



# One Act Play Festival

## Guidance for Festival Organisation

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# *One Act Play Festival*

## Guidance for Festival Organisation

### **1. Finance**

#### **1.1. Entry**

Teams must accompany their entry form with the appropriate fee(s) currently £40.

Following many withdrawals from both Districts and Divisions recently it is now recommended that clubs are required to pay, at the time of entry, a returnable deposit ideally repayable only after the club has met its final performance obligation of the festival season. The amount would be at the discretion of the district committee but a minimum of £50 is recommended.

#### **1.2. Reimbursement**

The Organising Committee at each stage of the Festival may make an allowance towards teams' expenses. This should be in accordance with the current guidance issued by the National Executive. Where grants to the Association are made at any level, these will be taken into account in determining the level of support. Grants made to individual clubs will be dealt with at the discretion of the relevant Organising Committee.

#### **1.3. Festival Revenue Account**

District and Divisional Committees shall collect all monies due to the Association from the Festivals which they organise and make all relevant payments. District Committees will be responsible for paying the validated expenses of their member clubs appearing at the District and Divisional Festivals. Divisional Committees will be responsible for paying the validated expenses of their member clubs appearing at the Scottish Final.

#### **1.4. Submission of Accounts**

- a) Districts should submit a copy of Festival Accounts Form F-12 to the Divisional Treasurer not later than two months after the District Festival. They should also inform the Divisional Treasurer of the expenses paid to their Divisional entrants once they have been agreed.
- b) Divisions should submit a copy of Festival Accounts Form F-12 to the National Treasurer not later than two months after the Divisional Festival. Expenses for competitors in the Scottish Final will be scrutinised by the National Treasurer before payment by Divisions.
- c) At all Festivals, raffle money and any other income should be included in the accounts.

#### **1.5. Royalty**

The Organising Committees normally refund royalty fees to teams for the play as performed up to a limit of £50. (See also Document Doc-1 Rules of Entry section 'Rules of Entry' para 6 on clubs providing written permission to perform as approved by the author/ agent).

#### **1.6. Social Events**

It is general policy that social events should be self-supporting or subsidised from local fund raising. Festival revenue cannot be used to fund social events.

#### **1.7. Insurance**

SCDA carries a national insurance policy which covers all festivals. The Organising Committee should encourage clubs to insure themselves against liability for the actions of their members.

### **2. Performance Dates and Times**

The Organising Committee at each stage of the Festival will fix the place, date and time for the

performance of each team and notify them accordingly<sup>1</sup>.

For the Scottish Final, the draw for the days each division appears is made by the National Committee at their February meeting. Thereafter the National Chairman and Festival Convenor in consultation with the National Festival Secretary will determine the allocation of teams to days and the running order taking into consideration all information available.

### 3. Programme and Production Details

The relevant form (F-1) will be issued to each Team by the Organising Committee at each stage of the Festival and must be returned by the due date.

### 4. The Organising Committee

Committees are advised that a detailed checklist for organisation of Open and Youth Festivals, is available as 'F-3 Festival Organisation Checklist'.

The committee should:

- a) Confirm the theatre hall booking in writing, complete the contract letter and obtain the theatre licence if required.
- b) Make arrangements to obtain by hire or otherwise curtains etc. If there is no fixed stage in the hall, also organise the necessary fit-ups.
- c) Order additional lighting and/or sound equipment if required.
- d) Appoint a Festival Stage Director and, if necessary, Assistant Stage Director.
- e) Appoint a competent person to take responsibility for electrical safety where this is not provided by the venue. The Authorised Electrical Person will report to the Festival Stage Director.
- f) Appoint a Lighting Technician and Stage Crew to operate under the Stage Director.
- g) Consider appointing an official photographer to record the event. It is essential that they are positioned in such a way to avoid any disturbance to the audience or the actors and that no flash is used.
- h) Collect scripts from Adjudicator at the end of the festival
- i) Collect scripts from the reserve adjudicator also on the last evening of the festival
- j) Send all scripts, for those teams progressing to the next round, to the appropriate organising secretary.
- k) Fill in the Adjudicator Feedback form from Organising Committee and forward it to the Festivals Committee

### 5. Teams

- a) Entry forms and rules are distributed to clubs. The Organising Secretary sends all fees to the Divisional Treasurer. Where deposits are required by the Organising Committee, they should be retained by the District Committee and returned where appropriate.
- b) The Organising Committee will arrange the order of the appearance of the teams.
- c) Forms 'F1-Combined Form' should be sent to the teams as soon as possible.
- d) Where a team wishes to enter an original play for the Scott Salver Award, tick appropriate box (combined Form F-1) and follow procedures set out in Scott Salver Rules of Entry Doc -3.
- e) Where a team wishes to enter the play For the Scottish Life and Character Award, they should tick the appropriate box (Combined Form F-1). The criteria for entry are described in para 14 of this document. The Organising Secretary will check the list on the SCDA website to see if the play has already been approved or refused. If no information is available, then the application should be referred to the Festivals Committee for a decision.

