

Festival Rules and Regulations



Oxfordshire Festival of Speech, Drama & Musical Theatre

Organised by **West Oxfordshire Performing Arts Foundation (WOXPAF)**

1. Festival Purpose and Ethos

1.1 The Festival aims to provide performers of all ages and experience levels with opportunities to perform, develop confidence, receive constructive feedback, acquire new skills and learn from others in a supportive environment.

1.2 The Festival is non-competitive. Its purpose is educational, developmental and celebratory, with emphasis on participation, personal growth, creativity and performance experience.

1.3 The Festival welcomes participants from all backgrounds, abilities and levels of experience. No minimum standard of performance or previous training is required.

2. Entries and Eligibility

2.1 Entries must be submitted via the published entry process before the closing date.

2.2 Late entries may only be accepted at the discretion of the Festival Committee and where capacity allows.

2.3 Entry fees must be paid in full by the published deadline unless a bursary or fee waiver has been awarded.

2.4 Entry fees are non-refundable except where an event, class or workshop is cancelled by the Festival.

2.5 Participants must enter the correct age category as defined in the syllabus. Age is determined as of 1 September of the festival year.

2.6 For mixed-age duologues, ensembles and group performances, entries should be made in the age category of the oldest performer.

2.7 A performer may not enter the same class more than once unless specifically permitted in the syllabus.

2.8 A performer may not perform the same piece in more than one class unless specifically permitted.

2.9 The Festival Committee reserves the right to refuse any entry.

3. Festival Administration

3.1 The Festival Committee is responsible for the management and operation of the Festival.

3.2 The Festival reserves the right to amend the timetable, classes, venues, programme content, adjudicators, workshop leaders or tutors if operational circumstances require.

3.3 The Festival reserves the right to combine, divide, limit or cancel classes where necessary due to entry numbers or operational considerations.

3.4 Participants are responsible for ensuring the Festival has accurate contact information.

3.5 Participants who cannot attend should notify the Festival as soon as possible.

3.6 Participants who are not present when called may be moved to a later point in the class at the steward's discretion. The Festival is not obliged to delay a class.

4. Performance Rules

4.1 Participants must remain within the published time limits.

4.2 Time limits apply to the performance itself and do not include introductions, entering or leaving the performance space, or placing simple props.

4.3 The adjudicator reserves the right to stop a performance that substantially exceeds the time limit.

4.4 Participants should be ready to perform in the published order unless instructed otherwise.

4.5 No coaching, prompting, mouthing of words or other assistance may be provided during a performance.

4.6 Festival stewards and adjudicators will not provide prompts during performances.

5. Performance Content

5.1 Material should be appropriate for the performer's age and suitable for a family audience.

5.2 The Festival welcomes a broad range of performance styles, themes and creative approaches.

5.3 Material addressing sensitive subjects may be performed where it is handled respectfully and in an age-appropriate manner.

5.4 Material drawing on cultural traditions, historical events, faiths, identities or lived experiences should be researched and presented thoughtfully.

5.5 The Festival reserves the right to require material to be amended, replaced or withdrawn where it is considered inappropriate, discriminatory, excessively explicit or otherwise unsuitable.

6. Own-Choice Material

6.1 Copies of own-choice pieces must be provided for the adjudicator where required by the syllabus.

6.2 Copies should clearly state:

- Class number
- Piece title
- Author
- Composer or lyricist (where appropriate)
- Performer name(s)

6.3 Entrants are responsible for ensuring compliance with copyright legislation.

6.4 Any work entered as original work must be substantially the entrant's own.

6.5 Significant use of artificial intelligence within original creative work should be declared at the time of entry.

7. Costumes, Props and Technical Requirements

7.1 Simple costume items and hand props may be used where permitted.

7.2 Costumes and props are optional and will not influence adjudication.

7.3 Large scenery, staging, furniture (other than Festival-provided chairs) and complex set changes are not permitted.

7.4 All props, costumes and technical items must be safe and fit for purpose.

7.5 Participants are responsible for placing and removing any props safely.

8. Music and Accompaniment

8.1 The Festival does not provide an official accompanist.

8.2 Participants wishing to use a live accompanist are responsible for arranging and paying for them.

8.3 Participants wishing to use a live accompanist should notify the Festival at the time of entry.

8.4 Backing tracks must be supplied by the participant in the format specified by the Festival.

8.5 Backing tracks should not contain lead vocals unless specifically permitted.

8.6 Participants are responsible for ensuring backing tracks are clearly labelled and ready for use.

9. Accessibility and Inclusion

9.1 The Festival is committed to creating an inclusive and accessible environment.

9.2 Participants may request reasonable adjustments to support their participation.

9.3 Entrants are encouraged to discuss access requirements with the Festival Team in advance wherever possible.

9.4 Participants may make use of support workers, communication aids, mobility equipment or other support arrangements where appropriate.

