

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.

The points listed below are the house rules, and are not negotiable with the staff on duty.

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 and issues to a 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

Specific responsibility for Health and Safety

All events with an audience at The Cockpit are subject to the requirements of Westminster City Council Rules of Management. At such times the designated Duty Manager, The Designated Premises Supervisor, the College Principal, 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, it is then the show operators responsibility to turn on the house lights and all working lights, then head downstairs to the evacuation point. The Cockpit Duty Manager 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 house lights will be permitted. They are on channels 6, 16 (upper gantry).

There are also back row LED house lights, (lower gantry) which are on channel 100 and have their own dimmer on the wall in the control box. 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, or replugged.

If the house lights have been changed from the standard setup, or are not effective for the safety of audience movement, the duty manager may stop the show from starting until rectified.

There are two Rogue R1 Beam Wash moving heads permanently rigged on the lower upstage bar on the upper gantry, these must not be moved or replugged, and can be programmed as needed.

It is not possible to rig lights or set on the bars above the downstage entrances underneath the balconies, due to this being the location of the fire exit signs. This is not negotiable.

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 signage

Fire hazards

- Corridors, entrances and seating walkways and steps must be kept clear at all times
- 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, a 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 keyholder/duty manager on arrival
- Fire doors cannot be propped open, unless using the retainer 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 only permitted in the foyer and 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, use the bins in dressing rooms, load in, and front of house areas. Food/perishable props in dressing rooms must be kept in air tight containers or in the fridge.
- Consumption of alcohol backstage during get ins/get outs is prohibited. Alcohol can be consumed in front of house areas only during these times, anyone who has consumed alcohol must not be permitted into any technical areas, or to carry out any technical work.

Operating equipment

Visiting companies may not operate the theatre's power tools, cyclorama winch or stage trap. The cyclorama must be operated by a Cockpit technician. Special procedures apply to the operating of the stage trap and this must only be opened with the written agreement of the Cockpit manager.

Painting and use of the workshop

Painting must take place in the workshop or car park using water-based paint only, no spray paints are allowed, also no gloss finish or oil based paint. Please use the paint sink in the workshop to wash painting equipment. Please clean up any mess or residues created from company activities in the workshop and load in/car park. Please use correct PPE for any activities that require it.

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 on stage should not be carried out simultaneously.

- Overhead rigging must be scheduled separately to any work on stage
- Nothing to be stored on gantries except within lined areas
- No trip or slip hazards to be left on walkways
- 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 be present to stop people entering the stage
- No climbing on scaffolding or lighting bars
- No use of stepladders on gantries, there are kick steps on the lower gantry only for accessing the upper bars
- Safety bonds/chains to be used with all lanterns and bar mounted appliances. Tripods, stands and any other equipment positioned on the gantries must be safety bonded.
- During rigging all entrance drapes must be fully open

Working on the Upper Gantry

- No more than 2 people at any one time on the upper gantry (exceptions can be made if necessary for rigging large items, please discuss with the house technician)
- There is a clear risk of falling and dropping objects onto stage and anyone below
- You must wear a bump cap on the upper gantry at all times (except when leaning over creating risk of falling onto the stage below)
- No wearing bump caps backwards, as this removes the protection provided by the peak
- No step ladders or hop ups/work platforms (these are for use on lower gantry only)
- 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 generic 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 can provide fall restraint equipment

- Do not over reach on the gantries, if in doubt, ask for help.

Stage Effects

- Use of live flames, weapons, cigarettes, pyrotechnics, smoke/fog/haze machines or strobe lighting must have been requested in writing two weeks before get in on the technical questionnaire - this cannot be authorised on the day.
- All set and props 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.

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 signage
- Corridors, entrances, 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 only permitted in the foyer and dressing rooms
- 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 and house technicians must be complied with
- See special notes for work on gantries above, no working overhead when anyone is on stage
- Spaces must be left as found, if necessary this means sweeping, mopping, Hoovering, cleaning dressing room surfaces and basins. We will charge £50 minimum for any additional cleaning required resulting from company activities.