



THE
WITCHER[®]
SCHOOL



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1. Project assumptions

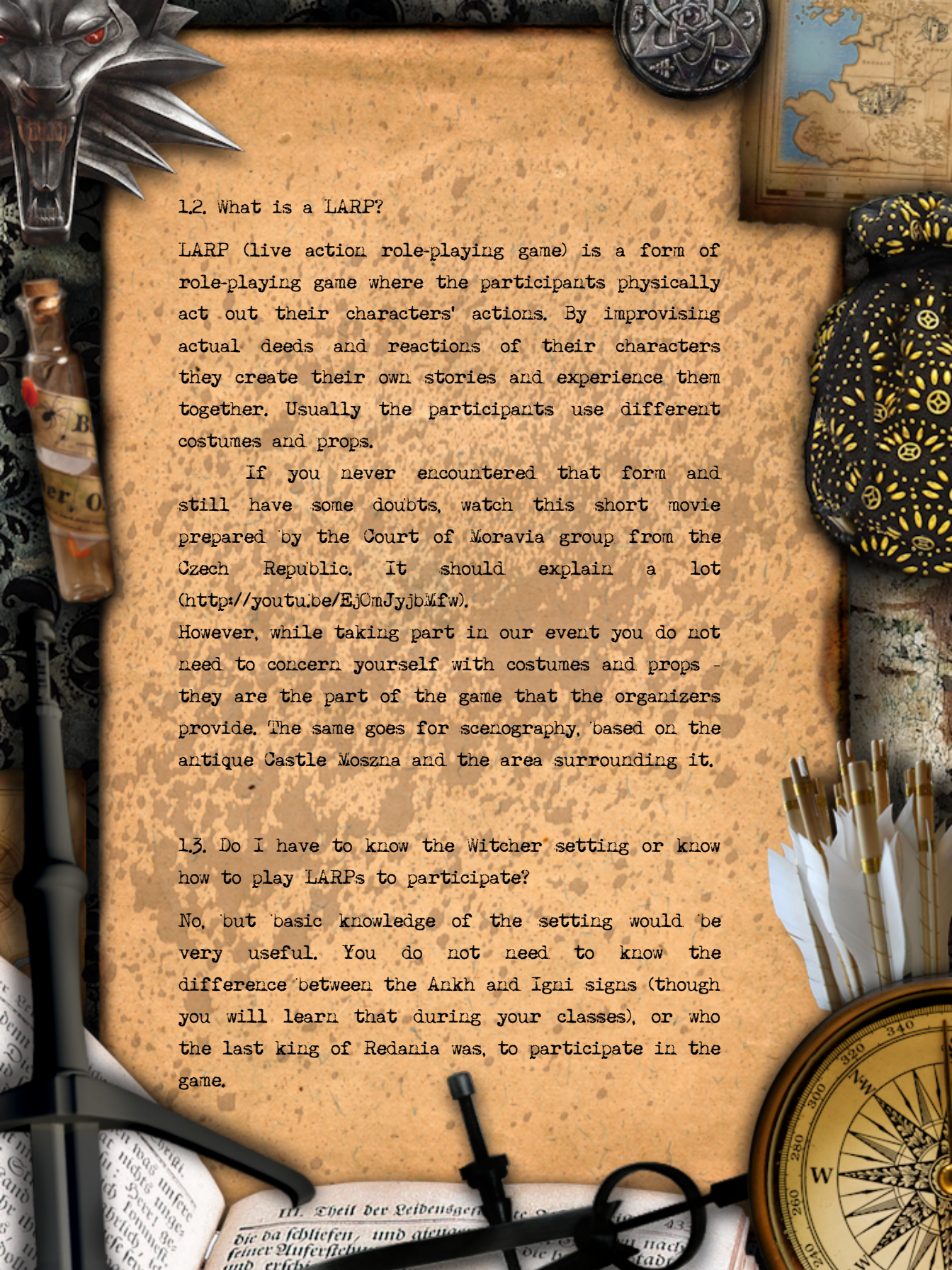
1.1. Witcher School

Witcher School is a LARP for adults inspired by „The Witcher” series and the fantasy book series by Andrzej Sapkowski.

