

THE COCKPIT

House Rules

This document outlines the basic house rules that we expect all users of the theatre to follow. Please ensure that all members of your company take the time to read it. If you have any questions or concerns, just ask a member of our staff.

General responsibility for Health, Safety and security

This lies with all staff and users of The Cockpit.

- Please correct any easily remedied risks you may encounter in the building and report all defects to either the duty manager or any member of Cockpit staff.
- Take care of personal belongings.
- Visiting companies are responsible for conducting their own risk assessments with respect to their specific activities.
- Please read our Covid19 Risk Assessment and ensure you're familiar with the current risk reduction measures in place throughout the building. You can find it on the Cockpit website, under the 'use our space' menu, then go to 'technical information'.

Specific responsibility for Health and Safety

All events involving an audience at The Cockpit are subject to the requirements of Westminster City Council Rules of Management. At such times the College Principal, The Designated Premises Supervisor, the designated Duty Manager, and venue technician are charged with enacting the Rules of Management. Their decision in matters relating to stewarding, seating, crowd management, operation of the bar, technical arrangements and all other aspects of health and safety within the venue should be regarded as final.

Events in the auditorium can only commence once clearance has been given by the duty manager, and must cease immediately if the instruction is given to do so.

Show Stop Procedure

In the event of a show stop, the Cockpit Duty Manager will call the control box using the phone, it is then the company operator's responsibility to turn on the house lights and all working lights, then head downstairs to the evacuation point. The Cockpit Duty Manager and front of house team will inform the company fire and cleaning warden, and the Cockpit team will inform the audience and perform the evacuation.

Get ins and Get outs

Our procedures are in line with current TMA/BECTU guidelines.

Instructions given by Cockpit technicians for safe and proper conduct, use of equipment and procedures during get-in and get-out including the handback of equipment, cabling and accessories used must be complied with.

House Lights

House lights (the lights for the audience focussed on the seating) must not be changed. No recolouring, replugging, refocusing or swapping out of lanterns will be permitted. They are on channels 4, 18 (upper gantry).

There are also back row LED house lights, (lower gantry) these are on Universe 2, starting address: 513 - RED, 514 - GREEN, 515 - BLUE - and plugged up to 13amp extensions running around the lower gantry. These must be used at all times when audiences are entering and exiting the auditorium, for preset, interval and post show. These must not be unplugged, replugged, refocussed, recoloured or swapped out.

If the house lights have been changed from the standard setup the duty manager may stop your show from starting until it's rectified.

There are two multi par battens rigged on the lower upstage bar on the upper gantry, these must not be moved, but can be replugged, recoloured and refocussed.

Signage

All signage in the building is up-to-date, current and there for a reason.

- Please take note of and comply with all door sticker warnings and instructions.

Fire hazards

- Corridors, entrances and seating walkways and steps must be kept clear at all times. There are no exceptions to this rule.
- If tripods or other equipment are to be placed in seating rakes, then the audience can only be seated on the exit route side of the equipment. Putting a camera tripod in the centre of the back row of seating will require closing off the whole row and losing those audience seats. Camera operators must report to the duty manager on arrival.
- Fire doors cannot be left propped open, unless using the Doorguard attached to the door, which will close automatically if the fire alarm sounds.
- Fire extinguishers cannot be obstructed or moved other than in the event of a fire.
- Fire Action notices must be read and left in place.

Eating and drinking

- Food and drink (other than bottled water) is not permitted anywhere other than the foyer or the dressing rooms. Chewing gum is banned from the building. Drinks other than bottled water are not permitted in the control box. Please take all rubbish with you when you leave the auditorium and technical areas, and use the bins in dressing rooms, load in, or front of house areas.

Operating equipment

Visiting companies may not operate the theatre's power tools, cyclorama winch or stage trap. The cyclorama must be operated by two people, one of which must be a Cockpit technician. Special procedures apply to the operating of the stage-trap and this must only be opened with the minuted agreement of the Cockpit manager. The stage lift is no longer in commission. Set and scene painting must take place in the workshop or car park using water-based paint only, no gloss finish, oil based, or spray paints allowed. Use the paint sink in the workshop to wash painting equipment - not the dressing room sinks.