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<sup>1</sup> Acceptable timings are defined in the Festival Rules Document

## 6. Publicity

- a) The Organising Committee should make strenuous efforts to publicise the Festival.
- b) Consideration should be given to issuing of complimentary tickets – for example to the local press.
- c) Consideration should be given to appointing an official photographer to record the event for future publicity .

## 7. Photography

- 7.1. Consideration should be given to appointing an official photographer to record the event for future publicity. Efforts should be made to avoid creating a nuisance to audience members by creating an exclusion zone around the photographer and if possible, using a mirrorless camera.
- 7.2. If an official photographer is present, notices should be posted that members of the audience may be photographed as well.
- 7.3. Organising committees should be aware of the problems of parents video recording or photographing their child's performance despite verbal or written announcements not to do so. If spotted, the parents should be told they must delete these recordings.

## 8. Booking

- a) The Organising Committee should decide the price of seats.
- b) It is recommended that seats are bookable in advance. General Council recommend that season tickets at a reduced price be made available to individual members booking for all performances at any Festival. Arrangements should be made for these and all general ticket sales.
- c) The committee should organise printing of necessary tickets and reserve suitable seats in the theatre for the Adjudicator, the Adjudicator's Steward and the Reserve Adjudicator to ensure privacy and elbow room – for example by ensuring the seat next to the Adjudicator is unoccupied. If possible a block of seats should be saved for the players on the evenings of their performance.

## 9. Programmes

- a) The committee should consider obtaining of estimates for the printing of programmes and endeavour to obtain advertising to cover the cost of printing.
- b) Include in the programme names of the Organising Committee and the name and email address of the Organising Secretary.
- c) Where possible copies of the programme should be placed in the dressing rooms for the casts, free of charge.
- d) Where the Festival is benefiting from sponsorship or similar support, all publicity should be given to this in the programme or elsewhere.
- e) Include the following statement in the District programme. "While a club may enter more than one team, only ONE team from any club can progress to the next stage of the Festival."

## 10. Front of House

- a) The Organising Committee should appoint a Front of House Manager, Fire Safety Officer and Marshals, First Aider, Stewards and Programme Sellers, etc.
- b) Stewards must be instructed to refuse admittance after the house lights are out and an official notice to this effect should be posted outside the doors. Stewards must be made aware of the emergency exits and procedures and consideration must be given to the requirements of the venue for public announcement of safety features.
- c) Unless it is unavoidable and except in Youth Festivals, it is advisable that cast members in costume are not allowed into the auditorium.
- d) The actual length of the interval is a matter for the Organising Committee to decide, but the recommendation is that intervals should not last more than 20 minutes.

## **11. Admission of Teams to view plays and adjudication**

Teams should pay for tickets (consideration should be given to a reduced rate) if they are to see at least one production on the evening they are performing. They should however be allowed into the theatre to hear the adjudication without a ticket, provided there are seats available.

Clearly local conditions will dictate the extent to which this is feasible, and in no circumstances should health and safety be compromised in accommodating teams in this way. An example would be where the team members have to stand in an aisle in the absence of available seating.

## **12. Staging**

### **12.1. Stage Director**

The Organising Committee at each festival will appoint a Stage Director to whom they may delegate all matters relating to the stage. The SCDA Organising Secretary and SCDA Stage Director will be familiar with a venue's technical facilities and requirements for risk assessment under Health and Safety legislation. The Stage Director must be fully conversant with all the rules. The Stage director's decision on all matters relating to the stage shall be final and binding on all teams.

### **12.2. Stage Plan**

At the earliest opportunity and in conjunction with the Stage Director, the Organising Committee will provide each team with a detailed dimensional plan of the stage on which it is to perform and details of the lighting, sound and other stage facilities available. These to include position of LX bars, number of available channels, available specials, types of sound equipment available and any possible limitations on access.

