

HEALTH, SAFETY & RISK ASSESSMENT (HPMF4006)

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The purpose of this reflective report is to demonstrate my development and understanding of health, safety and risk assessment in film and media. It is crucial that persons working in film and media have knowledge in aspects of health and safety to ensure safe working practices. Each person is responsible for their own health and safety and they must be aware of how to maintain it, however when you are in charge of a production you must have a health and safety policy in place which adheres to the legislation put in place by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). I will be reflecting on the challenges I encountered during this process and how I overcame them.

I used the running through the forest scene in my film 'The Chase' in my health, safety and risk assessment portfolio to showcase what I had learnt during this module. I began my portfolio with the outline of my film, including details of the scene in particular I would be focusing on. A large portion of my time spent on this production was dedicated to research which I thoroughly enjoyed. I had never researched a location like this where I would have to consider filming methods etc.

I found this module quite challenging as while I had experience of risk assessments and manual handling policies/plans in a domiciliary care environment I had no previous experience of these elements in the film and media sector. In my experience working in the care sector I had to be very specific and go into great detail about risks and take into account the persons I was conducting risk assessments for were elderly or disabled and vulnerable and therefore required much safer, steady and secure environments. I found it hard to transfer this over and I feel that I was looking too hard for potential risks while conducting my risk assessments in Dolaucothi Gold Mine and Llyn Llech Owain Country Park. I feel that my lack of knowledge in health and safety in film was quite a detriment to me during this module but it has helped me learn to adapt risk assessments to the persons involved a lot more efficiently.

I also found it quite difficult to keep to the word count as I had a lot of forms to complete as part of my portfolio which simply could not be left out.

Originally I planned to make a film in Dolaucothi Gold Mine after visiting with the university as I was able to conduct a full risk assessment there and obtain a copy of their risk assessment. However I felt that this location did not suit my desired visual elements and I felt that Llyn Llech Owain Country Park sparked my creativity more. Furthermore, Llyn Llech Owain was a lot closer to my home address and was one of the contributing factors when reviewing country parks and areas with rivers, lakes and woodland on google. I feel that due to living close to this area I would be able to provide better directions to persons involved in the production and would feel more confident as I could visit the location more frequently to monitor its hazards and any changes that might have occurred.

While researching Llyn Llech Owain Country Park I came across a website with information on it's location, it's folklore, opening times for park, café and visitors centre, it's status as a Site of Specific Scientific Interest, pricing, directions, parking and contact details. This information was very useful to my research and I was able to determine when I could shoot, where I could park and how I could contact them.

Website: <http://www.pembreycountrypark.wales/things-to-do/llyn-llech-owain-country-park/>

In addition to this a google maps search provided me with information on the local emergency services like the nearest hospital, fire station and police station.

I also learnt to adapt to change ideas through the usage of risk assessments as initially I had planned on shooting the film at night but upon completing the risk assessment, I realised that the likelihood of risk was significantly higher with the following hazards:

- Cold environment - The temperature would be considerably colder in the night, particularly in the autumn. This would also increase the risk of physical fatigue and stress.
- Object falling, moving or flying – Due to low visibility the risk of injury occurring due to an object falling, moving or flying is increased.
- Obstruction/exposed features – Due to low visibility the risk of injury occurring due to an obstruction or exposed feature is increased.
- Slippery surfaces and trip hazards – Due to low visibility persons present at night time filming are more likely to slip, trip and hurt themselves.
- Stress and anxiety – As it is dark and cold cast and crew may have increased stress and anxiety.

In addition to this filming at night would require additional lighting, increasing cost and manual handling. Also due to its opening times the park may refuse to allow us in after closing time and due to the late time staff would not be on site and due to its remote location it would take time to bring in support.

I also wanted to reveal that the protagonist was a monster by having her look at her reflection in the lake however I deduced that the risk of harm from the proximity to a deep body of water (especially at night) was too high. Another reason why I chose not to film by the lake is that the lake is surrounded by a peat bog which makes it a Site of Special Scientific Interest and that by filming in this area we could cause irreversible damage the eco system.

Another factor I had to take into consideration upon conducting the risk assessment was that the area by the lake had very minimal trees and did not match my mood board or ideas for visual elements. However when scouting out the area I found a location which had more trees, presented less risk and met the criteria in my visual elements much more closely.

I carefully considered all these factors and came to the conclusion that not only would it be more effective to shoot the film in the day time but that we could film it in a way which would not reduce the tension and atmosphere we planned to create in the production.

In conclusion I feel that during the process of this module, during classes, reading policies and conducting risk assessments I have learnt a lot more about health, safety and risk assessments in the film sector and have a greater respect and level of appreciation for people that conduct these sorts of activities on a daily basis. While I understand the importance in health, safety and risk assessments in film I feel that it is not something that I would like to pursue solely as a career as I feel I am much more suited to creative projects than its practical elements. However, I feel that it will be very beneficial to have this knowledge and understanding once I graduate and search for a career in the film and media sector.

Attached are photos taken on my location review, I hope to use this location again in future:



