



## **Drama**

## **Compliance Code**

**Reviewed: December 2023**

## Contents

1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 Responsibilities	3
2.1 Delegated Responsibilities	3
3.0 Management Issues	3
3.1 Staff Competence and Qualifications	3
3.2 H&S Training	4
3.3 Pupils and Class sizes	4
3.4 Curriculum and Performance Risk Assessments	4
4.0 Inspection of Workplace and Workplace Equipment	5
4.1 Types of Inspection, Maintenance and Testing of Work Equipment	5
4.1.1 Level 1	5
4.1.2 Level 2	5
4.1.3 Level 3	5/6
5.0 Manual Handling	6
5.1 Equipment handled by staff	6
5.2 Equipment handled by pupils	6
6.0 Equipment and Electrical safety	6
6.1 Purchase of New or Second-hand Equipment	6/7
6.2 Modification of equipment	7
6.3 Borrowed Equipment	7
6.4 Maintenance, Inspection and testing of Drama Equipment	7
6.5 Hazards and Equipment Defects	7
6.6 Working at Height and Access Equipment	7/8
6.7 Electrical Safety	8
6.7.1 Mains Wiring for Drama Productions	8
6.7.2 Portable Electric Equipment	8
7.0 Emergency Procedures and Arrangements	8
7.1 First Aid	8
7.2 Incident Reporting	9
7.3 Fire Safety	9
8.0 Services and Accommodation	10
9.0 Storage and Housekeeping	10
10. Layout and Audience Safety	10
10.1 Retractable seating	10
10.2 Steps	10
10.3 Seating at tables	10
10.4 Reduced Lighting Levels	10
11. Hazardous Substances	10/11
12. Licensing	11
Annex A – Suspended Equipment Guidance	
Annex B – Stage Lighting Guidance	
Annex C – Props and Special Effects Guidance	
Annex D – Scenery Guidance	
Annex E – Miscellaneous Guidance	
Annex F – Level 2 Guidance Checklist for Termly Inspection	

## **1. Introduction**

This Compliance Code covers all drama activities including:

- General lessons
- Productions in Secondary Schools and other performance venues

As with any practical activity, there is an element of risk in drama activities. However, this can be kept to an acceptable minimum if those involved are aware of the potential hazards and take appropriate steps to avoid accidents

This compliance Code should be used to carry out risk assessments, develop local safety arrangements and delegate responsibilities. Where further advice is required, clarification should be sought from your Health & Safety point of contact.

## **2. Responsibilities**

Headteachers, where appropriate through Heads of Department, teachers, technicians and other support staff, have a responsibility to ensure that the requirements stated within this compliance code are met within their school.

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the compliance code and for ensuring that a copy is made available to the Head of Drama electronically.

The Head of Drama, through discussion with the Site Manager or Trust Estates Manager, is to ensure that the control measures identified within the Site General Risk Assessment are implemented and reviewed annually for their area of responsibility. Any unforeseen hazard is to be included in the Site General Risk Assessment as and when identified along with suitable control measures.

### **2.1 Delegated Responsibilities**

Inspection, servicing and maintenance of department equipment is delegated to the site manager who is responsible for ensuring that issues identified from servicing, inspection and testing reports is communicated to the head of department in a timely manner.

An assessment of the findings is to be conducted with mitigating control measures implemented until such time that equipment can be repaired/ replaced. Where an increased risk is identified this, along with additional control measures, is to be included in the Site General Risk Assessment.

## **3. Management Issues**

### **3.1 Staff Competence and Qualifications**

Teachers with responsibility for the planning and delivery of Drama programmes should have completed appropriate initial and/or in-service training which cover all those aspects of activity required to be taught.

Where there are specific National Governing Body Certificates available for certain activities, teachers planning or supervising these activities should be certificated as appropriate.

Teachers of other subjects who have no specialist training may be time-tabled to teach in the Drama department. This arrangement should be exceptional and be implemented with the greatest care.

### **3.2 H&S Training**

It is highly recommended that all Heads of Department complete a suitable H&S Management course to provide the under-pinning knowledge of H&S and to assist in ensuring an understanding of the additional responsibilities associated with their role.

### **3.3 Pupils and Class Sizes**

Teachers must take account of the age, ability, aptitude and special educational needs of pupils in relation to equipment and activities. Legislation does not specify maximum pupil numbers in relation to individual teaching spaces. However, there is a relationship between the degree of hazard and the size of the teaching group in certain activities. The size of practical groups and pupil-teacher ratios should take account of the assessment of potential hazards and appropriate safety requirements.

Pupils should be taught about the hazards, risks and control measures within the context of their work in the Drama subject area so that risk awareness forms part of their learning.

Participation in potentially hazardous activities such as the use of electrical equipment, ladders and hazardous substances should not be undertaken by any person unless those involved have received suitable and sufficient training or are under the instruction of a person who is responsible and competent in the particular activity.

Where a production is being stage-managed and operated/presented by students there must always be a responsible and competent adult available backstage and another 'front of house'. The responsible adults must be competent in dealing with emergencies and sufficiently familiar with safety arrangements for the production. In the case of licensed functions, a minimum number of adult attendants may be specified in the licence.

### **3.4 Curriculum and Performance Risk Assessments**

The law requires the significant findings of risk assessments to be recorded. This compliance code details the most frequently arising risks associated with Drama and general hazards will be included in the Site Risk Assessment. However, there will be times where additional risk assessments will be required due to the nature of the department. Therefore, the Head of Department is to ensure that the following are completed, reviewed and retained.

- A curriculum risk assessment of drama lessons may be suitable for all lessons and requires reviewing annually (unless significant changes take place which impact on the control measures prior to annual review)
- A production risk assessment must be completed for each new Production and/or change of venue for the same Production.

To assist in the completion of performance risk assessments, further information in relation to specific areas of drama is provided as below. See also WNAT Risk Assessing Guidance.

Annex A – Suspended Equipment  
Annex B – Stage Lighting  
Annex C – Props and Special Effects  
Annex D – Scenery  
Annex E – Miscellaneous

## 4.0 Inspection of workplace and workplace equipment

The inspection process consists of periodic checks of the workplace environment and the equipment contained in it. The aim of this is to ensure that the control measures put in place to protect persons from risks identified in the Site General Risk Assessment are actually working in practice.

Health and Safety law requires that work equipment is maintained in a safe condition as per the Provision and Use of Workplace Equipment Regulations (PUWER). To achieve this, equipment must be maintained, inspected and, where necessary, tested. The requirement to meet regulation requirements is the responsibility of the Site Manager who monitors the need as part of their compliance schedule.

However, department staff are also responsible for the daily inspections and reporting of faults in a timely manner with suitable control measures implemented where there is a potential increased hazard and associated risk.

### 4.1 Types of Inspection, Maintenance and Testing of Work Equipment

There are 3 levels of inspection, maintenance and testing of work equipment which must be carried out. These are: -

#### 4.1.1 Level 1

A visual check by staff of equipment prior to its use on a daily (or as used) basis. This is simply a visual reassurance that the item is safe to use. For example, before using a ladder, check to ensure that feet are in place, rungs are not damaged and that the ladders is stable etc

**All faults are to be reported to the site manager in a timely manner using the relevant helpdesk. Any equipment found to be faulty is not to be used until remedial work is completed**

#### 4.1.2 Level 2

A more formal visual inspection which should be carried out termly. It requires checking the workplace and equipment using a checklist.

Level 2 inspections will be conducted by the WNAT Estates Manager and will consider items included in Annex F to this compliance Code. The findings will be recorded and presented at the termly H&S meetings.

#### 4.1.3 Level 3

Formal maintenance/inspection checks carried out by competent persons such as specialist contractors or members of staff who have received adequate training.

This is scheduled by the School Site Manager as part of their role responsibility for compliance management. Service, Inspection and testing reports are to be reviewed upon receipt and recorded centrally within the school Estates Management System (EMS). All issues are to be communicated to the Head of Department and additional control measures are to be considered where there is an increased risk to H&S or the operation of the school.

The records of these inspections are extremely important and can prove to be invaluable in defending any claims for compensation made against the Trust/ School.

Contractors that maintain, service and formally inspect D&T work equipment, such as lifting equipment, may sometimes recommend upgrades or improvements to the system, citing non-compliance with legal requirements. In these circumstances' schools should ask contractors to provide details and/or a risk assessment where the outcome clearly demonstrates the need for the additional control measures that the contractor has recommended.

Schools are inherently a low risk environment and all recommendations should be considered using the cost versus risk approach. However, where there is a clearly lack of legislation compliance, increased risk to H&S or the operation of the school then the recommendations must be implemented.

## **5.0 Manual Handling**

Where possible manual handling tasks should be avoided, or the risk of handling injury minimised by appropriate task design or the use of handling aids (e.g. trolleys). The layout of storage areas should minimise the need to stretch, reach, bend or twist the body excessively to reach frequently used or heavy items. This can be enhanced by ensuring that storage areas are kept tidy and well organised.

### **5.1 Equipment Handling by Staff**

All staff exposed to potential manual handling risks are to complete suitable manual handling awareness training with records held in their personal file. It is the responsibility of the head of department to identify those at potential risk and that the requirement for training should be considered as part of any risk assessment.

### **5.2 Equipment Handling by Pupils**

It is an integral part of the subject to involve pupils in handling equipment. However, this must be carried out in such a way as to reduce risk to pupils as far as is reasonably practicable. Schools must have arrangements to enable pupils to learn how to handle equipment safely according to their age and strength. The risk must be included in the risk assessing process.

## **6.0 Equipment and Electrical Safety**

Key areas relating to the provision and use of equipment are as follows:

- Ensuring suitable selection, maintenance, information, instruction and training.
- The control of specific hazards such as contact with dangerous parts, risk of fire and explosion etc.

The following information provides an outline of some of the general considerations:

### **6.1 Purchase of New or Second-hand Equipment**

Purchasers of new or second-hand machinery must ensure that it is suitable for the task considering:

- initial integrity and suitability
- the place where it will be used, and
- the purpose for which it is to be used

New machinery must bear a CE mark to show that it conforms to European Safety Standards. Although equipment made for domestic use may bear a CE mark it may not be suitable for use in a school environment.

## **6.2 Modification of Equipment**

Apart from very minor modifications which can be carried out without affecting the integral safety of the equipment, modifications should normally be undertaken by a competent organisation such as the manufacturer. It is recognised that in some circumstances a member of staff may have the required competence. The Head of Department must approve this.

Modifications that could impact the safe operation of the equipment are not to be permitted.

## **6.3 Borrowed Equipment**

Where equipment is to be borrowed rather than hired from a contractor, such as equipment belonging to local theatre groups, checks must be made to verify the suitability and integrity of the equipment and the competence of staff using it.

## **6.4 Maintenance, Inspection and Testing of Drama Equipment**

Equipment must be maintained, inspected and, where necessary, tested. This will require the involvement of specialist contractors and is the responsibility of the School Site Manager.

The Site Manager ensures that all formal maintenance/inspection requirements are scheduled and recorded. All records are maintained centrally on the school Estates Management System (EMS) and findings must be communicated the head of department to ensure mitigation is implemented accordingly.

## **6.5 Hazards and Equipment Defects**

It is the responsibility of everyone to inform the teacher in charge of any hazards and defects relating to equipment, so that appropriate action can be taken. All faults are to be reported to the site manager using the caretaker service desk in a timely manner. This will ensure the issues is logged correctly and provides an auditable trail.

Any damaged, faulty or equipment, which cannot be used safely, must be taken out of use and locked away where possible. Where it cannot be isolated it must be clearly marked as faulty equipment in order to avoid inadvertent use.

## **6.6 Work at Height and Access Equipment**

Work at height is defined as work in any place where, if suitable precautions were not taken, a person could fall a distance likely to cause personal injury.

All staff who are required to conduct working at height are to complete a suitable working at height awareness course and records of training are to be retained.

Working at height is considered high risk and as such the correct equipment must be used for all tasks irrespective of height and duration of exposure to the risk.

**NOTE – Furniture such as desks and chairs are not to be used for working at height requirements in any case.**

In regards to performances, exposure to falls must be considered in the risk assessment and consideration must be given to the following:

- Potential fall from stages
- Potential falls from props

## **6.7 Electrical Safety**

### **6.7.1 Mains Wiring for Drama Productions**

Where an establishment has permanent wiring, circuits used for drama productions these must be included in the 5 yearly statutory inspection of the establishment's mains wiring. This is the responsibility of the site manager and is monitored as part of their compliance requirements.

If the wiring is being rigged solely for a single production, advice should be sought from a qualified electrician to ensure the circuits will not pose a risk to safety and meet legal requirements. Extension leads should never be daisy chained (linked together) or overloaded.

### **6.7.2 Portable Electrical Equipment**

All portable electrical appliances used in drama productions must be included in the establishment's electrical testing programme – this includes luminaires and plug boards.

Portable Equipment Testing (PAT) is not a mandatory annual requirement and is based on an assessment of equipment usage. All equipment should be inspected prior to use as per Paragraph 6.5. For items that remain in place for prolonged periods such as IT equipment the requirement to PAT test could be every 2 years. However, items that are regularly moved around such as portable lights etc the requirement may be every 6 months.

It is the responsibility of the head of department to communicate requirements to the site manager to facilitate testing as needed.