During the game you will become an apprentice going through a rigorous witcher training: you will learn fencing, archery, horseback riding and alchemy; you will hunt monsters, unveil secrets and intrigues; and finally, you will face tough choices and discover the consequences the hard way.

The story, that you'll be part of, concentrates on making a simulation that you know from the books by Andrzej Sapkowski and The Witcher videogame series. You will move to Moszna Castle in Poland, decorated for our needs and transformed into a real witchers' abode where you will meet famous characters, that you know only from your imagination.

For a few days „the real world” will not exist - you will not be able to suddenly take your cell phone out of your pockets, because your phone will not be a part of our game world. In return you'll be able to send a message using magic or a horse courier. Sounds interesting? This is only the beginning.

A collage of fantasy-themed items including a silver dragon head, a map, a bottle, a dagger, a compass, and a book.

1.2. What is a LARP?


LARP (live action role-playing game) is a form of role-playing game where the participants physically act out their characters' actions. By improvising actual deeds and reactions of their characters they create their own stories and experience them together. Usually the participants use different costumes and props.

If you never encountered that form and still have some doubts, watch this short movie prepared by the Court of Moravia group from the Czech Republic. It should explain a lot (<http://youtube/EjOmJyjbMfw>).

However, while taking part in our event you do not need to concern yourself with costumes and props - they are the part of the game that the organizers provide. The same goes for scenography, based on the antique Castle Moszna and the area surrounding it.

1.3. Do I have to know the Witcher setting or know how to play LARPs to participate?

No, but basic knowledge of the setting would be very useful. You do not need to know the difference between the Ankh and Igni signs (though you will learn that during your classes), or who the last king of Redania was, to participate in the game.



What is more, since your character is single and unique - constructed around your submission in the sing-up form- your knowledge of the world, or lack thereof, will not have to be a secret. A common peasant most certainly has less knowledge than an heir to a noble house. Does that make the former a less attractive character? Absolutely not! All of the witcher adepts are equal in the training.

We want this experience to be an opportunity for every fan to find himself in The Witcher universe, and live an unforgettable adventure. We don't require former background with this form of games or an explicit acting skills. The workshops done before the larp will be sufficient enough to equip you with necessary knowledge and skills.

1.4. How do I know what to expect?

It is quite enough to read this document. We have included all the necessary and most important elements of the game here - both technical and plot-connected. However, if you do not find an answer to your questions, do not hesitate to contact us at: biuro.5zywiolow.com




2. Game theme.

2.1. Plot background

The game takes place around 200 years before the events of The Witcher video game (second half of 11th century) in Temeria in a mysterious Moszna Castle, which was built long ago by the elves.

The castle was claimed by the witchers after they fulfilled their assignment - given to them by the Temerian ruler, Geddes - to kill an evil Sorcerer who dabbled in dark magic, necromancy, and whose summoned monsters had terrorised the area. As a reward for a task well done, the witchers had been given the palace, where they decided to establish a school. 30 years have come to pass since those times and Moszna Castle has become the greatest training grounds for witchers on the whole continent.

Today, Gadric, son of Geddes, rules Temeria and eagerly finances the school. After all, the witcher's work is never over - monsters not only wonder around forests and sacred groves, but also often trespass human territories and wreak havoc when they do.




At the same time the last flames of a bloody elven uprising, led by Aelirenn, the White Rose, are dying out. The remaining, disorganised rebel forces roam the kingdom, hunted relentlessly by the royal army. The rumours are that Redania has just started a war with Korvir. Slowly, but steady, the wind of unrelenting change is coming...

2.2. Player roles

All participants will play apprentices of the witcher school. These apprentices will come from different social backgrounds: one might be a miller's child, orphaned after a particularly bloody elven raid; a young, independent woman who is trying to find a way out of the patriarchal system; a bastard of a rich and influential noble house, who has no alternatives; or an unwanted and unexpected child who was destined to be a monster killer.


