

Screen Guilds of Ireland  
**Competency Framework**

# Sound Department



**Fís Éireann**  
Screen Ireland





# Sound Department

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## Roles

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1. Production Sound Mixer
2. First Assistant Sound
3. Second Assistant Sound
4. Playback Engineer
5. Sound Trainee

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# Production Sound Mixer

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The Production Sound Mixer is the head of the production Sound Department. Using their experience, equipment, technical expertise and timing to capture “live sound”, usually in sync with camera and according to the creative vision of the Director. They are responsible for delivering the sound recordings of dialogue and background ambiance on completion of filming. In advance of shooting, the Sound Mixer will assess the scale of the production; determine the technical sound requirements; evaluate the need for department personnel and recruit the team. Once filming begins, they will run the department personnel on the floor, manage noise interference on set either in studio or on location, determine the positioning of microphones and other sound equipment both on actors and on the set to ensure the highest-possible quality of sound is captured at the time of shooting. In addition, they will liaise with other departments, manage and maintain the equipment and ensure that recordings are stored appropriately. The work involves long hours of physically demanding tasks. A Sound Mixer will have a strong knowledge of sound technology, acoustic principals, sound equipment, camera equipment and radio transmission technology. They are team players and will be able to think of creative solutions to problems posed by locations and shooting situations as they occur.

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## Key tasks:

1. Assembles an appropriate sound team based on the requirements of the script and the scale of the production.
  2. Prepares a plan for the recording of live sound by determining the technical sound requirements of the script in advance of shooting.
  3. Procures or supplies the necessary equipment for the recording of live sound as determined in the shooting plan.
  4. Maintains all equipment in good working condition to eliminate delays and mitigate errors.
  5. Creates an environment for optimum capture of live sound during production through preparation and collaboration with all other departments.
  6. Captures the best possible live sound mix, by making the necessary adjustments to levels and acutely balancing sound from different sources during each take.
  7. Delivers collated sound rushes and a daily sound report and the end of each shooting day in accordance with the requirements of post-production.
  8. Logistical management and storage of sound equipment.
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## Task statements

### Task statement 1:

**Assembles an appropriate sound team based on the requirements of the script and the scale of the production.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Assesses the scale of production and requirements for sound personnel.
- ✓ Sources and locates available personnel.
- ✓ Manages the interviews in order to select appropriate personnel.
- ✓ Negotiates with line producer for size of department.
- ✓ Inducts the recruited team.

### Task statement 2:

**Prepares a plan for the recording of live sound by determining the technical sound requirements of the script in advance of shooting.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Liaises with the Director to determine or interpret the creative sound design brief in advance of shooting.
- ✓ Breaks down the script and sound design brief to determine the technical requirements of each scene and highlights anything which may require specialist equipment.
- ✓ Attends technical reces to assess location specific requirements and challenges.
- ✓ Liaises with other departments (such as Camera, Locations and Costume) to determine what equipment and ancillary devices, specific to their needs, may be required.
- ✓ Liaises with other departments to assess the need for additional personnel (dailies), such as shooting with multiple cameras or on water etc.
- ✓ Verifies that the Sound Department plan adequately covers all requirements of the shoot by continuously reading and analysing the shooting schedule and daily call sheets.

### Task statement 3:

**Procures or supplies the necessary equipment for the recording of live sound as determined in the shooting plan.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Presents an outline of the sound equipment required by production by reviewing the script and desired shooting style of the Director.
- ✓ Negotiates price for supply or hire of the equipment.
- ✓ Processes paperwork associated with the procurement of the equipment as necessary.

## Task statement 4:

**Maintains all equipment in good working condition to eliminate delays and mitigate errors.**

### Associated activities

- ✓ Prepares and tests all equipment in advance of shooting with the assembled Sound Department.
- ✓ Breaks down and cleans equipment daily.
- ✓ Carries out minor repairs.
- ✓ Stores equipment appropriately.