## **7.0 Emergency procedures and Arrangements**

Heads of Department are responsible for preparing written emergency procedures for activities where there is a risk of serious and imminent danger to employees and/or pupils. Where employees are allocated specific tasks to perform in an emergency their role should be set out in detail.

### **7.1 First Aid**

Schools must have suitable numbers of trained first aiders available. Where Drama takes place out of normal operating hours, away from the School site or where there are a significant number of additional visitors a review of the current First Aid arrangements should be carried out to ensure they are still appropriate and included in the performance risk assessment. For further guidance on first aid see WNAT First Aid Policy.

## 7.2 Incident Reporting

Incidents must be reported using the WNAT incident reporting service desk. This will ensure that the incident is logged and reviewed in a timely manner with any follow up investigation conducted. Additionally, an assessment can be made as to whether the incident is reportable to the HSE as per the Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)

The timely reporting and investigation of incidents can assist in protecting against compensation claims made against the school or Trust.

## 7.3 Fire Safety

Fire risk assessments (FRA) are carried out by an external contractor for all WNAT sites. The Head of Drama should ensure that the fire risk assessment and occupancy assessment is reviewed when planning performances to ensure that there is not impact to the control measures currently in place such as restricting escape routes etc. The FRA and occupancy assessment are held centrally by the site manager.

The person responsible for the drama lesson/production must:

- Be familiar with the general fire arrangements including, how to raise an alarm, fire routes, fire equipment and their responsibilities in the event of a fire.
- Ensure that any curtains provided across fire exit doors can be parted at the centre, are flame-retardant, and are able to be pulled across so as not to reduce the exit width.
- Ensure that when curtains are dry-cleaned they are retreated to ensure they remain flame retardant (you will need to keep evidence that treatment meets the required standard).
- Discuss any specific risks arising out of Drama activities with the Site Manager and Trust Estates Manager to establish if the fire risk assessment requires review to take account the following:
  - Emergency lighting
  - Electrical safety
  - Seating layout (including seating around tables)
  - Standing audiences
  - Audience occupancy levels
  - Signage and information
  - Access and egress, including ensuring there are an adequate number of gangways and gangway widths.
  - Firefighting equipment
  - Evacuation stewards
  - Flammable substances
- Ensure that fire exits are not blocked by equipment, loose chairs, tables or other obstructions during Drama activities.
- Ensure that staff and others involved in Drama activities are aware of fire evacuation arrangements during a performance
- Ensure that seating, gangways, rostra etc are arranged in line with the information provided in this Compliance Code.
- Ensure that the performance has a license where it falls under the category of a licensable activity (further information is detailed in this code).

## **8.0 Services and accommodation**

The heating system should consider the nature of the activity and ensure that there is an even, controlled temperature. Inadequate heating, excessive temperatures, lack of ventilation or poor air circulation can be hazardous.

All issues should be reported to the site manager using the caretaker service desk

## **9.0 Storage and Housekeeping**

Good housekeeping arrangements must be in place in order to avoid the introduction of tripping hazards, such as cables and props as well as the collapse of items being stored. This may involve a discussion with all those involved regarding good housekeeping needs and arrangements for regular checks of areas.

Shelving should not be overloaded and heavy items should be stored at a lower height to reduce manual handling risks

Housekeeping will be inspected termly as part of the level 2 inspection requirements

## **10.0 Layout and audience Safety**

### **10.1 Retractable seating**

Ensure that manufacturers' information and control measures identified in risk assessments are followed when setting out retractable seating.

### **10.2 Steps**

Ensure that stairs are clearly visible, and consideration has been given to handrail requirements, depending on the stair layout.

Edge strips should be in place and cables should be secured to prevent trip hazards.

### **10.3 Seating at Tables**

For an event given before an audience seated at tables a ratio of 1.0 m<sup>2</sup> (12 sq. ft) per person should be used. In such cases tables adjacent to exits must be secured in position to prevent them being moved or overturned in an emergency.

### **10.4 Reduced Lighting levels**

Consideration should be given to reduced lighting during performances as audiences may not be familiar with the area and there could be an increased risk of trip hazards. Light levels should remain normal until such time audiences are seated and should be returned to normal levels at the end of the performance.

## **11.0 Hazardous Substances**

Substances hazardous to health may take the form of gases, vapours, liquids, fumes and solids (e.g. dusts); on their own or as part of a mixture. It doesn't matter how much of a substance is used.

Risk assessments must be completed for all substances that may be a hazard to health and material data sheets should be used to obtain the required information. When used as part of a performance the control measures can be included in the performance risk assessment.

## **12.0 Licensing**

Before some productions can be performed for the public it may be necessary to apply for an appropriate licence from the District Council. A theatrical performance (e.g. a drama production) is a 'licensable activity' and a Premise Licence or Temporary Event Notice (TEN) will be required. Schools must contact the licensing section of their District Council to check on requirements for the particular performance or production.

In general, it will be necessary for the school to demonstrate that suitable provision has been made for:

- Emergency lighting
- Electrical safety
- Seating
- Signage and information
- Access and egress
- Fire escape
- Firefighting precautions and equipment
- Stewardship and organisation

## **Annex A to Drama Compliance Code**

### **Suspended Equipment Guidance**

This document is concerned with the hazards and risks associated with suspended equipment such as stage lighting and scenery. It contains details of such hazards and lists the protective measures which will be necessary to control risks to staff and pupils while using such equipment.

This guide covers the simple flying facilities that may be found in a school environment. It is not concerned with professional systems.

There are specific health and safety requirements for the provision, management and use of lifting equipment (i.e. any work equipment for lifting or lowering loads, including attachments used for fixing or supporting the load) known as the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998.

Effectively, this covers items such as stage lighting hoist units, stage scenery hoist units and any equipment used to lift people. The following points must be considered:

- The Safe Working Load (SWL) of all attachment points must be established.
- The maximum load to be suspended on any system must not exceed the lowest SWL of any individual part of the system.
- All equipment such as fixing points, pulley blocks, ropes, harnesses, shackles etc. used in lifting operations must be capable of supporting the load they are subjected to. If in any doubt, seek the advice of a specialist contractor via the Site Manager.
- The SWL of all equipment/suspension points must be indicated on the equipment, either in writing or in the form of a colour code.
- All fixing attachments must be of a design that will not accidentally release the load, e.g. hook attachments must have safety catches.
- All lifting equipment must be examined by a competent person for defects before being used, i.e. by someone with the necessary theoretical knowledge and practical experience to be able to identify defects or weaknesses in the lifting equipment.
- Lifting equipment must be inspected annually; equipment used to lift people must be inspected at least every six months. This examination must be carried out by a competent person and the site manager must be informed of the requirement to enable scheduling.
- If additional equipment is purchased between formal inspections, the school's insurers must be notified of any changes to the schedule of equipment to be inspected.
- All lifting operations must be planned by a competent person and appropriately supervised.
- In the case of lifting equipment used for productions, the above checks must be completed as part of initial planning and included in the production risk assessment. Records should be kept of the most recent inspection and details of the scheme of inspection used.
- If lifting equipment is to be used to lift people rather than objects, it is necessary to have procedures in place to be able to recover them safely in the event of an equipment failure.