These are but few examples of roles the gamers could choose to play. Whatever their roots and knowledge of the world are, they have one thing in common - after going through the gates of the school, everybody becomes equal. Their past and social standing means nothings. Their ability to survive a harsh and exhausting training means everything.



New apprentices come from a variety of different places and most probably have not had the chance to meet each other. But the characters you want to play can be registered as a group - there is nothing wrong about, for instance, siblings attending the school together. Such relations, though, fall to the players' hands and they have to report that when they apply for the event.

Apprentices of the school shall be divided into two groups. The first group are those who have walked through the school's gates for the first time - and this is going to be the majority of participants. The second group, however, are those apprentices who have already trained to be witchers for some time. Assignment to a particular group will be decided upon by the organizers on the basis of applications filled by the players themselves.

During future editions of our LARP, our participants will be able to advance in rank or become assistants to one of the mentors, or even replace them.



2.3. Division into groups

Regardless of their ranks, apprentices will be divided into two competing groups. Players will be assigned to a group on the basis of their preferences towards different subjects chosen in the application forms. Each group will have their tutor nominated from the group of instructors.

2.4. What is the game about?

First and foremost it is an adventure set in the world of The Witcher. It is a game about overcoming one's own barriers and self-improvement. It is a game which will make you feel like a real witcher. We want to achieve that effect with the use of unique sceneries, costumes, props, make-up and special effects.

It is also a story about the most characteristic quality of The Witcher setting - about moral dilemmas and choices which are never purely good or bad.

2.5. Questions and answers

What kind of emotions will the players feel?

Rivalry, fatigue, unending desire to be better. Fear and uncertainty of success. Happiness and joy of success and disappointment with failure.




Adrenaline boiling in veins during monster hunts and exploration of the school's secrets.

What experience will players get?

Being a part of the witcher school and finally becoming one themselves. Up to this point, you could only read about this or see this on the screen of your TV or PC. But here... if you want to slash your enemy with a sword you do not have to imagine doing that, or push a button on your controller. What you have to do here is to do it for real. You will learn how to brew potions using real ingredients, and what gestures are needed to use witcher signs. And these are only a few of the things you will be able to learn. You will be an integral part of the live action.

This will be an opportunity to immerse yourself in a well-known setting of The Witcher and live your own unforgettable adventure.

A collection of fantasy-themed items arranged around a central parchment page. In the top left is a silver dragon head with red eyes. In the top right is a small map of a fantasy world and a circular metal emblem with a knot design. On the left is a glass bottle with a label that says 'B' and 'er, O'. In the bottom left is a black dagger. In the bottom right is a large brass compass rose and a book with text in German. A black quill pen lies across the bottom of the parchment page.

What questions will the game ask the players?

How hard can I push myself to become the best?

How much effort can I put into completing a given task?

Am I able to take someone's life?

Are the beasts roaming the surrounding forests the only creatures deserving to be called monsters?





3. A day at Witcher School

3.1. Timetable of a normal schoolday

Below you can find an example of a typical day of an apprentice at the witcher school. The presented information is neither specific, nor final, and it can change depending on the outcomes of the game:

08:00am - reveille

08:30am - breakfast and assembly

09:00am - 4:00pm - classes according to the group/rank plan,

4:30pm - dinner and evaluation

5:00pm - free time, consultations with instructors, special projects

8:00pm - special tasks, confrontations, tests

3.2. Types of classes


Knowledge and skills you will acquire during your classes will be useful during challenges you will have to face in-game.



- Fencing

With the use of replica swords. Basic strikes and steps. Trials with mannequins and duels between players.

- Alchemy



Production, effects and dangers of basic potions, tonics and oils. Preparation, collection and use of basic ingredients. Everything will be spectacular in a specially prepared laboratory.

- Knowledge of monsters



Encyclopedic classes on various beasts, their habits, weaknesses and ways of handling them. Detecting monsters that hide in plain sight. Ways of surviving a confrontation.


- Meditation

Calming one's body, spirit and mind, which is imperative in reaching the heights of witcher's abilities. Paying attention to the most important details and attaining unity with your whole body.