## Task statement 5:

**Creates an environment for optimum capture of live sound during production through preparation and collaboration with all other departments.**

### Associated activities

- ✓ Reduces noise & other interference in order to ensure the highest quality of live/sync sound is captured at time of shooting, thus avoiding the need for ADR (re-recording the dialogue in post-production).
- ✓ Liaises with other departments (Locations, Costume, Set Decorating, Props etc.) to implement noise reduction practices and interventions in order to create an optimal environment for the capture of live sound.
- ✓ Coordinates the team to set microphones both on set and on cast to capture the best possible dialogue, background, sound effects and room tone.
- ✓ Troubleshoots and solves acoustic issues and challenges presented by locations, costumes, production/plant equipment etc. efficiently and with minimal delay to production.
- ✓ Observes the blocking of each scene before shooting with the rest of the Sound Department to determine the best way to achieve the sound requirements of the scene.

## Task statement 6:

**Captures the best possible live sound mix, by making the necessary adjustments to levels and acutely balancing sound from different sources during each take.**

### Associated activities

- ✓ Monitors the sound quality and adjusts the levels as sound is being recorded.
- ✓ Supervises the work of the team in terms of radio mic placement on cast, and boom mic placement by the 1st Assistants.
- ✓ Provides scene audio monitoring to relevant personnel (Director, Script Supervisor etc.) in order for them to properly judge performances.
- ✓ Monitors the audio integrity of each take in order to sign off on a scene being fully captured.
- ✓ Collaborates with the Assistant Director team to maintain set discipline to reduce polluting noise factors.
- ✓ Syncs sound to picture by collaborating with the DIT, Camera Department and post-production and supplying timecode to both sound and picture.
- ✓ Monitors the frame in order to assess where adjustments and improvements can be made in terms of microphone placement.
- ✓ Liaises with the Director and 1st Assistant Director to collect all the additional sound design elements that can be captured live on set for post-production including ambience, atmospheres and wild tracks etc.

## Task statement 7:

**Delivers collated sound rushes and a daily sound report and the end of each shooting day in accordance with the requirements of post-production.**

### Associated activities

- ✓ Compiles report sheets daily by documenting and annotating throughout the day for the edit, using clear labelling protocols like voice memo and/or a sound report sheet.
- ✓ Liaises with the Post-Production Supervisor to detail the workflow for the sound edit.
- ✓ Saves the sound rushes onto an appropriate media device (Disk Drive, CF Card, SD Card etc.) in order for sound to be attached to the picture in the edit.
- ✓ Delivers the media device to the DIT as required in order for the workflow to reach the edit stage efficiently.

## Task statement 8:

**Logistical management and storage of sound equipment.**

### Associated activities

- ✓ Creates an inventory of all equipment.
- ✓ Stores/packs equipment for safe transit.
- ✓ Liaises with the Production Department for shipping/air transit and return of equipment when necessary.
- ✓ Files the necessary paperwork, such as carnets, for the equipment and for the department when travelling overseas with a production.

## Technical competencies

Area	Indicators	
<b>Skill in breaking down scripts to identify technical sound requirements.</b>	✓	Can critically evaluate sound requirements in each script and break it down to assess requirements
<b>Ability to recognize the challenges particular to a location.</b>	✓	Can decipher sound challenges while shooting in any given location and evaluate any constraints
	✓	Can evaluate and assess noise mitigation interventions (kit), to adequately record live sound to suit the picture
<b>Knowledge of frame rates and Timecode equipment, (syncing picture and sound).</b>	✓	Can identify and provide the necessary workflow to achieve synchronization of sound and picture
<b>Knowledge of H&amp;S regarding the safe operation of equipment.</b>	✓	Can follow Health and Safety protocols on set and location
	✓	Knowledge of H&S regarding the safe operation and maintenance of sound equipment
<b>Repair techniques for sound equipment.</b>	✓	Can carry out minor repairs on field sound equipment and identify when equipment becomes unsafe to use
<b>Intricate Knowledge of multi-track recording.</b>	✓	Can effectively lay down and monitor multiple audio tracks using multiple mic sources and create a working production mix track of all mic sources appropriate to a scene
<b>Intricate Knowledge of Post-Production workflow</b>	✓	Can evaluate the requirements of post-production and establish a workflow to safeguard the delivery of daily sound rushes
	✓	Can identify and operate the appropriate media drives to use for said workflow
<b>Intricate Knowledge of microphone specifications.</b>	✓	Can decipher which microphones are best suited to an actor's voice and what mics are required to fully capture the sound requirements of a project