### **Maintenance**

It is important that all suspension and tie-off points are included as part of a regular maintenance check. For equipment used to lift people, it must be inspected every six months. All lifting equipment must be inspected by a competent person arranged via the site manager.

### **Raising and Lowering**

This should only occur under supervision where strict 'ground control' can be exercised. All operators must be trained to lower equipment using the cleat as a 'friction block'. It is good practice to use a crew of two when raising and lowering. One concentrates on raising, the other takes in slack on the cleat. Correct tie-off procedures must be taught. Spare line should be neatly coiled out of the way.

Whenever an abnormal load is attached to the system, a notice must be posted by the tie-off point to bring it to the attention of other users.

Operators concerned with raising or lowering equipment should always have a clear view of the stage area. Where that is impossible, a third member of the team should be stationed to give a clear view and instruct the 'flying' team.

### **Spot Bars (Barrells)**

The weight of a fully laden spot bar and its inherent danger needs to be considered. As a consequence, it is normal in schools for these bars to be fixed suspensions.

Any lowerable system requires a winch and cable system and must be specifically designed for that purpose. The system will require annual inspection.

### **Screens**

The nylon ropes used on most large projection screens must be regularly checked.

The screen should be raised and lowered gently and tied up securely. The operator needs to check that the screen is coiling in its own ropes smoothly.

### **Temporary or Partial Flying**

Whenever a production calls for the suspension or partial flying of equipment/scenery or scene cloths, care should be taken that it does not hang in such a position to cause it or anything else to come into the close proximity of a lighting unit.

The anchor points of the object to be flown need to be considered carefully according to its weight and function.

The main danger with temporary flying is that of temporary fixings becoming permanent therefore it is essential that at the end of the production *all* temporary structures, suspensions and arrangements are removed. This is particularly important where the theatre has been let out to external groups.

### **Knots**

All operators should be familiar with the common knots used in suspending items. The widely used granny knot does not provide a firm enough non-slip fixing.

### **Domestic Pulleys**

Domestic pulleys should only be used on lightweight suspensions. Check that the pulley itself is firmly attached and in good working order.

### **Clearing a Jammed Line**

If a rope line jams in a pulley no attempt should be made to clear it by jerking or hauling on the line.

## **Annex B to Drama Compliance Code**

### **Stage Lighting Guidance**

This document addresses the hazards and control measures concerned with stage lighting. It deals primarily with electrical safety. The preparation of a lighting design and a hanging plot will save a considerable amount of time.

#### **User Pre-Use Checks**

Ensure that a luminaire is cleaned, checked and working before it is suspended. When checking, particular attention must be given to:

- The earth connection on the luminaire and in the plug.
- Any wear on the flexible tail of the luminaire, especially where it emerges from within the light.
- Wear around the plug.

#### **Plugs**

All luminaires must be fitted with a rubber/smash proof plug to suit a 5 amp round pin socket or, in some instances, a 15amp socket. These sockets are peculiar to the Drama/Theatre industry. A 13amp square pin plug must not be fitted to equipment controlled by the stage lighting system.

#### **Colour Frames**

Non-flammable gels must only be used in the correct colour frame for that luminaire. Care must be taken that the colour frame is firmly in position using the locking device if fitted.

#### **Barn Doors/Iris**

Care must be taken to see that the Barn Door is firmly engaged in its runners and the safety clip attached. Similar care must be taken when using an adjustable iris.

#### **Suspension of Lighting Units**

Where students are involved in the erection/suspension of lighting units a competent member of staff must always supervise the activity and check the students' work. It is recommended that a record is kept that the member of staff has completed the checks in case of possible prosecution/litigation in the event of an accident being caused by the lighting.

Luminaires must only be suspended with the correct hook clamp and safety chains must always be used. Hook clamps must be attached to the luminaire by washer and wingnut. These should not be over-tightened. Jammed wingnuts must not be released by using the stirrup of the luminaire as a lever.

Luminaires must not be suspended so that strain is placed on the plug or on the 'tail'. When hanging the light ensure that there is plenty of slack in the tail so that later focusing is facilitated.

#### **Temporary Suspension Points**

When a particular production calls for temporary hanging points, particular care must be taken, especially if these are over the audience area. A secondary 'safety' suspension must be incorporated. Lighting bars must not be installed without prior consultation with an appropriate competent person, i.e. specialist contractor, to determine the safe working load. Please note - lighting bars may need inspection prior to the issue of a license for Productions.

It is important that at the end of the production all temporary fixings are removed. This includes all temporary wiring.

## **Changing the Bulb**

The manufacturer's instructions must be closely followed. If the bulb is of tungsten-halogen type the glove supplied must be used to handle the bulb. Casings of luminaires can become very hot causing difficulty in handling.

When handling hired equipment, it is normal practice to keep all failed bulbs and return them with the hired equipment to the hiring company.

When a new bulb is fitted to a luminaire it should not be switched on but brought on via a dimmer and allowed to burn in at a low wattage. The prime cause of early lamp failure is due to movement of fitting when the filament is still hot and at its most vulnerable. Care must be taken to avoid combustible materials when siting lighting units or equipment with hot surfaces.

## **Temporary Wiring**

Temporary wiring rigged for each production must be either toughened rubber-sheathed or PVC sheathed and double insulated. At least 10amp cable should be used. Cables must only be joined by the appropriate plug and socket which should be of the rubber/smash proof variety. The number of joints should be kept to a minimum and cable runs kept as short as practicable.

Wiring should, as far as possible, be kept off the floor in backstage areas where people are likely to pass.

Cables should not be laid on the floor across exits or doorways. Where such use is unavoidable, cable covers must be used. Cables should not run on or near stairs or steps.

Excess cable should be avoided wherever possible. When unavoidable it must **not** be coiled into tight loops and fixed in position, but the excess distributed in long loops along the suspension bar.

Plug boards should be made up or specific extension leads kept for 13amp or 5amp systems to prevent the need for excessive changing of plugs.

## **Multi-Adaptors**

Multi-adaptors must not be used. Plug boards are an acceptable alternative.

## **Circuits**

All operators must fully understand the circuit distribution and the number of outlets per circuit in a particular venue. The circuit rating will depend upon the type of lighting control board and whether dimmers are incorporated. Operators unsure of the circuit rating must seek competent advice.

## **Patching**

Some stage lighting systems incorporate a patching system that allows for more than one circuit to be connected to a particular dimmer. Great care must be taken to ensure that the dimmer capacity is not exceeded.

