



## **Guidance for Students and Low Budget Filmmakers**

### **1. Permissions**

Student filmmakers working in Bristol must seek permission from Bristol Film Office to film on council/public land unless you meet any of the following exemptions:

- Use of minimal equipment (camera, tripod, 1x lighting stand)
- A crew of 6 or less (with minimal equipment stated above). If working with actors, a total cast and crew of 10
- Journalism students as detailed in section 4
- Kit practice shoots (camera testing, etc.)

Student crews working with more equipment or cast/crew than this should seek permission from Bristol Film Office for any filming related to university/college coursework or assignments. Crews that are exempt from the permissions process do not have to apply for permission to film or notify Bristol Film Office of their filming activity on the understanding that filming activity on council/public land adheres at all times to Bristol Film Office's Filmmaker's Code of Practice and will not involve any of the following:

- Use of weapons, real or fake
- Simulated or real violence
- Antisocial behaviour, real or simulated
- The staging of crimes or accidents
- Filming scenes of a sensitive nature
- Filming with child actors or animals
- Use of UAVs/drones
- Filming before 8am or after 10pm
- Filming or the placement of equipment/props in the road or blocking public footpaths
- Stunts of any sort
- Dressing of actors in police uniform or the use of marked police and other emergency service vehicles
- Special effects, smoke, fire and explosions
- Excessive noise and disturbance to residents/businesses
- Filming inside council buildings/interior properties

Any student crews found to be in serious breach of the Code of Conduct or these terms will be issued with a penalty notice of £250.

Productions that are not exempt from the permissions process should contact Bristol Film Office in the first instance for all enquiries related to council land and property and we will consult with the relevant council teams on your behalf. For health and safety reasons, Bristol Film Office and Avon and Somerset Police (via Bristol Film Office) require full consultation if any of the following feature in your film's script:

- When using any additional equipment than camera, tripod and basic sound kit (Lighting, dolly, track, jib arm, etc.)
- Where the crew size (including actors and extras) is in excess of 10 people



### **Bristol Film Office**

Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, Queens Road, Bristol BS8 1RL United Kingdom

T: +44 (0) 117 922 3958 E: [bristolfilloffice@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:bristolfilloffice@bristol.gov.uk)

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



Bristol Film Office requires at least 10 working days' notice if additional equipment or larger crews are applying for filming permission. Lack of sufficient consultation and effective risk assessing where these matters are involved may result in filming being refused or a shoot being stopped. Bristol Film Office **will not** be able to offer permission to students filming scenes involving any of the following on general highways or other public land:

- Weapons (real or fake), simulating violence, antisocial behaviour or filming scenes of a sensitive nature
- Filming with child actors or animals

## 2. Fees and Charges

Small crews of student filmmakers will not be charged location fees for filming on Bristol City Council/public land. Crews of 15 or more people (including cast) will be charged a small location fee for the use of council/public land. For further details please see our full [schedule of fees and charges](#).

## 2. Locations

When making a film on a low/no budget the most cost effective, hassle free way of finding a location is to ask friends and family if they would be willing to let you use their property. If it is a student production you could also try asking your University or college – they will often have empty rooms/buildings that are available for you to use.

Bristol Film Office's locations library is a professional database and as such the property owners on our books will expect a substantial location fee. In the case of low or no-budget filming, Bristol Film Office **is not** able to offer an interior location-finding service. We regret that we are also not able to offer low/no budget crews permission to use Bristol City Council interior locations for filming purposes.

## 3. Risk Assessment

Bristol Film Office is unable to offer permission to film on public land without receipt of an effective risk assessment that covers all locations being used. For full guidance on health and safety law and completing a risk assessment for filming purposes please see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg360.pdf>. Bristol Film Office is responsible for overseeing the health and safety of production crews working in the city. It is a production's responsibility to complete a risk assessment that covers all significant risks. Lack of sufficient risk assessing or the submission thereof may result in filming being refused or a shoot being stopped.

## 4. Journalism Students

News crews are not required to obtain a filming permit for filming at council-managed outdoor spaces (highways, parks, harbour, etc.). In general, the same applies to journalism students. There are, however certain occasions when journalism students should inform Bristol Film Office in advance of their activities. These exceptions are as follows:

- When filming at council-managed interior locations (Libraries, museums, council offices, etc.)



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- When filming at the following sites: Ashton Court Estate, Blaise Castle Estate, Oldbury Court Estate, Clifton Down and Durdham Down.
- When filming with a crew larger than 6 people
- When using any additional equipment than camera, tripod, 1 x light stand and basic sound kit (Lighting, dolly, track, jib arm, etc.)
- When using weapons (real or fake), simulating violence, antisocial behaviour or filming scenes of a sensitive nature
- When filming child actors or animals

## 5. Private Property

For private property and residences you must gain the permission of the property owner. If the property is rented you need to gain permission from both the people who live there and also the landlord. If you require advice on who owns a particular location, Bristol Film Office may be able to help. Please call us if you need any locations advice and assistance.

Filmmakers should ensure that location owners and adjacent property owners are:

- Kept fully informed of your intentions
- Given details of any art department requirements including dressing and construction
- Issued with a location contract which clearly states the terms agreed between themselves and the filmmakers

Local Police should be informed of filming activity within their districts. In addition to advising the Police of the points above, special guidance should be sought with the following:

- The staging of crimes, accidents or use of firearms
- The dressing of artistes in police uniforms. It is an offence to impersonate a police officer and cast should be asked to cover such uniforms in between takes

Where relevant the Emergency Services should be duly advised of:

- Special effects, fires or explosions (Fire Brigade)
- The impersonation of fire officers/ambulance staff or use of pseudo fire tenders or ambulances

Private property owners are likely to expect a fee in return for use of their location so this may limit options for students and low-budget filmmakers where specific locations are required.

## 6. Insurance

For all filming you will need to provide evidence of adequate public liability insurance (ask your tutor about this or look at the PACT website [www.pact.co.uk](http://www.pact.co.uk)). For filming on land managed by Bristol City Council you are required to have at least £5,000,000 public liability indemnity. If you are attending a college or university you will be covered by your school's public liability insurance.

## 7. Notifying Local Residents and Businesses



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If we feel that your production is likely to impact on residents and businesses around the filming location we would request that they are notified of your activity by letter at least seven days in advance of filming. You should include your contact details in this letter and encourage people to get in touch if they have any concerns about your proposals.

Filmmakers on location are visitors and should be sensitive to the community in which they are working. Noise should be kept to a minimum, especially during unsociable hours (10pm to 8am). Students should carry their college/university Identification with them whenever they are filming in the city, regardless of the location or the scale of the shoot.

### **8. Green Filmmaking**

The following list of practices can be easily adopted by low budget productions to reduce the impact of their filmmaking on the environment:

1. Reduce waste materials e.g. provide reusable drinking containers
2. Avoid printing materials where possible and always print double sided
3. Provide recycling bins
4. Limit vehicle numbers by lift sharing
5. Switch off equipment when not in use
6. Use local crew and cast as much as possible to reduce travel
7. Make sure all crew and cast are aware of your green policy by including details in your call sheets

These practices are extracts from Creative England's Green Filmmaking Guidelines that has been adapted from *Code of Best Practices in Sustainable Filmmaking*; the work of the Bristol based wildlife producer, Andrew Buchanan, and Larry Engel, a US producer.



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