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# 1st Assistant Sound

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The 1st AS, is the right hand to the Production Sound Mixer and delegates to the 2nd Assistant Sound and Sound Trainee. Their main task is to position the boom microphone close enough to the actors so their dialogue and/or certain sound effects in the scene are captured clearly and with the best quality for sound mixers to work with. In order to follow the action of the scene and acquire the cleanest possible audio, 1st Assistants must be well acquainted with the script, memorize actors' blocking and respond sensitively to small movements and improvisations. In order to ensure the mic doesn't enter the frame or create a shadow in the shot, 1st Assistants must have an acute knowledge of lens dynamics and framing i.e. where the frame line is in real space based on the lens size, camera angle and distance from the subject. They must be aware at all times of lighting design and have an understanding of the physics of light and reflections. As well as being responsible for the operation of the boom microphone they also collaborate with the 2nd Assistant to conceal microphones within actors' costumes when necessary. 1st Assistants work in tandem with most other departments on set, notably Camera, ADs, Costume, Props & Lighting to pre-empt issues that will pollute the soundtracks and efficiently troubleshoot noise pollution on set as it arises. The 1st AS is a key collaborator on set and provides a link between the Sound Mixer and those on the floor. The 1st AS assists the sound team in cleaning, repairing, and storing the equipment for the next day's shoot, ensuring that everything is kept in good working order. Being a good 1st Assistant requires a keen eye for detail. Memorization, observation and troubleshooting skills along with physical agility, balance, stamina and patience are essential traits.

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## Key tasks:

1. Collaborates with the Sound Mixer to prepare for the recording of live sound by focusing on challenges presented by script and locations.
  2. Deploys the equipment necessary, in accordance with the requirements of the Sound Department's plan for the capture of optimum quality live sound.
  3. Assists in the capture of live sound by placing the boom mic in accordance with the requirements of script, blocking, placement of cameras, lighting setup and sources of noise.
  4. Aids in the effective functioning of the department by acting as a liaison between the Sound Mixer and the floor throughout the shooting day.
  5. Collaborates with the 2nd Assistant to radio mic each required cast member.
  6. Develops strong working relationships with the broader crew base in order to effectively tackle the noise issues presented by each department.
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## Task statements

### Task statement 1:

**Collaborates with the Sound Mixer to prepare for the recording of live sound by focusing on challenges presented by script and locations.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Focuses on the particular needs of script in collaboration with Sound Mixer in order to develop a plan.
- ✓ Focuses on the particular challenges of locations and sets by collaborating with the heads of the relevant departments in pre-production.
- ✓ Prepares and tests all equipment required for the recording of live sound throughout the duration of filming.
- ✓ Assesses the required size of the Sound Department according to the needs of the script and camera count.

### Task statement 2:

**Deploy the equipment necessary, in accordance with the requirements of the Sound Department's plan for the capture of optimum quality live sound.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Studies the script and casting in order to compile an appropriate selection of microphones for the project.
- ✓ Makes a plan for the placement of mics and transmitters at the start of each scene to ensure the highest possible audio is captured.
- ✓ Assists in the mitigation of noise pollution by identifying the source of interference and deploying the necessary acoustic treatment measures.

### Task statement 3:

**Assist in the capture of live sound by placing the boom mic in accordance with the requirements of script, blocking, placement of cameras, lighting setup and sources of noise.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Devises, by means of tech rehearsals, a movement plan for the adequate placement of the boom mic throughout a scene based on the blocking of the actors, the placement and movement of cameras, and the lighting setup.
- ✓ Ascertain whether or not a noise pollution source can be eliminated, and if not, selects the appropriate mic and its placement to minimize the pick up of such noise pollution.
- ✓ Memorizes elements of actors' dialogue to develop movement cues so as to arrive at the appropriate cast member at the appropriate moment.