## **Portable Boards**

Small portable boards are available. Great care must be taken that the total load on the board does not exceed the power supply available.

When used on a domestic 13 amp supply the following formula determines the total wattage that can be used safely:

Amps x Volts = Watts

13amps x 240 = 3,120watts (e.g. six 500watt lights; or twelve 250watt lights)

Touring school companies who provide drama activities at schools using their own portable equipment must fully acquaint themselves with the power supply available at your venue and design their lighting accordingly.

Long runs of cable from power point to board must be avoided.

### **Stage Lighting Control Boards**

A range of types and ages of stage lighting control board exist within schools. Regardless of type, it is important that their use is governed by a strict code of discipline.

The power supply to the board must only be switched on when a supervising adult is present. It is recommended that wherever practicable the stage lighting system is kept isolated and locked.

Due to the large number of leads/plugs and sockets, it is advisable to label them.

### **Maintenance of Stage Lighting Boards**

Simple maintenance is possible and can assist greatly in accident prevention.

- When a number of dimmers are shared amongst a greater number of circuits by physically pulling out the plug and relocating it, the plug is often put under a strain and the plug top may become loose. Plugs must be regularly checked. In particular ensure the clamp properly secures the outer sheath of the cable. Wherever the system permits, rubber smash proof plugs must be used.
- Wherever a fuse is blown the immediate cause should be determined. The correct fuse must be re-fitted. A higher rated fuse must never be used, even as a temporary measure. Improvised fuses must never be used.
- A circuit which constantly blows a fuse must be kept isolated and professional advice sought

### **Professional Maintenance**

The lighting board must be regularly inspected, especially in the case of older installations. The number and frequency of these inspections will obviously depend on the age, type and frequency with which the board is used.

### **Housekeeping**

Good housekeeping is essential in the vicinity of the lighting board. Scripts, cue sheets and hand tools must never be placed on the top of the dimmer racks.

Drinks must **never** be consumed near the lighting board, sound equipment and other similar electrical equipment.

Where a patch panel is incorporated the leads must not become entangled.

### **Access to and Siting of the Lighting Control Board**

Access to lighting boards is sometimes difficult and they are often placed in positions which make it impossible to supervise in detail what is actually happening. In these circumstances it is essential that only trusted, responsible and trained pupils operate the board.

In remotely sited lighting control positions the physical means of access must be regularly checked, e.g. wall-mounted ladders to gallery. This point of access must never be blocked.

Physical surroundings around lighting boards must be checked for hazards and, where practicable, remedial action taken, e.g. safety rails, trapdoors fitted. It is important to remember that the operator will be working in low light levels and in some cases, there will be considerable movement taking place as the operator tries to see the production from potentially difficult vantage points.

Some venues have lighting boards that operate from the back of the hall. In these cases, the lighting area must be isolated from the audience. Any leads running to this point must be taped down. Wherever they cross passageways, cable covers must be used. If operators are sitting on chairs on a rostrum, then the rostra must be butted against the wall to prevent chairs slipping off the back.

It is recommended that a securely mounted angle-poise lamp is provided to enable operators to see clearly what they are doing, in preference to torches which can be dropped and cause a tripping hazard.

### **Movable Stands**

The use of movable stands must be restricted to trained personnel. When loaded and working within their design limits they are a very useful aid in stage lighting. When these design limits are exceeded, they can present a potential danger.

The following points must be considered at all times:

- The tube must never be extended beyond the safety mark. There must always be sufficient extension tube in the main tube to provide secure grip by the locking device.
- The stand must always have two locking devices in working order.
- Most stands are designed to carry relatively lightweight luminaires. A heavy load at the full extension increases the chance of the stand toppling.
- If the stand is placed on a temporary structure, e.g. a rostrum or table, then it must be secured.
- All cables leading to the stand must be firmly fixed and taped down. Where necessary, cable covers should be used.
- The lowering of a stand presents its own dangers and is a task best tackled by two people, one to take the weight of the extension tube, the other to release the locking devices. The tube, when loaded can descend with considerable force and people have been known to damage their hands as a result.
- A luminaire must always be mounted on a stand by the use of a correct spigot.
- Two or more lights must only be mounted using a specifically designed bracket on a stand which is sturdy enough for the purpose.

### **Management of the Stage Lighting Process**

Stage lighting is often inadequately planned, and the rigging left late in the production process. Consequently, a frenetic atmosphere can develop as operators feel they are working against a deadline and their rehearsal time is ended. Such an atmosphere is conducive to accidents, especially as fatigue sets in.

The person working on a light must take responsibility for its disconnection. Reliance must never be placed on another person, or solely on a switch, to isolate the unit.

Clear communication is essential between the board operator and anyone working on the lighting. It is easy to mishear instructions or circuit numbers, while 'on' and 'off' are easily transposed.

## Annex C to Drama Compliance Code

### Props and Special Effects Guidance

#### Introduction

This document is concerned with the hazards and risks associated with the use of props and special effects. It contains details of common hazards and lists the protective measures which will be necessary to control risks to staff and pupils while using such items.

#### Pyrotechnics and other Special Effects

##### Manufacturers' Recommendations

All pyrotechnics are potentially dangerous unless used strictly in accordance with manufacturers and suppliers' recommendations.

Pyrotechnics or special effects must always be bought or hired from reputable dealers and fixed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions using properly designed and constructed devices.

##### Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT) Codes of Practice

Schools who use pyrotechnics in their productions must refer to the Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT) Codes of Practice for Pyrotechnics, Strobe Effects and Firearms Safety.

These are available from ABTT, 47 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XT; tel. 0207 403 3778; website: [www.abtt.org.uk](http://www.abtt.org.uk).

No matter how important to the action of the performance, **the effect must never be fired if there is a danger to anyone.**

Many of these effects are potentially dangerous. They must only be handled under strict supervision.

Under no circumstances should 'home made' preparations be used.

The pyrotechnic device must always be sited so that it cannot set fire to adjacent materials and costumes.

The operator must have a direct view of the device from the firing point. In those cases where the device is on stage the operator must not fire solely on a verbal cue.

Always fire the device from an approved control/firing box.

Ensure that the device is electrically and mechanically safe and in particular that all connections are in good condition.

Ensure that fire-fighting equipment is at hand.

Know the procedures for first aid, fire and emergency in the event of an accident.

Ensure that there is no ignition source before withdrawing any explosive or pyrotechnic device from the main storage receptacle.

Withdraw from store only sufficient pyrotechnic supplies for one performance. The main storage container must be kept locked.

When loading a device, the operator must have in their possession the means of isolating the firing circuit. In most cases this will be the disconnected extension lead. **Never rely on switches in lieu of cable disconnection.**

The device itself must be fitted with a tail of 1.5m which is sufficient to allow the operator to face away from the pyrotechnic device when making the supply cable connection.

