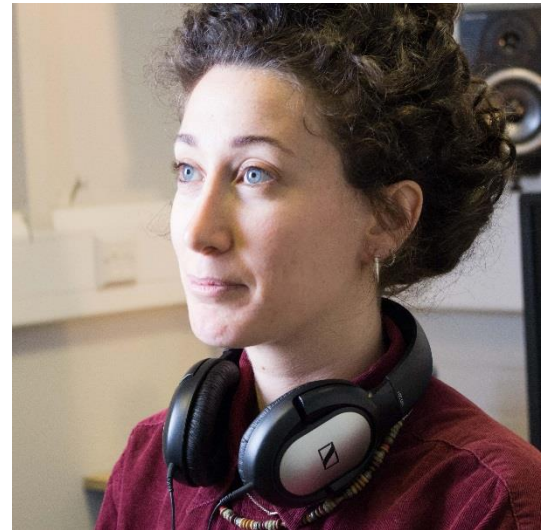# Department of Media Arts
Sound recording
Procedure for safe use of headphones

Before starting any sound recording, choose a pair of enclosed headphones that effectively insulate your monitored sound from the outside world, rather than using an ear bud type. This will enable you to listen at lower volumes throughout the recording session.
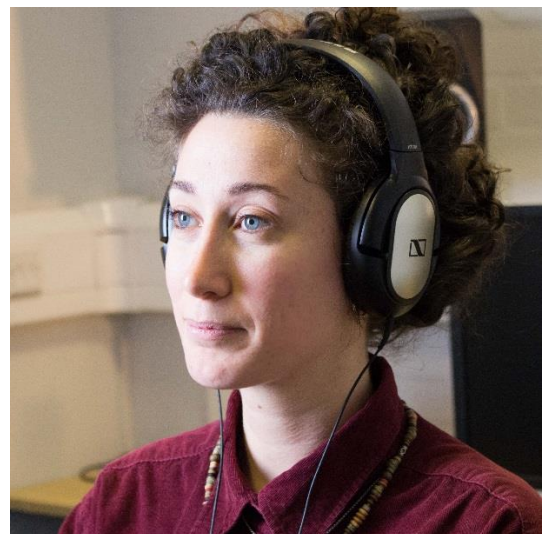
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1. Set up the recording device (i.e. Zoom recorder, Edirol recorder, or video camera) and connect the microphone(s). Don't forget to switch on the phantom power after connecting the microphone, as shown in class.

2. Wear the headphones 'at ease' on your neck, i.e. not over your ears just yet, then connect them to the recording device.

3. Set the device to record standby, scratch the microphone and tap the boom pole while checking that there is a corresponding signal present on the visual display. Also listen out for sound coming out of your headphones, but don't put them over your ears just yet.

4. Turn the recording level down so that the scratch and tap signal peaks to a low level, say around -45 dB. If you have two microphones connected, then adjust both channels accordingly.

5. Set the monitoring volume to around 40%-50% on the dial, i.e. 11-12 o'clock.

Headphones 'at ease'

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6. Now place your headphones over your ears so you can listen closely to the sound being picked up by the microphone(s).

7. Place your microphone in its optimum position for the recording, as trained in class, and ask your actor to give you some lines to check and set the recording level.

8. Set the recording levels, as trained in class, to enable optimum recording quality.

9. Ensure your listening level on the headphones is no louder than required. It is best to monitor at lower volumes to avoid hearing fatigue (and damage), which also minimises the risk sound leakage over your recording.

   Now you're good to go, but take regular breaks between takes to enable your ears to remain highly tuned for monitoring your recording throughout your shoot.

Headphones in use