### Task statement 4:

**Aid in the effective functioning of the department by acting as a liaison between the Sound Mixer and the floor throughout the shooting day.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Liaises with both Sound Mixer and other crew on the floor to effectively create a shooting environment conducive to the capture of optimized sound.
- ✓ Coordinates other members of the sound team to deploy required equipment and soundproof areas of noise pollution.

### Task statement 5:

**Collaborates with the 2nd Assistant to radio mic each required cast member.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Works in tandem with the 2nd Assistant from the pre-production stage, develops a workflow with the Costume Department to efficiently mic each cast member each day.
- ✓ With the 2nd AS, studies the costumes in pre-production and devises methods of mic application that both minimize noise issues from the costumes and ensure optimal sound pick up.

### Task statement 6:

**Develops strong working relationships with the broader crew base in order to effectively tackle the noise issues presented by each department.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Each department presents its own set of noise pollution issues from costumes to special effects fans to camera running fans to facilities generators. The 1AS must develop good working relationships with the members of each department in order to negotiate the mitigation of these noise pollutants.
- ✓ Good interpersonal skills and a diplomatic nature are essential to this end.

## Technical competencies

Area	Indicators	
<b>Knowledge of techniques and conventions of film making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can show understanding of techniques and conventions of filmmaking</li> <li>Can decipher sound challenges while shooting in any given location and evaluate any constraints</li> <li>Solid understanding of the script and sound design requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge of correct usage of sound recording equipment and ancillary devices for time coding and sync</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can evaluate equipment and ancillary devices for time coding and synchronization</li> <li>Can evaluate what appropriate mics to use and where to use on actors, for maximum quality sound capture</li> <li>Can evaluate and assess what noise mitigation interventions are necessary quickly and efficiently</li> <li>Has a complete understanding of all sound equipment</li> </ul>
<b>Health and Safety on set</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has shown ability to follow Health and Safety protocols on set and location</li> <li>Is physically proficient in boom operation and is physically capable of safely operating a boom mounted microphone above numerous actors' heads in a confined space</li> </ul>
<b>Skill in planting mics on actors/ sets for optimum quality sound capture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can evaluate what appropriate mics to use and where to use on actors, for maximum quality sound capture</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge of camera lenses and lighting systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has a deep understanding of the physics of lenses and how the shooting frame is affected by camera movement and lens position in relation to the subject</li> <li>Has a deep understanding of the physics of light distribution in a space so as to avoid shadows on the actors or set</li> <li>Is able to assess how the set decoration, lighting setup and camera angles affect the placement of the boom mic and can decipher the best route to take in each circumstance</li> </ul>
<b>Solid understanding of set etiquette</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knows how to conduct oneself on set and in the workplace</li> <li>Understands the workflow of an actor and what they require in a close working environment</li> <li>Strong interpersonal skills</li> <li>Can effectively combine their own movement plan with the dynamics of the camera and the blocking of the actors to effectively do their own job whilst being extremely mindful of how it affects others ability to do theirs</li> </ul>

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## 2nd Assistant Sound

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The role of the 2nd Assistant is slightly broader than that of the 1st but similar in many ways. Although it is the goal of the sound team to capture as much of the production sound as possible using the boom mic, the 2nd Assistant must administer perfectly placed radio mics in addition. The radio mics serve two purposes; they act as a supplemental vocal pickup source to be mixed with the boom mics achieving the fullest possible sound for that actors' voice, and in some instances as the primary microphones source for the voice when the boom is pushed away from the actor by frame lines or shadow-causing light setups. The 2nd AS must be creative and collaborative when it comes to concealing microphones in costumes whilst minimizing, if not eliminating, noise pollution from the costume. On set, the 2nd AS provides additional boom operating when necessary, on single camera shoots if the actors are placed too far apart in a particular setup or the performance dictates the overlapping of dialogue. The 2nd AS is in charge of the sound equipment when on set. They inventory the equipment and instruct/mentor the trainee in the maintenance of the equipment. They have an in-depth knowledge of gear and work practices as well as electronics and physics in order to maintain said gear. Collaborating with the 1st Assistant and Sound Mixer, they liaise with other departments to efficiently troubleshoot, identify and eliminate all sources of noise pollution on set or location. They are the main source of mentorship to the trainee and so must have excellent knowledge of equipment and working practices both within the sound department and the rest of the crew.