- Forging and fixing equipment

Self-sufficiency - caring for your weapons and armour. Crafting common elements needed to create new equipment. High quality materials and





equipment are provided, and all hand-made elements become the property of the players.

- Survival skills

Surviving in natural environment, ways of tracking monsters and gaining advantage in any kind of situation.

- Archery

Shooting static and dynamic targets, and shooting in unfavourable conditions.

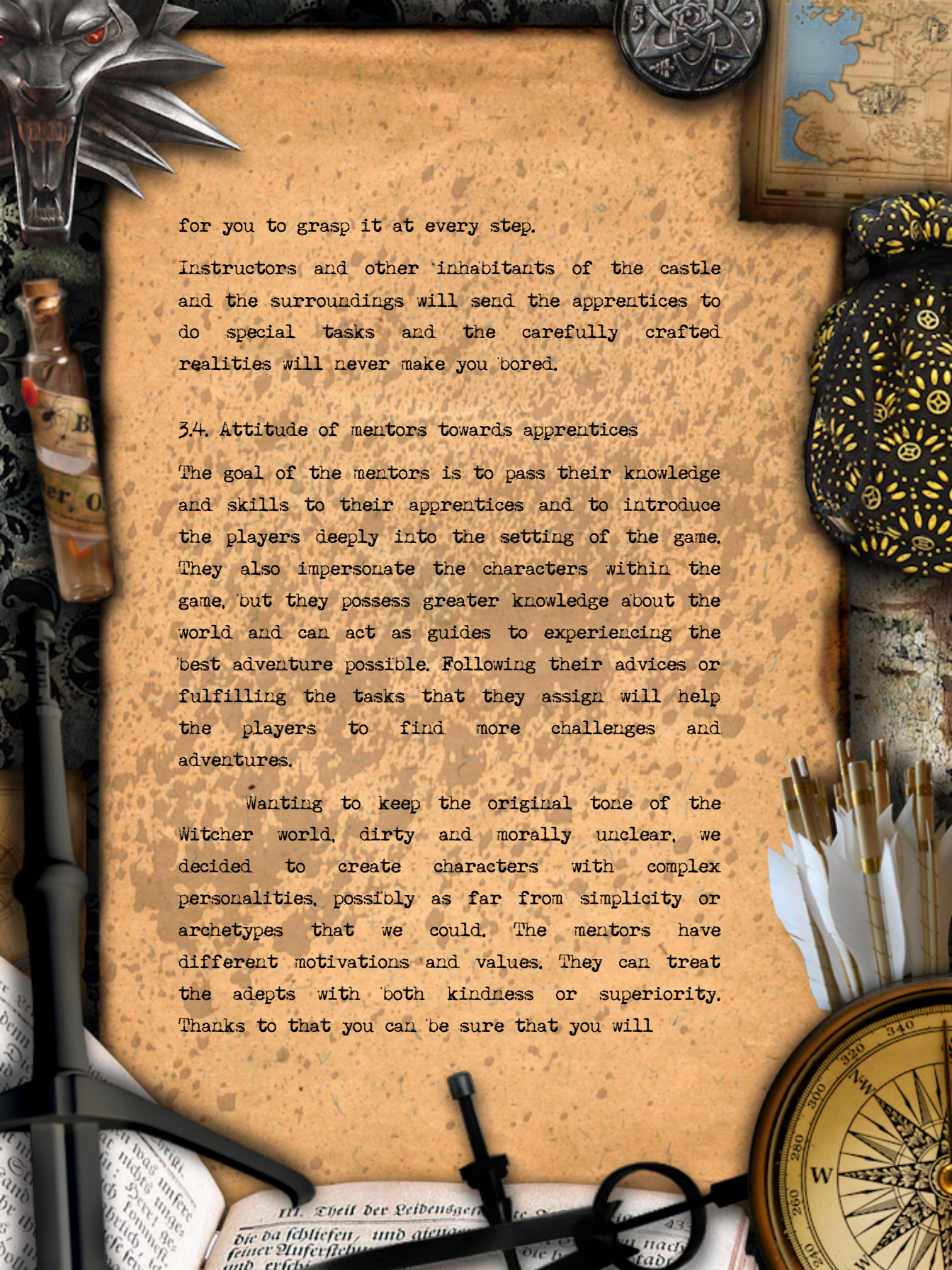
- Witcher signs

Basic issues in ancient witcher magic. Spectacular and with special effects.