The Stage Director will, having studied the technical forms;

- i. ensure that all appropriate technical personnel have copies of the forms a clear week before each Festival and that any problems have been addressed;
  - ii. liaise with competing teams to ensure that there are no foreseeable problems;
  - iii. give competing teams the opportunity to view the stage facilities prior to the Festival.
- b) ensure everyone involved in the Festival understands the theatre's safety rules;
  - c) provide advice to clubs on safety requirements;
  - d) brief each team on the venue's safety procedures;
  - e) be familiar with the responsibilities outlined in the Safety Guidance Note (Doc 5);
  - f) review the Safety Plan, (in the combined Form F-1) submitted by each team and require additional safety measures if considered appropriate;
  - g) record and report any safety related incidents or near misses to the Organising Secretary in writing;
  - h) complete time sheets provided by the Organising Secretary and return them to him/her.

### **12.3. Setting**

The Festival Organising Committee will provide stage draperies including, a cyclorama or alternative. Teams may bring their own flats, and box sets are permitted. All flats, furnishings and properties must be fireproofed, all electrical equipment requiring Portable Appliance Testing must have an up to date PAT label. Failure to comply with this requirement may lead to the cancellation of a performance. The Stage Director is responsible for ensuring that these conditions are met.

### **12.4. Additional Lighting and Other Equipment**

Teams may use additional lighting and other equipment at their own expense. This must be agreed with the Stage Director prior to the technical rehearsal. It cannot be guaranteed that such lighting can be left in position during other performances. If this situation arises then the relevant time will not be included in the setting and striking times set out in the rules. Where a strobe light is used in a performance, a team must notify the Stage Director in advance. The Organising Committee has a legal obligation to warn the public.

### **12.5. Stage Crew**

The Stage Director will have in attendance throughout all rehearsal periods and performances an adequate number of assistants. With the permission of the Stage Director, teams may use voluntary helpers in setting and striking scenery, but they may not employ paid stage hands. The Stage Director will note on official time sheets time taken for setting, striking and the time occupied by the performance. His or her decision on these times is final. There is no appeal on this decision.

### **12.6. Technical Rehearsals**

- a) The Organising Committee shall afford each team a specified technical rehearsal time to test in advance lighting plans, stage facilities and acoustics. The period allotted may be used in any manner the team desires. The Stage Director shall see that the teams adhere strictly to their allotted periods.
- b) Remember to make allowance in venue hire so that the first team are able to start their rehearsal on time.
- c) Technical rehearsal times will be:
  - District 1 hour
  - Divisional recommended 1½ hours, and 1¼ hours minimum.
  - Scottish 1½ hours.

There should be a minimum of 15 minutes interval between each rehearsal. The same requirements should apply to Youth events.

- d) The Stage Director will give clear indications as to when a team may commence and must finish rehearsal, as well as advising time remaining at appropriate intervals (e.g. half way, 10 and 5 minutes from the end and again at the end.
- e) The Stage Director will establish with the team when the performance timing will begin.
- f) Teams will be allowed to assemble items of furniture and staging, which have been broken down for transport outwith the technical rehearsal timing.
- g) In the event of a technical problem beyond the control of the team the Stage Director will stop the clock and re-start once the problem has been solved.
- h) Any contravention of procedures should be reported to the Organising Secretary as soon as possible.

### **12.7. Performance**

The stage director will ensure

- a) timings are taken of setting, running and striking
- b) teams are advised at 5 and 8 minutes of setting time.
- c) teams are advised at 3 and 4 minutes of striking time.

## **12 Adjudication**

### **12.1. Appointment**

Adjudicators and Reserve Adjudicators shall be appointed as follows;-

- a) District Festivals by the District Committee.
- b) Divisional Festivals by the Divisional Committee.
- c) Scottish Final Festival by the National Committee.

At each stage the responsible committee shall pay the fees and expenses of adjudicators appointed by it. It is the responsibility of the organising committee to agree the rate with the adjudicator. The Committee is advised to allow for expenses in addition to the fee. Adjudicators should be offered travelling expenses by second class rail or a mileage rate as agreed by the Organising Committee for travel by car. Careful attention should be given to the notes on Conflict of Interest in the Adjudicator's Contract.

### **12.2. Adjudicator - General**

Adjudicators will be given a contract which will, amongst other things, indicate the following requirements. Organising committees must confirm that the adjudicator is clear about these.