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### Key tasks:

1. Collaborates with the sound team to devise a mic-ing strategy conducive to the optimal recording of dialogue and the efficient running of the department.
  2. Collaborates with the Costume Department (and sometimes Hair/Make-up) in pre-production to establish the best placement and attaching of microphones within costumes for optimum vocal pick up.
  3. Collaborates with the sound team in pre-production to establish the best plan for equipment storage and transport which is most conducive to the efficient working of the department during the shoot.
  4. Liaises with the heads of other departments to mitigate noise pollution.
  5. Operates an additional boom on single camera shoots or installs plant microphones on set when necessary.
  6. Catalogues and inventory all the sound equipment in use on a project and assess upcoming requirements.
  7. Mentors the Trainee in all things related to the equipment and consumables stores.
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## Task statements

### Task statement 1:

**Collaborates with the sound team to devise a mic-ing strategy conducive to the optimal recording of dialogue and the efficient running of the department.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Breaks down the script and schedules in pre-production to establish a speaking cast count.
- ✓ Assesses how many radio mics will be required for the project based on speaking cast count per day in the schedule.
- ✓ Collaborates with the sound team to establish a microphone selection based on the types of voices cast in the project.
- ✓ Builds a radio mic case with the selected mics and transmitters and decides on what type of mounting apparatus will be needed for the costumes based on the script.

### Task statement 2:

**Collaborates with the Costume Department (and sometimes Hair/Make-up) in pre-production to establish the best placement and attaching of microphones within costumes for optimum vocal pick up.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Upon reading the script, ascertains the types of materials being used to construct the costumes and research their acoustic properties.
- ✓ Collaborates with the Costume Department in mitigating any noise pollution from the costumes themselves.
- ✓ Collaborates with the Costume Department to find the best placement of microphone within the costume while maintaining actors' vocal integrity.
- ✓ If a costume isn't conducive to the optimum capture of dialogue, placement of the microphone in the hair might be necessary or even concealing the mic on the skin in plain sight using makeup.

### Task statement 3:

**Collaborates with the sound team in pre-production to establish the best plan for equipment storage and transport which is most conducive to the efficient working of the department during the shoot.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Once the equipment has been selected by the Sound Mixer, they work with the sound team to establish a workflow in the sound van or truck that is most efficient relative to the style of shooting of the project.
- ✓ Devises a storage system for the equipment in order of priority.
- ✓ Maintains and develops this system as the shoot progresses and the needs of the shoot evolve.

## Task statement 4:

**Liases with the heads of other departments to mitigate noise pollution.**

### Associated activities

- ✓ Upon arrival on set, immediately troubleshoots and identifies all sound pollutants.
- ✓ Liases with the appropriate department, with diplomacy, to neutralize the issue in a way that works for sound as well as the smooth running of the shoot.
- ✓ Builds interpersonal and working relationships with Heads of Department and crew in order to achieve these goals amicably and swiftly.

## Task statement 5:

**Operates an additional boom on single camera shoots or installs plant microphones on set when necessary.**

### Associated activities

- ✓ Assists in the consistent capture of dialogue and effects by operating an additional boom when the 1st Assistant requires it.
- ✓ Is aware at all times during filming of the blocking of a scene as the need for an additional boom is dependent on the dynamics of each shot as it arises.
- ✓ Is observant of the performances of the actors and is ready to offer a second boom to the scene should it be deemed necessary.