3.3. Free time and additional events

After their classes, the castle and the surroundings will be open to the apprentices. There might be a surprise, a mystery or an intrigue waiting around every corner. The surrounding forest is full of dangers - monsters, dark riddles and lost artifacts.

Apart from the mentors, the world will be brought to life by other characters as well. For what is a witcher without any sorceresses, bards and elves? In this dangerous universe adventure just waits




for you to grasp it at every step.

Instructors and other inhabitants of the castle and the surroundings will send the apprentices to do special tasks and the carefully crafted realities will never make you bored.

3.4. Attitude of mentors towards apprentices

The goal of the mentors is to pass their knowledge and skills to their apprentices and to introduce the players deeply into the setting of the game. They also impersonate the characters within the game, but they possess greater knowledge about the world and can act as guides to experiencing the best adventure possible. Following their advices or fulfilling the tasks that they assign will help the players to find more challenges and adventures.

Wanting to keep the original tone of the Witcher world, dirty and morally unclear, we decided to create characters with complex personalities, possibly as far from simplicity or archetypes that we could. The mentors have different motivations and values. They can treat the adepts with both kindness or superiority. Thanks to that you can be sure that you will



definitely experience their capricious humours, but also appraisal for getting the job done.

The relations between the school adepts and the mentors aren't easy. You need to remember, that most of the people beginning their training doesn't survive the first year or die during one of the trials (e.g. Trial of Grass). Emotions aren't the strong side of the witchers, and attachment or making an intimate relation with someone could be considered as a weakness.




4. Basic technical assumptions

4.1. Approach towards game setting

Witcher School is a simulation which tries to reflect faithfully the actual witcher training we know from The Witcher universe. We want to use the 360 degrees illusion system - which means that everything the players will be able to interact with will be an actual element of the game world, and the modern world elements that shouldn't exist in the fantasy world will be diminished to the absolute minimum. To achieve that we will ask for the cooperation of all the participants. We will encourage the use of stylised language or dialects, and discourage references to modern world phenomena (such as technology). The details will be presented to the participants during workshops prior to the start of the game.

Obviously enough, the castle where the action will take place, functions normally as a 21st century building. It is equipped with elements that will stand out from the world depicted. We will try our best to hide their existence, but we know it is impossible to do that completely. In such cases, players will have to apply the so-called „suspension of disbelief“ and:




a) ignore the standing-out elements (e.g. not pay attention to the extinguisher cabinet);

b) explain some elements of the world in terms of phenomena different to the actual ones (e.g. room lights are powered by magic, not electricity).

In the ticket price, you will be provided with everything needed to function properly within the game world. Clothes, a place to sleep and food. Your personal belongings, that don't fit the fantasy world, will be locked out securely and access to them will be limited. Thanks to that you will be able to experience the world in which there are no phone rings and nobody will try to check their social media (trying to hide it under an antique table). You will live your adventures without the feeling of faking it.

On the game area there will be some off game areas - that is areas where the game becomes paused. Going inside those rooms you will for a moment (as long as you are inside them) cease to participate in the game. You can rest a moment, relax or make a phone call.

The off game rooms will always be properly labelled, and the info about their location will be revealed before the game. The private rooms of the



players can gain an off game status, if the players themselves want so and put a specific sign on the door.

4.2. Place and time of the game

The game will last for 48 hours without any breaks. It will take place in Moszna Castle as well as its surrounding parks, meadows and forests. The whole area (apart from specifically marked locations) will become the game world and all characters met there will be part of that world.

If the players spot any person or element which does not fit the game world, they are obliged to report it to the organizers who will take care of the situation as soon as possible.