- a) The Adjudicator will be provided with full details of the Festival in writing as specified in the Adjudicator's Contract

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- b) Ensure the Adjudicator inspects the stage conditions and technical facilities before the Festival starts.
- c) Organise reasonable hotel accommodation, with appropriate writing facilities, for the Adjudicator if required.
- d) Adjudicators must not be in the position where they could adjudicate on the same team at more than one level of the Festival.
- e) An Adjudicator's Steward should be appointed to meet and look after the Adjudicator throughout the Festival.
- f) The Adjudicator should be provided with a small desk or writing board with an electrical lamp and a copy of the programme.

### **12.3. Public Adjudication**

The Adjudicator should constrain public adjudication to a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 10 minutes per team. (See "Deferred Adjudication" below.)

Before the final results are announced at any Festival, the calculation of marks shall be checked by a member of the Organising Committee.

A Youth team that has entered only the Youth competition is not eligible for any placing award in the Open competition. Note that awards such as 'Best Set' or 'Best Moment in Theatre' should be open to all teams that appear in the Festival.

If more than one team from any club has performed in the Festival, the rule that more than one team from a club may be placed, but may not proceed beyond the District Festival shall be explained to the audience by an official of the Organising Committee.

The Stage Director must, before the adjudication, inform the Organising Secretary or other appropriate official and the Adjudicator of any infringement of the rules by any team, or the occurrence of any technical issues outwith a team's control.

### **12.4. Forms of Adjudication**

Adjudication will take three forms:-

#### **At District Level**

- a) All teams will receive a public adjudication at the close of each session. However, see "Deferred Adjudication" below.
- b) At the end of each evening, teams are entitled to a private adjudication. If they do not wish this facility they should inform the Organising Secretary/ Stage Director at the technical rehearsal.

#### **At Divisional Level**

- a) All teams will receive a public adjudication at the close of each session.
- b) If a team wishes a private adjudication on the night of the performance they should make this request to the Organising Secretary/Stage Director at the technical rehearsal.
- c) At the end of the final evening, those teams progressing to the Scottish Final Festival may meet the Adjudicator privately.

#### **At National Level**

- a) All teams will receive a public adjudication at the close of each session.
- b) If a team wishes a private adjudication on the night of the performance they should make this request to the Organising Secretary /Stage Director at the technical rehearsal.

At the end of the final evening, the team progressing to the British Final Festival may meet the adjudicator privately.



### **12.5. Private Adjudication**

Teams should be made aware of the availability of a private adjudication and should also be told who is entitled to attend<sup>2</sup>. Teams may elect not to avail themselves of this. See Page 5 Section 11.4 above. Representatives of each team at this meeting will be confined to the members of the Club who have actively contributed to the production.

An upper time limit should be set by the committee but should not exceed 12 minutes.

The Steward will:-

- a. accompany the Adjudicator and introduce him/her to the teams;
- b. remain present throughout the meeting and be responsible for the control of the meeting;
- c. if necessary, set a time limit and ensure the time allocated is adhered to
- d. ensure that relationships do not become strained or overheated
- e. ensure that unfair comments are not directed at the Adjudicator
- f. be prepared to halt the private adjudication at any time if any of these circumstances should occur.

### **12.6. Marking and trophies**

The adjudicator will be expected to use the SCDA marking guidance supplied.

Marks are allocated as follows

- a) Acting 40
- b) Production 35
- c) Stage Presentation 15
- d) General Achievement 10
- e) Total 100

Clear instructions should be given to the Adjudicator for announcing the winners, including the following:-

- a) no nightly winners will be announced;
- b) at the end of the festival the Adjudicator will announce the appropriate trophy winners in reverse order of merit;
- c) a clear order of merit must be shown. No teams can be placed equal;
- d) there must not be equal marks in any area for which there is a trophy or placing awarded;
- e) half marks may not be used except to achieve d) above only.
- f) where the same Festival is held in different venues the Adjudicator will, at the end of the Festival, place the leading teams irrespective of where they have appeared;
- g) the Scottish Life and Character award should be made on merit and not solely because a play meets the criteria - see section 13, page 7 below;
- h) on all matters of placing and marking the Adjudicator's decision is final.

### **12.7. Adjudicator's Mark Sheets**

Adjudicators should be informed that they should take no account of any deductions because of timing issues. These deductions are applied by an SCDA representative (other than the Adjudicator's Steward) after the marks sheet has been completed by the adjudicator.