## Task statement 6:

**Catalogues and inventory all the sound equipment in use on a project and assess upcoming requirements.**

### Associated activities

- ✓ Keeps a detailed log of what sound equipment is in use on a project.
- ✓ In pre-production, compiles a list of consumables that are needed to facilitate the sound department during shooting like radio mic mounting accessories, boom pole maintenance supplies, cleaning products, sanitizing equipment, disposable batteries, tapes etc.
- ✓ Keeps a log of consumables and keeps the store's supply of these topped up in conjunction with the Sound Trainee.
- ✓ Is aware of the schedule as well as the script requirements and any changes to such to pre-empt their sound needs.
- ✓ Orders or prepares the necessary equipment for all upcoming scenes.

## Task statement 7:

**Mentors the Trainee in all things related to the equipment and consumables stores.**

### Associated activities

- ✓ Delegates to the Trainee where appropriate.
- ✓ Monitors their work and makes sure it doesn't interfere with the smooth running of the department.
- ✓ Monitors the Trainee's progression and, within the supervision of the entire sound team, increases the responsibility of the Trainee.

## Technical competencies

Area	Indicators	
<b>Knowledge of techniques and conventions of film making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can show understanding of techniques and conventions of filmmaking</li> <li>Can decipher sound challenges while shooting in any given location and evaluate any constraints</li> <li>Solid understanding of the script and sound design requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge of correct usage of sound recording equipment and ancillary devices for time coding and sync</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can evaluate equipment and ancillary devices for time coding and synchronization</li> <li>Can evaluate what appropriate mics to use and where to use on actors, for maximum quality sound capture</li> <li>Can evaluate and assess what noise mitigation interventions are necessary quickly and efficiently</li> <li>Has a complete understanding of all sound equipment</li> </ul>
<b>Health and Safety on set</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has shown ability to follow health and safety protocols on set and location</li> <li>Is physically proficient in boom operation and is physically capable of safely operating a boom mounted microphone above numerous actors' heads in a confined space</li> </ul>
<b>Skill in planting mics on actors/ sets for optimum quality sound capture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can evaluate what appropriate mics to use and where to use on actors, for maximum quality sound capture</li> <li>Can negotiate noisy costume materials and understand what measures to take to mitigate the noise while maintaining the materials integrity</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge of camera lenses and lighting systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has a deep understanding of the physics of lenses and how the shooting frame is affected by camera movement and lens position in relation to the subject</li> <li>Has a deep understanding of the physics of light distribution in a space so as to avoid shadows on the actors or set</li> <li>Is able to assess how the set decoration, lighting setup and camera angles affect the placement of the boom mic and can decipher the best route to take in each circumstance</li> </ul>
<b>Solid understanding of set etiquette</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knows how to conduct oneself on set and in the workplace</li> <li>Understands the workflow of an actor and what they require in a close working environment</li> <li>Strong interpersonal skills</li> <li>Can effectively combine their own movement plan with the dynamics of the camera and the blocking of the actors to effectively do their own job whilst being extremely mindful of how it affects others ability to do theirs</li> </ul>

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# Playback Engineer

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A Playback Engineer is required when any music is to be performed in a scene either by background artists or by cast members themselves. They have an intricate knowledge of sound engineering as well as how sound performs in acoustic spaces. In pre-production, the Sound Department will assess whether any music in the film is to be recorded live on set, as per the Director's creative choice, or pre-recorded, mimed on set by the cast, and laid down in post-production. When cast are miming to a backing track, the Playback Engineer will facilitate a full public address system to ensure that performance integrity can be maintained by the actor or background artist whilst also maintaining an acoustically safe working environment. When the Director requests the live performance of music within a scene, the Playback Engineer will liaise with the Production Sound Mixer on how best to achieve the optimum recording of the live performance, whilst providing a sync track to the performer to maintain timing consistency and synchronicity for the edit.