The area will be divided into special locations - dining rooms, feast rooms, classrooms, bedrooms, instructors' rooms, etc. Players who have only started their education might be forbidden to go into specific locations (plot-wise), but nothing would physically stop them, if they truly wanted to get there.

4.3. Mechanics and meta-techniques

One of the main assumptions in terms of mechanics


means that only your true skills and their realistic presentation matter in-game. If you do not hit a target from a bow, it means you miss and nothing can change that.

Magic is another matter, though, which The Witcher world is full of. Backed by the usage of special effects, will be greatly limited (the witcher adepts shouldn't cast spells everywhere, don't you think?), but when it shows it's spectacularly real. You will encounter magic during the signs or alchemy lessons and of course during fights with some of the monsters.

The organizers and game crew that stay in the area impersonate characters as well, and follow the same rules other players do. Situations where these rules do not apply are: being in the „off game“ areas, and unexpected events, such as real accidents.

There is also one exception to the above. For the comfort of our players we have introduced the stop-break mechanics. During the play, each player can say (in English) one of these words and everyone who hears them should act accordingly:






Stop - I don't want it, that's enough. A scene during which a player uses this word is too intense or, for some reason, they do not want to take part in it any longer. The reason of using the word should be eliminated and the game continued as if nothing happened.

Example1: During a fierce fight with Anna, John has called her a whore. Anna uses the word **stop**. John cannot use any other offensive language of such sort during their argument.

Example2: Kate grabs Paul's shoulder and starts shaking him strongly, causing him pain. John uses the word **stop**. Kate has to let Paul go immediately and stop interacting with him on the physical level.

Break - let's keep this level. A scene during which a player uses this word has reached the highest acceptable level of intensity for a given player, and should not become more intense. What it means in practice is that you should not delve deeper into the subject being discussed, or should not escalate the conflict any more.

Example1: During a fierce fight with Anna, John has called her a whore. Anna uses the word **break**. John can still use similarly vulgar and offensive




words during their argument. However, he should not use any stronger words.

Example2: Kate grabs Paul's shoulder and starts shaking him strongly, causing him pain. Paul uses the word **break**. Kate can still shake him, but she should avoid doing more intense moves which could cause John further pain or interfere with his privacy.

4.4. Levels of contact between players

Witcher School is a game for adults only. It assumes the possibility of intense physical and psychological contact between all the participants. The border of pain should never be overstepped. That is why all participants are obliged to restrain themselves from doing anything that could directly (or by accident) cause real physical or psychological pain in other players. Additional control mechanism (in form of the stop-break mechanics) is to be used by players themselves and everybody is required to respect it.


Physical contact between player characters will be mainly possible during controlled practice sessions or during tests. Of course, this does not exclude contact during free time (which obviously will be frowned upon by the instructors). In such cases the



rule of „accepting defeat“ should be applied, which assumes that the defeated person should admit their defeat (e.g. they should fall down unconscious after a feigned hit in the back of their heads, etc.). All such issues shall be presented and practised at workshops before the start of the game. Physical contact between the players and the monsters is based on the same rules. They should be dynamic, but also safe.

Of course, being a part of The Witcher world includes fighting monsters. There will be plenty of such fights and the organizers will do their best to make them both safe and dynamic.

The concept of personal property, inseparable to the current owner, does not exist in the game - everything can be stolen, broken or taken away, with the exception of special elements of costumes that the players have been allowed to bring into the game (such issues will be resolved individually and thoroughly discussed at workshops before the game). All personal belonging from „the real world“ will be locked away safely in special containers, and access to them will be very limited during the game.

A collage of various objects including a metallic dragon head, a small map, a bottle, a quill holder, a compass, and a book. The central focus is a piece of parchment with a paragraph of text. The parchment is surrounded by these objects: a metallic dragon head in the top left, a small map in the top right, a bottle in the middle left, a quill holder in the middle right, a compass in the bottom right, and a book in the bottom left.

Issues of permanent damage to expensive equipment owned by the organizers, castle decorations as well as other issues are regulated by official event regulations.



