

Worcestershire Theatre Festival 2021

Frequently Asked Questions



What's the aim of the Festival?

The aim of the festival is to enjoy live theatre, benefit and perhaps learn from the experiences of other, like-minded people and to provide a way of progressing in the All England Theatre Festival if you wish.

What am I committing to if my group progresses to the All England Theatre Festival?

The Worcestershire Theatre Festival is a first round festival that provides a means to progress in a National drama competition culminating in the British Final held later in the year. At the time of entering the Worcestershire Theatre Festival you will be asked if you want to progress to the second round of the competition if your performance wins or is the runner up. It is then expected that your group will perform in the subsequent rounds of the All England Theatre Festival competition.

Are there any restrictions on the type of performance or the number in the cast?

Any type of theatrical performance may enter the Festival including; - plays, dance, mime, music, monologues etc. although performances that may cause offence may not be allowed. The performance must last at least 20 minutes and no more than 55 minutes. There is no upper limit to the number of performers.

How long do we get to set up and strike our set?

You have 10 minutes to set and 5 minutes to strike your set. These times are in addition to the running time of your performance. The festival stage manager will ensure that all members of your group are ready to set, perform and strike. There are penalties awarded for not keeping within these times.

How do we sort out our technical requirements?

You need to complete the technical questionnaire and ensure that it is returned to the festival stage manager at least two weeks prior to the festival. Please bear in mind that to accommodate all the performances, the stage and particularly the lighting has to be set up prior to the festival starting. Consequently some compromises may be necessary. You are welcome to discuss any technical queries with the festival stage manager prior to completing the questionnaire.

Can we arrange our lighting and sound before the day?

Lighting and sound together with all other technical requirements must be arranged by completing the technical questionnaire and returning it to the festival stage manager at least two weeks prior to the festival. It will be setup before the festival by the theatre technicians.

Can we use pyrotechnics, smoke machines and similar effects?

As the use of these may be restricted be sure to check with the festival stage manager if you are contemplating any of these sorts of effects or indeed anything that may be considered a bit out of the ordinary. All technical details and requirements must be included on the technical questionnaire. Please note that smoking is NOT allowed and that a risk assessment may be required.

Can we use microphones?

The use of any sort of live microphone is not permitted as a means of enhancing a performer's voice on stage. However, none connected microphones may be used as a prop. Live microphones may be used for voice over or other off stage effects.

Will there be anybody to help us back stage?

The festival stage manager and his back stage team will do their best to ensure that your production runs smoothly. They will ensure that your group is ready to set up and perform etc. The running of the actual performance is, of course, your responsibility.

Will we have to operate the lights, sound and curtain ourselves?

This is up to you. If you are familiar with the equipment and want to operate your own lights, sound etc, that's fine. Alternatively, and often the best policy with an unfamiliar venue, is for the theatre technicians to operate but obviously they will need accurate cueing as they will not be familiar with your production. Cueing can be done either by standing by the operator in the control room or via headsets from the stage.

How much rehearsal time do we have?

You have 30 minutes during the morning of your performance to do pretty much what you want on stage, check your lights, sound levels etc and try some lines. The Festival back stage team will try to ensure that everything runs smoothly for your performance. You will not have time to go through your whole performance.

Who will be in the audience?

The audience comprises members and supporters from other groups together with members of the public who have been attracted by the festival publicity. You are encouraged to bring your own supporters and watch, as far as possible, the other plays in your session and the other sessions during the weekend.

What about Curtain Calls?

Curtain calls or bows are not permitted.

Do we get our own dressing room?

Suitable dressing rooms will be allocated to each group, although you may not be able to occupy your dressing room until the start of your session.

Do we need any sort of insurance?

It is anticipated that most established groups will have appropriate insurance to cover their normal activities which will provide appropriate cover while they are performing as part of the Festival. However, this may not be the case with smaller or less well established groups. It is recommended that all participating groups should have Public Liability Insurance to the value of £5 million covering all time spent backstage or performing.

Any group that chooses to go forward to subsequent rounds of this competition will be required by The All England Theatre Festival (AETF) who organise the subsequent rounds to have public liability insurance. The All England Theatre Festival has negotiated a bespoke AETF insurance scheme for smaller and start up groups for a cost of approximately £65-£70 annually, from Ansvr Insurance. This is only available through AETF. Details can be obtained from the AETF website. The Ansvr Insurance cover policy only provides cover while competing in an AETF run festival, not for any other productions a group may do throughout the year. It means that if a group goes on to the Quarter, Semi and English Final they will not have to take out additional policies.

What about safe guarding children and young persons?

You are responsible for the safe guarding of children and young people involved with your production and you should ensure that they are protected in the same way and to the same level of safeguard as they are when you meet as a group during the rest of the year. Occasionally, individual venues used for the festival may impose certain extra and specific conditions to do with safe guarding children and young people, you will be advised about these specific conditions should the need arise.

Do the cast get complimentary tickets and can I buy other tickets?

Yes, a complimentary ticket is available for each member of the cast (performer) which can be used by that same cast member to view the other plays in the same session. Complimentary tickets are not available for directors, stage managers, backstage crew or technical crew but tickets are available for sale from the venue prior to the event and on the day.

What does the adjudicator do?

The adjudicator speaks about each production at the end of each performance giving a constructive criticism of the various aspects of the performance, e.g. acting, directing, presentation and costumes.

Will the adjudicator mention an individual?

Often the adjudicator will mention all the actors / performers individually, sometimes to praise, sometimes to suggest different ways that a performance may be portrayed etc. but never in a negative or derogatory way.

When are the trophies presented?

The winners of the various trophies are announced and presented on stage at the end of the Sunday night session. It is obviously desirable that recipients of the trophies are in the audience to go on stage to receive their trophy. Trophies are held by the winners for one year.

When are the subsequent rounds?

Quarter Final – Dates to be confirmed.

Semi Final -

English Final -

British Final -

Revised August 2020