It is recommended that the organising secretary provides each team with a copy of all marks. (Form F-7). This is at the discretion of each division/district

### **12.8. Reserve Adjudicator**

The Committee shall appoint a Reserve Adjudicator<sup>3</sup> as follows:-

- a) Any suitable person (for example a trainee adjudicator).
- b) A panel of three persons chosen from Honorary Office Bearers, Members of General Council or any committee of the Association.

The Reserve Adjudicator or Panel should be given seating preferably in the same row as and near, but not next to the Adjudicator

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<sup>2</sup> Normally the team, though teams may ask to include other relevant individuals

<sup>3</sup> No person directly involved with any Club performing in that Festival shall be a reserve adjudicator or serve on the panel.

<sup>4</sup> Please refer to current legislation on the use of weapons on stage

With the agreement of the Adjudicator :-

- c) a reserve adjudicator could be allowed to attend the private adjudications, but may not make any comment unless invited to by the adjudicator;
- d) and if it proves practical, then it would be appreciated if the adjudicator and reserve could have a discussion on the adjudication, but only after placements have been announced.

Where a panel performs the adjudication, one member shall be appointed to give a brief public adjudication and announce the placings. Each member of the panel should mark the plays independently and the result will be based on the average marks.

In the event of the Reserve Adjudicator being required to stand in:-

- a) all subsequent adjudications must be done by the substitute;
- b) account shall be taken of any adjudications, markings and placings available from the Adjudicator;
- c) the Reserve Adjudicator should also give short public and private adjudications;
- d) the Reserve Adjudicator must give a written report as the Adjudicator would;
- e) expenses should be paid if requested and, if appropriate, a fee considered;

For Divisional and Scottish Finals, it is suggested that one Reserve Adjudicator be appointed rather than a panel.

### **12.9. Deferred Adjudication**

Where the same play is presented by more than one team in the same Festival public adjudication of all performances of the play shall be deferred until after the last such performance. This shall not apply to private adjudications.

## **13 Announcements**

Any necessary announcements at a Festival must be made by an appropriate official of the SCDA and not by the Adjudicator.

- a) The Organising Committee should announce any alterations to cast and whether the play contains offensive material, strobe lighting or gunshots<sup>4</sup> on the evening where it occurs.
- b) If a team is disqualified or loses marks because of infringement of the Rules of the competition they must be informed and the announcement must be made by an official of the SCDA before the public adjudication.

## **14 Adjudicator feedback**

Clubs should be provided with form F-5\_Adjudicator\_Feedback and requested for these to be returned to the festivals committee (festivals@SCDA.org.uk) . Organising committees also complete a form and send to the festivals committee

Adjudicators should be given a copy of form F-12\_Festival\_Feedback\_for\_Adjudicators and invited to comment back to the committee on the organisation and conduct of the festival.

## **15 Scottish Life and Character Criteria**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the "Scottish Life and Character Award is to promote the writing and presentation of works which portray some aspect or aspects of life, either contemporary or historical which are particularly "Scottish".

### **Criteria**

General. As a rule of thumb, if the play could be transported to somewhere outside Scotland and still work as a play, it would not qualify as specifically "Scottish Life and Character".

- a. Historical Plays – This category should depict incidents from Scottish history with the majority of the principal characters being Scots or have strong Scottish connections.
- b. Period Plays – This category should depict the minutiae of Scottish life addressing a particular aspect of Scottish period life, social, economic or political.
- c. Contemporary Plays – This category should address contemporary social, economic or political issues relevant to Scotland and the Scots. The majority of the principal characters being Scots, irrespective of ethnic origin.

- d. Adaptations and translations from other plays, cultures and languages into Scots will not be considered eligible.

### **Notes**

It should not be assumed that simply because a play is by a Scottish author, or is published in Scotland, it will automatically be considered eligible.

### **Examples**

- a. A traditional love story which is set in Glasgow would not, in itself qualify. If the main characters were Celtic and Rangers fans, it still would not qualify of itself. If the play explored the history of the rivalry between the 2 clubs and their supporters and how it relates to everyday life in Glasgow, it would qualify.
- b. If a murder mystery is set in 19th century Edinburgh, it would not necessarily qualify even if it mentioned "Burke and Hare". If it explored the history of Edinburgh at that time and how they affected the population, it would qualify.