



Notes to participants 2018

In response to requests from new participants, we have drawn up a handy checklist which is designed to guide you successfully through the process. We hope it helps!

FIRST (and before end Nov):

- Decide what it is you are going to do and what you want to offer. We accept **scripted** (both published and original), and **devised** drama (which can take a variety of forms)
- If a **published script**:
 - ✓ Do check that performance rights are available before submitting your entry
 - ✓ Beware of making any alterations to the text. Permission for these must be applied for (to the holder of the performance rights) who may or may not grant it
 - ✓ As soon as you can, apply for and pay for performance rights
- If an **original script**:
 - ✓ Ensure you include a cast list and that the pages of the script are numbered
- If a **devised** piece:
 - ✓ With your entry form, submit as detailed a scenario of your piece as you can. Include a guide to likely length, size of cast and suitability of content for a young audience (if containing adult themes, we are likely to schedule your play for later in the evening and issue a warning for those with smaller children in the audience)
- Before or on the night, the adjudicator will require a script and/or a strong indication of which actor is uttering which lines. Give the adjudicator as much help as you can in identifying individual actors
- Fill in and send your **application form** to Hazel with the **entry fee and script/detailed scenario**. Be clear about which sessions during the Festival you can or can't perform and if this changes, let Hazel know as soon as possible. Once the programme schedule has been agreed; it is tough/impossible to change who performs on which night.

SECOND (and before end January):

- If you haven't already done so, send to Hazel your final script (as it is to be performed, inc any changes), your licence to perform, and any permission for cuts
- If you make any subsequent alterations to the script, please supply an accurate one at your technical session
- Devised or unscripted pieces must have a synopsis and cast list with as much help as possible to enable the adjudicator to identify characters/players
- Fill in and return the Programme Information Sheet. Again, if anything changes after this, let Hazel know as soon as possible and she will do her best
- Send some stuff to help us to promote your entry (eg rehearsals photos, promo photos, costume sketches, intriguing synopses, information about your group etc)

THIRD (before the end of February - prepare for the technical session):

- Brenda or Derek will contact you to arrange your **ONE HOUR TECHNICAL SESSION**. This is scheduled to take place during the weekend before the festival (Thu 1st & Fri 2nd eve; Sat 3rd & Sun 4th all day). You can choose, but get in early if you're fussy!
- It is your opportunity to decide on the positioning of any stage scenery, furniture and large properties, and to try out and agree the lighting states and sound effects that will be used for the basis of the technical cues. It is very unlikely there will be time to actually run any of the play but by all means, bring some or all the cast so they can familiarise themselves with the stage and the rest of the theatre, but don't expect to rehearse the play. Do bear in mind when staging that the first four rows of the Barn auditorium are not raked, so avoid sitting or laying your cast on the stage for extended periods
- The process is simple: the competing team director tells the YDF stage director what is wanted and the YDF then try to supply it! The earlier the notice of what is wanted, the better chance there is of actually getting it!

- Before arrival at the Technical Sessions, you need to decide what you would like:
 - ✓ Pinspots/discrete areas of lighting – Where? Size? Colour?
 - ✓ Cyclorama/skycloth – Visible or playing to black? Colour(s)?
 - ✓ How many separate cues for lighting and sound? Remember this is a drama festival, not a competition to see how many cues can be fitted into the playing time! Past adjudicators have adversely commented on too frequent lighting state changes that get out of synchronisation with the action of the play. We advise – keep it simple!
 - ✓ Where is the sound to come from? Back of the stage? Behind the audience? SL?
 - ✓ Who is actually calling the cues to the YDF technicians?
 - ✓ Please try to ensure that only **one** person is making decisions about lighting states or sound levels.
- **How to prepare:** Having already supplied some details of what is required of the lighting and sound in the information sent to the Festival, it is important to arrive at the Tech Session prepared with numbered cue sheets and pre-recorded sound. Please ensure that the script to be used by the person(s) cueing lighting and sound are marked up with the same cue numbers as on the cue sheets
- **Storage of set and properties:** Although the Barn theatre has very limited storage space, it is usually possible to store teams' sets and props between the Tech Session and the performance. Once the performance is over, everything must be removed from the Theatre
- **Finally:** The WGC YDF is a competitive festival and so is governed by a set of rules to ensure that all participants are treated fairly. The overall task of the YDF technical team is to provide you with the facilities and expertise to help you get the very best performance from your team. If you tell us what you want, we'll do our best to help you achieve this best performance, and, hopefully, make the competitive event a safe and enjoyable one

FOURTH - ON THE NIGHT:

- Arrive in good time. The curtain goes up at 7.30pm for evening performances and at 2 pm if there is a Sat matinee. All teams must be there at least 30 minutes before the start, even if on last. You will be briefed by an ASM on health and safety issues and all members of your onstage/backstage team will be issued with an identifying wristband (not to be worn onstage of course!)
- Please ensure that friends, family and supporters remain front of house. We obviously can't have strangers (or anyone not part of the cast or crew) backstage
- Each team will be given two complimentary tickets for their performance session. In addition (with the exception of the last night), and dependent upon public ticket demand, there may be some seats in the auditorium for use by the teams. These may be taken on a first come, first served basis, and are available to anybody wearing a wristband. There will also be a television relay in the bar and foyer for those unable to get into the auditorium.
- After your performance, there will be an onstage (public) adjudication and at the end of the evening, there will be an opportunity for you to meet privately with the adjudicator. Both are marvellous opportunities for teams to get new ideas and to hear an experienced and professional view of their work.

FIFTH - ON THE FINAL NIGHT:

- Please try to ensure that your team is represented should you win an award (of which there are 8). Make sure you buy your ticket early! If you are unlucky, and don't manage to get one, we will ensure that you can watch events on the screen in the bar

REMEMBER: We are happy to help and please don't hesitate to ask us at any point if you are unsure, need advice or need support. We want this to be a terrific experience for all our participants and we will do our best to make it so.

BREAK A LEG!

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 Welwyn Garden City Youth Drama Festival