9.5 Alternative formats of Festival information will be provided where reasonably practicable.

9.6 All attendees are expected to communicate respectfully and contribute to a welcoming environment.

10. Community Showcase and Festival Farewell

10.1 Participation in the Community Showcase may be subject to separate application and selection processes.

10.2 Participation in the Festival Farewell performance may be by invitation of the adjudicator and/or Festival Committee.

10.3 Invitations are based on a range of factors and are not determined solely by performance standard.

11. Workshops

11.1 Workshop places are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

11.2 Workshop places are confirmed once payment or bursary funding has been received.

11.3 Workshops may be subject to age restrictions, eligibility criteria or capacity limits.

11.4 Workshop bookings are non-refundable unless cancelled by the Festival.

11.5 The Festival reserves the right to cancel workshops if demand is insufficient or due to circumstances beyond its control.

11.6 Participants under 18 must have appropriate emergency contact details provided.

11.7 Relevant medical, allergy and accessibility information should be provided at registration.

11.8 Parents, carers or responsible adults remain responsible for participants under 18 outside supervised sessions.

12. Photography, Recording and Media

12.1 Official Festival photography and filming may take place.

12.2 Media consent will be obtained during registration.

12.3 Consent may be withdrawn at any time by notifying the Festival in writing.

12.4 No unauthorised photography, filming or audio recording is permitted during performances.

12.5 Photography and recording during workshops requires permission from the Festival and all participants involved.

13. Safeguarding

13.1 The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount.

13.2 WOXPAP does not act in loco parentis.

13.3 Parents, carers, teachers and group leaders remain responsible for participants in their care.

13.4 Any safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the Festival Safeguarding Lead.

13.5 Bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.

13.6 The Festival reserves the right to remove any individual whose behaviour is unsafe, discriminatory or otherwise contrary to Festival values.

14. Health and Safety

- 14.1 Participants and attendees must follow venue health and safety requirements.
- 14.2 Emergency instructions must be followed at all times.
- 14.3 Participants should inform organisers of any relevant medical or access needs.
- 14.4 Emergency exits, corridors and access routes must be kept clear.
- 14.5 No naked flames, pyrotechnics, smoke effects, hazardous substances, weapons or imitation weapons may be used without prior written approval.
- 14.6 Participants should report accidents, hazards or safety concerns to Festival staff.
- 14.7 The safety and wellbeing of participants, volunteers and visitors will take precedence over the running of any activity.

15. Complaints

- 15.1 Concerns should initially be raised with a Festival volunteer or member of the Festival Team.
- 15.2 Formal complaints should be submitted in writing within 14 days of the Festival.
- 15.3 Complaints will be handled in accordance with the WOXPAP Complaints Policy.
- 15.4 Safeguarding concerns should not be raised through the complaints procedure and must instead be reported directly to the Safeguarding Lead.

16. Data Protection

- 16.1 Personal information collected through Festival activities will be processed in accordance with UK GDPR and the WOXPAP Data Protection Policy.
- 16.2 Information will be used only for legitimate Festival administration, safeguarding, reporting and communication purposes.

17. Bursaries

- 17.1 Festival bursaries exist to support participation where financial circumstances would otherwise create a barrier.
- 17.2 Applications will be considered confidentially by WOXPAP Trustees.
- 17.3 Awards are subject to available funding.

17.4 Trustees reserve the right to make partial awards where demand exceeds available funding.

17.5 All bursary decisions are final.

18. General Conduct

18.1 All participants, teachers, parents, carers, volunteers and audience members are expected to behave respectfully.

18.2 Mobile phones should be switched off or silenced during performances.

18.3 Audience members should avoid entering or leaving performance spaces during performances where possible.

18.4 Festival volunteers act on behalf of WOXPAP and reasonable instructions from Festival staff and volunteers should be followed.

18.5 The Festival cannot accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage to personal property.

19. Unforeseen Circumstances

19.1 The Festival shall not be liable for loss, inconvenience or disruption caused by circumstances beyond its reasonable control, including severe weather, venue closure, public health restrictions, transport disruption or utility failure.

20. Acceptance of Rules

20.1 Submission of an entry, booking or registration constitutes acceptance of these Rules and Regulations.

20.2 The Festival Committee and WOXPAP Trustees reserve the right to amend these Rules and Regulations where necessary. Significant changes will be communicated to participants.

20.3 The Festival Committee's decision on administrative and operational matters is final.