it.

Virtual working off site

You may be required to set up online public forums, questionnaires or blogs as part of your studies. Please refer to the JANET policy for general rules as to the use of the Internet. In addition to the JANET policy you should also be familiar with '*netiquette*'. *Netiquette* stands for 'network etiquette' and refers to a variety of rules applied to online discussion forums to facilitate efficient interaction.

Some netiquette rules that you may want your online discussion users to follow:

- Type in standard English and avoid using abbreviations, e.g. 'u', 'r', '4get'. Also use mixed case and proper punctuation. Extensive use of capital letters looks as if you're screaming or SHOUTING to others.
- Give meaningful titles to your messages in the main discussion area. If not, other users may get confused and/or ignore your message.
- Before posting a question, read the messages in the forum in case the same question has been already asked.
- Respect other people's time and bandwidth. When attaching files to your discussion messages make sure they are of reasonable size.
- Do not use any personal information or data (e.g. e-mail, mobile phone, address) and/or images of other students and/or tutors. Any information provided is strictly used within this environment, unless permission is given.
- If you believe someone has violated netiquette please report abuse of the forum to the discussion moderator.
- Do not post a comment that is a negative remark about another member. Personal insults are strictly not allowed.
- Do not post spam messages or pirated material. Spam is any message that contains advertisements, copyrighted material, information to software piracy and/or information related to password cracking or the circumvention of security measures.
- Do not post comments which are likely to incite religious or racial intolerance of any sort.
- Do not post messages that contain harmful or annoying HTML code or code that interferes with the display or operation of the virtual learning environment.
- Know the rules of this space and follow them
- Respect the privacy and rights of others, if in doubt be cautious
- Never deceive, defame or harass people who use this space or anyone else affected by what you write

- The owner of the site reserves the right to remove messages or ban participants if these rules are broken.

Work placements during your studies

Many students go on work placements during their studies at Leeds Arts University. If you do go on a work placement, the employer should ensure you receive suitable and adequate health & safety training, appropriate instructions, guidance and supervision during the period of the work placement. You should only be asked to work in a safe environment, in which you will not operate any hazardous machinery without firstly receiving an appropriate induction. Suitable and adequate risk assessments should be carried out and protective clothing/equipment supplied where necessary.

Whilst on a work placement you are required to:

- not disclose any information confidential to the employer
- obey all safety, security and other instructions given by the employer
- act responsibly at all times and recognise your role as representative of both Leeds Arts University and of the employer, in your relations with clients and other employees
- alert the employer and the University of any problems which might affect progress or satisfactory completion of the placement

You should confirm that you are/are not suffering from any complaint which may cause a hazard either to you or to those working with you. The University should advise the employer of any known details concerning you which may require special attention to ensure a successful placement.

The employer should arrange for employer's liability insurance to cover accident or injury caused to you by negligence of the employer or other employees.

The employer should accept, and insure against liability for loss, damage or injury caused by you whilst on work placement with the organisation, to the employer's property, other employees or a third party, in the same way as for paid employees. The employer should inform their insurer of your participation in a work placement.

The employer should observe relevant legislation laid down in the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Equality Act 2010.

In case of absence, accident or sickness, the employer should immediately notify the Risk and Safety Manager at Leeds Arts University. The students should be allowed to use the first aid facilities the employer provides.

The University will arrange for you and the employer to receive appropriate guidance, support and monitoring during and after the work placement.

Key Questions to consider before beginning any off-site work:

- Which locations will you be visiting?
- What risks are present within these locations?
- How will you minimise these risks?
- What will you be doing?
- What risks might your planned activities pose to you and your collaborators?
- How will you minimise these risks?
- What risks might your planned activities pose to members of the public?

- How will you minimise these risks?
- What kinds of information will you be collecting?
- How will you be collecting this information?
- Why are you collecting this information?
- To what use will the info be put and how will you use it?
- Will you be photographing, videoing, vox popping etc. on private property?
- If yes how will you gain permission?

A copy of the University's generic risk assessment for working off site can be found in the working off site section of the Health & Safety Manual.

IF IN DOUBT - ASK

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