In the event of a misfire, switch off or disconnect the circuit and ensure that no further attempt is made to fire the device.

Whenever a pyrotechnic or smoke device is used in a test firing or in performance ensure that other users and caretaking staff are fully informed.

Pyrotechnic devices must not be sited where any entrance to or exit from a setting or any escape route from the stage could be affected.

Ensure that any plugs and sockets used in connection with firing cables are of a type different from others in use throughout the premises or clearly labelled to avoid the possibility of accidental firing.

Ensure that the operator is thoroughly familiar with the firing box. If fitted with firing circuits check that the ON/OFF position is clearly marked. Ideally the device will be fitted with a key and main switch to prevent possible interference. The box should be switched on a short time before the cue. A firing box that is switched on must never be left unattended in order to prevent possible accidental tripping of the firing circuit.

Pyrotechnics must only be used if there is sufficient rehearsal time, energy and financial resource to ensure they are fired safely.

### **Maroons**

Maroons are designed to produce a very loud report and are available in various sizes. Only theatrical maroons designed to be fired electronically should be used. Only the exact number of maroons required for a particular production should be ordered. If for any reason, there are maroons left over at the end of the production they must be detonated.

### **Bomb Tank**

Maroons must only be fired in a bomb tank. The tank must be designed to permit explosion relief in an upward direction only. The metal must not be less than 2.5mm (0.1") thick and all joints must be welded. Except for the top, the tank should form a complete enclosure. The opening at the top should be as large as possible.

The size must be such that any maroon suspended within it is at least 200mm (8") clear of any internal face.

A stout mesh lid of approximately 12.5mm (0.5") matrix must be provided to cover the opening with arrangements for securely fixing into position when the maroon has been connected. For full details of construction, please see ABTT booklet.

### **Siting**

If at all practicable the bomb tank should be sited away from the stage level and clear of all personnel. Due regard must be taken of the possible effect on surrounding structure, equipment and fittings. Ensure that any fabrics suspended over the tank are not nearer than 4m (13'). The tank must not be

sited in a position where it is possible for personnel to appear suddenly (e.g. by turning a corner of an approach corridor).

### **Rehearsal**

A trial firing using a maroon must always take place with all personnel other than the operator *well clear* of the bomb tank. Ensure that other users of the building are fully informed.

### **Loading**

Ensure that the firing circuit is isolated. Disconnect the supply cable to the tank and keep the tail to hand whilst connecting up the maroon. **Never rely on switches or removal of switches in lieu of this cable disconnection.**

### **Standby Maroon**

In order to provide a standby maroon in the event of a misfiring, it is permissible to arrange a second maroon to be suspended within the same tank arranged in such a way that there is 200mm (8") clearance between maroons and the internal faces of the tank.

### **Fixing in Position**

Combustible materials than 1mm thick must never be used to suspend maroons in their intended flying position.

### **Debris**

The tank must be clear of all debris.

### **Firing**

The maroon must only be fired by an operator who has a direct view of the bomb tank and its surrounding area.

Hearing protection must be worn in accordance with manufacturer instruction.

### **Notices**

Clear notices in 50mm (2") letters must be posted in the vicinity of the bomb tank:

DANGER  
EXPLOSIVES  
KEEP CLEAR

These notices should be removed as soon as practicable after firing.

### **Misfires**

The firing box must be isolated and the supply to the device unplugged as soon as practicable. Take no further action until the end of the performance when the fault can be ascertained and rectified and a trial firing carried out, thereby using up the maroon.

### **Flash Boxes**

Flash boxes must be sited so as to avoid combustion hazards to scenery, hangings or costumes. Where the flash box is sited upon a rostrum it must stand on a panel of non-combustible material not less than 0.6m square (2-foot square).

### **Priming**

Before priming ensure that the flash box is clean and in sound electrical and mechanical condition.

Ensure that the flash box is completely isolated from any ignition source by disconnecting the local cable connector and keeping it to hand whilst priming the flash box. **Do not rely on switches or removal of fuses in lieu of this cable disconnection.**

The flash box must only be primed in accordance with the makers or suppliers' recommendations. For full details, see the ABTT Handbook.

### **Reloading**

Never attempt to reload a flash box until disconnected from the firing supply and always allow at least 15 minutes to elapse between firings to permit complete cooling of the flash box.

### **Firing**

The flash box must only be fired by an operator who has a direct view of the flash box and surrounding area. It must never be fired if there is danger to personnel. It is good practice to use a visual rather than verbal cue.

### **Smoke Guns**

Ensure suppliers instructions are fully carried out. **It is essential to use the grade of oil recommended by the manufacturers whenever the oil level needs replenishing.** This must only be done when the machine is cold and disconnected from the electrical supply. Take care to avoid spillage on or around the device. Fitting must not take place in the immediate stage area.

When inserting a gas cylinder, follow the makers' instructions. Ensure that the valve is closed when removing a cylinder.

Allow plenty of time for the gun to heat up before attempting use and ensure that the green temperature indicator lamp is alight showing the gun is ready for operation.

Avoid firing the gun directly at people, fabrics or equipment. It is recommended that the operator has a clear view.

Several rehearsals under performance conditions will be necessary to determine the settings required.

### **Ice**

Dry ice is extremely cold and can cause severe burns. It must not be allowed to come into contact with bare skin and gloves must be worn when handling.

### **Storage**

The storage of dry ice can present problems. It must never be kept in a sealed container. If a deep freeze is not available, a refrigerator, disconnected from the electrical supply, may provide sufficient thermal insulation for medium term storage. Care must be maintained that the surrounding area is well ventilated to avoid any excess build-up of carbon dioxide.

### **Dry Ice Machine**

The makers/supplier's instructions must be followed closely when using a machine. During operations the water is boiling and that along with proximity to electricity presents potential dangers. Care must be taken to ensure that nobody is enveloped in vapour for more than a few seconds as carbon dioxide is an inert gas that does not support human life. Adequate ventilation must, therefore, be maintained.

### **Strobe Lighting**

Generally, strobe lighting is made to create a 'silent film' jerky quality to movement, for example in chase sequences. The disorientating effect and the potential dangers of such lighting need to be fully

appreciated, especially if performers are asked to perform complex manoeuvres or move scenery whilst the lighting is in use.

Strobe lighting can cause epileptic fits. To minimise this, the British Epilepsy Association recommends that the frequency should not exceed 5 flashes per second. If strobe lighting is being used in a production, it should be brought to the attention of prospective members of the audience before they purchase tickets. Additional warnings must be provided in the programme and on signs near the venue entrance.

### **Firearms**

A valid Firearms Certificate issued by the Police must be obtained if it is intended that any firearm other than a starting pistol will be used. Certificates are issued only to individuals who will be held responsible for the custody and use of the weapon.