5. Applications, dates, and other practicalities

5.1. Contact in terms of character creation

On our project's website - www.witcherschool.com - the official ticket sale shall be launched on 23 March 2015. People who buy a ticket to the vent will gain access to a special application form in which they will be able to:

- choose their character's social background;
- present their relations to other apprentices (in case of group applications);
- choose classes they are most and least interested in (in order to prepare an individual lesson plan);
- give information on levels of skills they possess;
- write down any additional and important information (concerning allergies or costumes they want to take with them to the game);

On the basis of the data provided the organizers will prepare a character, an individual lesson plan and additional information that they will share with the applicant, so that they can get to know their character better.







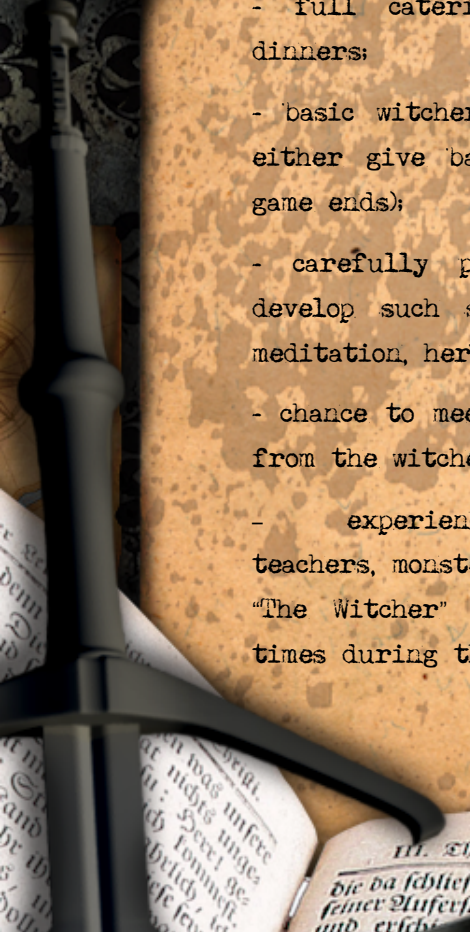

5.2. Participation costs


The total cost of participation in the event is 300 EURO.

This does not cover transportation costs to Moszna Castle grounds.

Additional information on transportation shall be made available at a later date.

5.3. What you get for the ticket

- three nights at a three-star hotel in Moszna Castle;
 - full catering, consisting of breakfasts and dinners;
 - basic witcher apprentice costume (which you can either give back or buy for yourself after the game ends);
 - carefully prepared classes during which you develop such skills as: fencing, survival skills, meditation, herbalism, archery, and alchemy;
 - chance to meet and fight with monsters you know from the witchers' bestiary;
 - experienced cast of dozens of actors, playing teachers, monsters and other characters (known from "The Witcher" books and games), available at all times during the LARP;
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- complete exclusion from the outer world, and access to most of the places and surroundings of the castle;
 - chance to hand-make your own leather equipment during our classes (which you will take home after the game ends);
 - hand-made witcher medallion (which you will take home after the game ends);
 - incredible adventure in the "Witcher's" setting which you will never forget!

5.4. What you can and should take with you

Each participant should not forget to take additional clothes with them, especially:

- shoes (completely and evenly black or brown, preferably leather);
- warm underwear for change;
- gloves (dark, even in colour, preferably leather).



You can take as well:

- additional costume elements or props/weapons, such as belts, pouches, medieval cutlery, etc. (they need to be written down in the application form and accepted by the organizers);
- elements of scenography to decorate the rooms (pelts, paintings, books and others - but they need to fit the setting and its atmosphere).

5.5. Application and event dates

The tickets will be sold from 8:00pm on 23 March 2015.

The game will take place between 31 August 3 September 2015. The first day will devoted to larp workshops, assigning roles and characters and other organisational issues. The proper game will last for the next two days without any breaks in between, and it will end with a party for all the participants. The last day will focus on conclusions and leaving the gaming area.