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## Key tasks:

1. Ascertains with the Director whether they require live performance or miming to a backing track.
  2. Cues music playback for the actor or performer through whatever infrastructure required by the project.
  3. Collaborates with the production sound team to establish a workflow for post-production.
  4. Assesses the level of public address needed for the acoustic space.
  5. Responds in real time to changes in the demands of the project using sound editing software.
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## Task statements

### Task statement 1:

**Ascertain with the Director whether they require live performance or miming to a backing track.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Assesses which style of performance is preferred by the director for the project.
- ✓ Devises an equipment package that would be required for either scenario i.e. PA system or the use of in-ear monitors etc.
- ✓ Assesses the requirements of the script and Director to establish the type of playback needed and the personnel required to facilitate the project.

### Task statement 2:

**Cues music playback for the actor or performer through whatever infrastructure required by the project.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Establishes a workflow with the director and 1st AD for cueing in the music.
- ✓ Is aware of hearing safety levels when using in-ear monitors.
- ✓ Liaises with the performer as to how best to provide the backing track for their needs.
- ✓ Is aware of the actors blocking in order to cue music based on actors' movements within a scene.

### Task statement 3:

**Collaborates with the production sound team to establish a workflow for post-production.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ Backing tracks need to be provided to post-production as well as fed to the Production Sound Mixer on set for sync reference. Integrates the sound team's timecode to the playback network in order to maintain synchronicity.
- ✓ Collaborates with the Electrical Department to ensure all mains powered equipment is safe to use on set.

### Task statement 4:

**Assesses the level of public address needed for the acoustic space.**

#### Associated activities

- ✓ If a backing track is required, assesses the size of the set or location and provides the necessary equipment to appropriately fill that space.
- ✓ Pays special attention to safe hearing working practices.
- ✓ Liaises with production for the provision of appropriate hearing protection for those working on set for long periods of time with playback running.

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**Task statement 5:**

Responds in real time to changes in the demands of the project using sound editing software.

Associated activities

- ✓ Provides sound editing software to be able to efficiently modify tracks on the go according to the needs of the project.

## Technical competencies

Area	Indicators	
<b>Knowledge of Sound Engineering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can show understanding of techniques of producing live sound through public address safely</li> <li>Intricate knowledge of safe equipment setup and de-rigging</li> <li>Efficient troubleshooting of signal flow issues that arise randomly and often on set</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge and awareness of set etiquette</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knows how to conduct oneself on set and in the workplace</li> <li>Understands the workflow of an actor and what they require in a close working environment</li> <li>Strong interpersonal skills</li> <li>Can effectively combine their own workflow with the dynamics of the camera and the blocking of the actors to effectively do their own job whilst being extremely mindful of how it affects others ability to do theirs</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge of sound editing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can efficiently make alterations to a digital sound file within a sound editing software under pressure</li> <li>Can integrate a timecode infrastructure into their workflow for synchronization in the edit</li> <li>Can establish a network between themselves and the production sound team to deliver the backing track in sync to post-production</li> </ul>

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# Sound Trainee

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The Sound Trainee works under the direction of the sound team, setting up and breaking down the sound equipment over the course of the shooting day and contributing to the efficient running of the department. Their main responsibilities are maintaining charge on batteries for comms packs and other sound equipment, running cables and laying sound mats as required. Their role expands and contracts with the needs of the production, the level of their experience and may include opportunities to swing a boom or attach radio mics under strict supervision and for training purposes only. At the end of each shooting day, they help pack up and make sure that any necessary paperwork is handed over to the production office. A good Trainee is reliable, a fast learner, a good listener and has an ability to communicate. They need to be able to take direction, be helpful and have an appreciation of the craft.