When a firearm other than a starting pistol is required for dramatic purposes, it must be hired from a reputable theatrical supplier who will be able to give specific advice on whether the item requires a firearms certificate. These discussions must take place at least eight weeks before the item is needed so that certificates, if required, can be issued.

Schools **must not** borrow firearms from individuals.

It is recommended that wherever possible 'dummy' firearms are hired, i.e. firearms that do not fire blanks.

Firearms must **never** be pointed or fired towards the public or directly at any person on stage. Aiming slightly to one side of an actor will achieve the effect from the audience's point of view.

Blank ammunition must be strictly limited to the amount required for each performance. The explosive discharge from a blank cartridge can cause injury and great care must always be exercised.

Any firearm and blank ammunition, when not in use, must be kept **under lock and key**. Firearms must be handled only by trusted personnel. After use it must be returned to a designated member of the stage staff who must return it to the store as soon as practicable, i.e. the firearm must not be left on the props table backstage.

Personnel handling the firearm must be given explicit training on safe handling of the firearm. This must include:

- Stressing that the firearm is never pointed at anyone
- How to load and unload
- Breach to be kept open (broken) and ammunition/ magazine removed except when in use
- The importance of security
- General respect for the firearm's potential

### **Weapons other than Firearms**

Personnel must only handle weapons with considerable care both for themselves and others' safety. All weapons must be blunted. All handles must be regularly checked to ensure that the blade is firmly held. No weapon should ever be used in a fight that has not been rehearsed.

### **Stage Fights**

Stage fights present a potential danger. The safety and security of the participants must always be considered the most important element in any effect.

Participants in stage fights should wear protective clothing wherever practicable and costume designers should take this into account in their designs.

All stage fights must be choreographed and rehearsed. Unrehearsed sequences must never be permitted. All rehearsals must be supervised.

All rehearsals should be conducted with the weapons that are actually going to be used. Where this is not possible adequate rehearsal time should be set aside to allow for a changeover period.

Participants should run through the fight just before its actual performance or as close to its performance as practicable.

## **Annex D to Drama Compliance Code**

### **Scenery Guidance**

#### **Introduction**

This document is concerned with the hazards and risks associated with scenery. It contains details of common hazards and lists the protective measures which will be necessary to control risks to staff and pupils while moving and handling scenery.

For the purpose of this section the term scenery is used to define any temporary structure erected for a performance. This section does not deal with the actual construction of scenery.

#### **Lifting**

The teacher in charge of the production must undertake a risk assessment of the manual handling tasks within the production. This will include erection of scenery, changing scenery during performances/rehearsals and any manual handling undertaken by the cast as part of the performance (e.g. carrying or lifting another member of the cast).

Particular consideration must be given to the issue of changing scenery as, what may be a simple task in daylight may become much more difficult in low light conditions, especially if it involves co-ordination of several people.

Where possible manual handling tasks should be avoided or the risk of handling injury minimised by appropriate task design or the use of handling aids (e.g. trolleys).

Where it is considered a manual handling operation could lead to a significant risk of injury an assessment of the risk must be carried out.

Students should be given general guidance for correct lifting techniques. See WNAT Manual Handling Guidance.

#### **Moving Flats**

Lightweight flats must be 'run' into position rather than carried, i.e. the rail leading edge must be lifted just clear of the ground and the flat dragged into position with one hand as high up the flat as possible.

#### **Raising and Lowering Flats**

With one person 'footing' the flat, walk it upright.

Lightweight flats can be 'floated' to the ground. Check the floor area is clear. Loosely foot the bottom rail and allow the flat to gently fall away. Heavyweight flats must be 'walked' down.

#### **Fixing of Flats**

Professional methods of fixing flats together using loose-pin hinge, lash-line cleat or stage brace and weight are only suitable on canvas flats or similar lightweight flats. The heavier the flat the more substantial the fixing should be and a combination of the above may be needed.

Inherent stability must be a consideration in the original design.

It is not sufficient to regard two flats forming a right angle as being stable. There must always be a secondary fixing to prevent toppling.

#### **Storage of Flats**

Flats must be stored back to back and face to face.

### **Rostra and Platforms**

Whether rostra need to be clipped or fastened together will depend on the nature of the activity, the type of floor surface and whether the base of the rostrum has a non-slip surface. Whenever energetic movement is planned, rostra must be clipped together. A simple gate hook greatly reduces the chances of rostra sliding apart.

If the design demands that rostra should be built on top of each other to increase the height, then they must always be battened together.

There are several proprietary makes of folding rostra. It is essential that all personnel are trained and that the manufacturer's instructions are followed closely.

### **Scaffolding Structures**

If 3-D scenery is to be built on the stage, e.g. ramparts or a balcony, which may support members of the cast as well, it must be established that:

- the stage can support the additional weight of the structure (e.g. scaffold frame and scenery panels)
- the structure is erected and approved by a competent person

If the scaffolding is to be used for longer than seven days, it will require re-inspection on every seventh day by a competent person.

In addition, the following points must be considered:

- Safety rails must be incorporated into the stage design at the front and back of the platform on a risk basis, for example, where entrances and exits are made in black outs, where the edge cannot be clearly identified and safe system cannot be implemented to avoid falls.
- When using scaffolding it is important to consider at the design stage the nature and type of flooring to be used. Scaffold boards can separate unless they are 'tied in' to the structure and each other. How that is to be achieved without damage to the board requires early consideration if the scaffolding is being hired.
- Additional cross struts may be required if it is planned to use other materials
- Whenever 'amateur' labour has been used to erect a scaffolding structure it must always be checked by a competent person
- A regular check must be made on the structure throughout the run of the performances
- Great care should be taken when taking down a scaffolding structure and it must only be undertaken by or under the supervision of a competent person
- All offstage scaffolding tubes must be picked out with white paint or tape and if necessary padded. This is particularly important on all horizontal tubes.

### **Access to High Platforms**

Backstage access to high platforms should be considered at the design stage. It is a dangerous practice to utilise all-purpose built units on stage while relying on improvised steps and structures backstage.

Steps must be firmly fastened into position, the edge of the tread marked with white paint or tape. Handrails must always be fitted. The potential danger of emerging from bright light into total darkness must always be considered.

### **Scenery Materials**

Highly flammable materials must not be used to construct scenery. If this is unavoidable the construction material should be sprayed with flame retardant. Candles and naked flames must not be used.

## **Annex E to Drama Compliance Code**

### **Miscellaneous Guidance**

#### **Introduction**

This document contains information regarding equipment and activities which do not fall neatly into any particular category, specifically the hazards and risks associated with the following topics:

- Management of Workshops and Preparation of Materials for the Production
- Backstage
- Curtaining
- Sound Equipment
- Stage Extensions

#### **Management of workshops and preparation of materials for the production**

Where materials for the production are being prepared in workshops etc., reference should be made to other relevant Compliance Codes such as the WNAT Design and Technology Compliance Code which details the safety standards that should be maintained for these activities.