Working on the gantries

There are clear risks of serious injury resulting from falls and falling objects. There is an additional risk of head injury particularly on the upper gantry where there are low overhead beams.

In general, work on the gantries and work in the auditorium should not be carried out simultaneously.

- Rigging time must be scheduled and booked separately to rehearsals and tech runs
- Nothing to be stored on gantries except within lined areas
- No trip or slip hazards to be left on walkways
- Bump caps are to be worn on the upper gantry. Hard hats to be worn below if people are working above
- No rigging of lights or other equipment while people are on the ground floor of the auditorium - the retractable hazard tape barriers should be pulled across the wings, and human pages must always be used to stop people entering the stage level of the auditorium
- No climbing on scaffolding
- No use of stepladders on gantries
- Safety bonds/chains to be used with all lanterns, bar mounted appliances and freestanding tripods and stands or other equipment positioned on the gantries
- During rigging, all entrance drapes must be fully open and appropriate signage displayed
- Multi pars can only be moved if pre-requested and approved by the Cockpit technical production manager

Working on the Upper Gantry

- No more than 2 people at any one time on the upper gantry
- There is a clear risk of falling and dropping objects onto stage and people below
- You must wear a bump cap on the upper gantry at all times (except when sitting down and leaning over creating risk of it falling off onto the stage below)
- No wearing bump caps backwards, as this removes the protection provided by the peak of the cap
- No step ladders or hop ups/work platforms
- No music playing whilst working on the upper gantry – you must be able to communicate clearly with people below
- No rigging of anything larger than a 1K lantern without a Cockpit Technician present
- If work requires leaning out over the edge of the gantry please call to the attention of a member of Cockpit technical team who will provide fall restraint equipment
- Do not over reach on the gantries, if in doubt, ask for help.

Stage Effects

- Please note that companies intending to use live flames, weapons, cigarettes, pyrotechnics, smoke/fog/haze machines or strobe lighting must seek advance clearance (at least two weeks). This cannot be authorised during get in time.
- All set and props and must be fireproofed to City of Westminster Council licensing standards (If in doubt, please ask).
- Make yourself aware of where the trap door is and ensure that the whole company are aware of where it is and to be particularly careful in that area, particularly if barefooted as the surface of the stage in that area is not completely flat.

Standards of behaviour

We aim to engender a culture of respect, co-operation and industry.

- Abuse of people or facilities at The Cockpit will not be tolerated.
- It's essential that all users of the building help us to keep noise outside to a minimum in the evenings so as to avoid upsetting our neighbours. This applies outside the front of the building when leaving or on a break, and also in the car park at the back of the building.

Unsupervised students, young people and children

Separate risk assessments must be undertaken if young people under the age of 18 are working with you in any capacity. Arrangements must be made with The Cockpit Manager for all unsupervised use of the building by anyone under 18.

- Where such arrangements have not been made, young people may be required to leave by the theatre manager or security staff.
- Unsupervised students or young people are not permitted under any circumstances in the workshop, sub-stage area, gantries, dimmer room, theatre control room, front of house office or technician's office.

Key Points – Summary

- Please take note of and comply with all door sticker warnings and instructions.
- Corridors, entrances and seating walkways and steps must be kept clear at all times.
- Fire extinguishers cannot be obstructed or moved other than in the event of a fire.
- Food, drink (other than bottled water) is not permitted anywhere other than the foyer or the dressing rooms. No chewing gum anywhere.
- No spray paint or gloss paint to be used anywhere inside or outside of the building, this includes the loading bay/car park/pavement/foyer etc.
- City of Westminster licensing requirements apply at ALL times.
- Instructions given by the management or house technicians for safe and proper working must be complied with.
- See special notes concerning work on gantries, above. PPE at all times. No working above people on the ground floor.
- If you have made a mess, you will need to clean the spaces after you have used them. This means sweeping, mopping, hoovering as required and cleaning dressing room surfaces and basins. We charge £50 minimum for any additional cleaning required.