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## Key tasks:

- 1.** Aids the smooth running of the Sound Department by maintaining charge on batteries for comms packs, monitors etc.
  - 2.** Contributes to the day-to-day management of the comms packs and headphones, by distributing and retrieving all related equipment to those concerned, in order to facilitate the monitoring of sound quality.
  - 3.** Runs cables and ancillary equipment necessary to record live sound as directed, in order to expedite the setting up of equipment.
  - 4.** Aids the sound team in managing the noise interference.
  - 5.** Contributes to the efficient set-up and break-down of equipment.
  - 6.** Keeps a track on stores and consumables, ensuring orders are placed when necessary.
  - 7.** Turns over necessary paperwork to production at the end of the week including working time sheets and purchase orders.
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## Task statements

### Task statement 1:

**Aids the smooth running of the Sound Department by maintaining charge on batteries for comms packs, monitors etc.**

Associated activities

- ✓ Monitors the charge on batteries in order to ascertain which ones need to be fit for circulation whilst gaining familiarity with the equipment.
- ✓ Supplies and retrieves batteries as needed by the sound team.

### Task statement 2:

**Contributes to the day-to-day management of the comms packs and headphones, by distributing and retrieving all related equipment to those concerned, in order to facilitate the monitoring of sound quality.**

Associated activities

- ✓ Acquires a brief of who's who on set from the Assistants or Sound Mixer.
- ✓ Gathers the equipment from the sound vehicle/cart, distribute and retrieve at the end of the day.
- ✓ Checks the equipment is working and report anything defective to the Assistants for repair.

### Task statement 3:

**Runs cables and place ancillary equipment necessary to record live sound as directed in order to expedite the setting up of equipment.**

Associated activities

- ✓ Runs microphone cables and places receiver aerials required for sound acquisition following instruction from the Sound Mixer/Assistants.
- ✓ Operates within the H&S guidelines for avoidance of trip hazards and safe use of equipment as set out by H&S company policy.

### Task statement 4:

**Aids the sound team in managing the noise interference.**

Associated activities

- ✓ Gathers/lays carpet to dampen sound, ensuring it is not in shot, on the guidance of the sound team and apply the appropriate dampening pads to elements of set and props.
- ✓ Assists in the identification of unwanted noises and pollutants.

## Task statement 5:

**Contributes to the efficient set-up and break-down of equipment.**

### Associated activities

- ✓ Sets up the sound cart according to the instruction of the sound team in order to gain familiarity with the equipment as well as moving, cleaning and sanitising equipment.
- ✓ Assist the team in the movement of equipment throughout the day in accordance with the call sheet and shooting schedule.

## Task statement 6:

**Keeps a track on stores and consumables, ensuring orders are placed when necessary.**

### Associated activities

- ✓ Makes sure all the consumable stores are in stock
- ✓ Liaises with production for ordering stores when necessary.

## Task statement 7:

**Turns over necessary paperwork to production at the end of the week including working time sheets and purchase orders.**

### Associated activities

- ✓ Keeps a log of all time worked during the week for each member of the department.
- ✓ Submits any necessary timesheets to the production office for the sound team.
- ✓ Liaises with the production office regarding stores/consumables orders and purchase orders where appropriate.

## Technical competencies

Area	Indicators	
<b>Understanding the Wireless Transmission of Sound</b>	✓ ✓	Has shown an understanding of electronics, microphones, recording, playback and editing equipment
<b>Sound and Equipment</b>	✓ ✓	Has shown an understanding and knowledge of how sound moves Can evaluate why different equipment is used for different situations
<b>Administrative/Workflow Competency</b>	✓ ✓ ✓	Has displayed ability to keep timesheets Can relay what consumables are required to production Can analyse what is expected on everyday tasks and manage deadlines
<b>Batteries, charging, distributing, and retrieving.</b>	✓	Understanding of battery dynamics/evaluate charging times and know how to charge/retrieve
<b>Sound Environment</b>	✓	Has shown the ability to concentrate on listening to sound in a distracting environment
<b>H&amp;S Competency</b>	✓ ✓	Has read and can understand the H&S Statement and knows what applies to the Sound Department Has shown ability to follow Health and Safety protocols on set and location
<b>Ability to escalate problems to those concerned</b>	✓	Can identify problems, define problems and articulate them in a professional manner
<b>Computer literacy</b>	✓	Shows competency in using computers to manage equipment spreadsheets, timesheets and production documents, equipment research and acquisition and script breakdowns



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