The following general points must be borne in mind at the preparation stage of the production:

- Often a large amount of construction takes place on site away from specialist workshops. It is good practice to try to pre-fabricate as much as possible in workshops and then assemble the units on site. It is appreciated, however, that this is often impossible because of the design requirements.
- In these circumstances, improvisation often occurs. While employing a range of materials and processes to achieve unusual or innovative effects is to be encouraged, the potential risks arising out of such activities must always be borne in mind and safe practice must not be compromised.
- Specialist advice must always be sought whenever the use of unfamiliar methods or materials is being contemplated
- Inevitably, as the production process draws towards a performance, a large number of different teams may be working on the same site, often with clashes of interest. This poses its own problems of supervision and safety. It is essential that there is an overall site supervisor who can ensure that one activity is not endangering another. Pre-planning is essential.
- Good housekeeping is essential in the creation of a safe working environment. Drama is a highly disciplined activity, and this should be reflected in the general organisation.
- It is good practice to use a mobile tool trolley to house all the tools in use
- Saw benches and modern light weight mobile work benches are extremely useful as work can be safely clamped at a safe working height
- The working environment must always be well ventilated when using any process or material likely to give off fumes. Particular care must be taken in confined spaces.
- Canvas flats and backcloths must be fireproofed before being erected on the stage.

#### **Backstage**

Backstage should be kept clear of all unnecessary obstructions. When unavoidable they must be clearly marked and brought to the attention of the performers. Routines must be established and maintained, i.e. all items are returned to the props table.

Stage exits must be kept clear of obstructions. Any lobbies or corridors where they form part of the way out in an emergency must not be used for storage. If, because of the layout of the building, storage in these areas is genuinely unavoidable, a clear gangway of at least one metre (3' 3") must be left.

Any matting/carpeting used backstage must be tacked down.

Costumes should be stored in the stage wings. If a quick change is planned, discarded clothes should be returned to the storage area as soon as practicable.

## **Curtaining**

### **Fire Proofing Certificate**

All stage curtaining must be flame resistant either inherently or by being treated with flame proofing solution. A certificate should be provided by the company that proofs the curtain material. Whenever curtains are dry cleaned, they must also be re-flame proofed.

### **Curtain Tracks**

Curtain tracks must be included on a maintenance schedule. If it is ever necessary to move a track great care must be taken that the track does not kink or go out of true.

### **Curtain Winch**

It is good practice to keep the winch chained or otherwise restrict the use of the winch.

In time the cable tends to stretch, and over enthusiastic or jerky winding can cause the cable to jump from the drum and 'bird nest'.

It is important to maintain cable tensions and to prevent the cable kinking.

Forceful use of the winch must never be used to clear a jammed track.

## **Sound Equipment**

Increasingly schools are using a wide variety of electronic equipment in the production of live music. Often this equipment is borrowed from students, its condition is unknown and total reliance is placed upon the student for its correct connection.

The use of good quality equipment, properly connected to a correctly installed socket, must ensure that no risk arises. However, things can go wrong during a performance, e.g. a lead may be strained, or a component fail.

The following extra precautions must therefore always be taken:

- Use double-insulated equipment wherever possible. This means that all live parts are insulated and additionally are enclosed in an insulating housing.
- Double-insulated equipment often has no earth-wire because it does not need it, but you must not assume that equipment is double insulated because it has no earth. Always check with the manufacturer or supplier or check the equipment for the double insulation mark on the casing (a square within a square). Some instruments may not be available double insulated.
- The equipment must be regularly maintained. All broken plugs must be replaced immediately, and cables checked for strain and wear.
- Do not keep changing plugs. Always carry robust adapter leads to allow for different socket systems.
- It is good practice to feed equipment through a Residual Current Device sometimes referred to as an earth leakage circuit breaker.
- Choose a kind that can operate at not more than 30 milliseconds. Check that it has a test button. Operate the test button before every performance.

## **Stage Extensions**

If the production requires the stage to be extended it will be necessary to ensure this is safe. Consider the following points:

- What is the maximum number of members of the cast who will be on the extension at any one time?
- How much scenery will be on the extension?
- Is edge protection possible?

With the answers from these questions it will be possible to write a specification for the required extension, containing such items as size, height, minimum safe working load, edge protection etc. It may be necessary to seek advice from a competent person.

## Annex F to WNAT Drama Compliance Code

### Level 2 guidance checklist for termly inspection

<b>1</b>	<b>Fire Precautions</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Are escape routes and fire exits clear and unobstructed		
	Are combustible materials kept away from heat sources		
	Are emergency exits and escape routes clearly marked and visible		
	Do fire exit doors open easily (i.e. not stiff /broken, or needing a key to unlock)		
	Are all fire extinguishers fully charged, operational and in-date annual servicing.		
	Are all the elements of your fire alarm system (including call points, alarms / detectors etc tested / serviced.		
<b>2</b>	<b>First Aid</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Are first aid boxes correctly and adequately stocked		
	Are First Aiders clearly identified		
<b>3</b>	<b>Housekeeping</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Are waste bins routinely emptied		
	Are floors / corridors clear of rubbish, materials and equipment		
<b>4</b>	<b>Slips / Trips and Falls</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Are floor and stair surfaces / coverings in good condition (i.e. no worn/raised edges, no broken treads on stairs)		
	Are all areas free from trailing cables / wires		
	Are steps / changes in floor levels clearly marked / obvious		
	Are handrails in good condition		
	Are wet floors or spillages dealt with appropriately		
	Are floors free from loose rugs and mats, especially on shiny / slippery floor surfaces		
<b>5</b>	<b>Electrical Safety</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>

	Are there sufficient sockets to avoid the use of adapters or extension leads and overloading		
	Have portable electrical appliances been tested as required		
	Are plugs, sockets, cables, flexes in good condition		
<b>6</b>	<b>Lighting</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Is internal and external lighting sufficient		
	Are lights and diffusers clean and in working order (no missing/broken bulbs/tubes)		
<b>7</b>	<b>Storage</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Is all stored material / equipment stored safely		
	Is all shelving / racking secure		
	Is appropriate equipment available for access to any high shelving or racking		
	Are any hazardous substances correctly labelled and stored in a safe manner		
	Are all hazardous substance storage areas clearly marked as such		
<b>8</b>	<b>Furniture / Equipment</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Is all furniture / equipment safely positioned and appropriate for its usage		
	Are ladders kept secure		
	Are ladders in satisfactory condition and suitable for the tasks carried out		
	Are ladders inspected formally and records kept		
	Are records up-to-date for all equipment requiring statutory inspection (e.g. hoists, lifts, pressure vessels, gas appliances etc)		
	Are any necessary guards and protective devices in position and operating effectively		
<b>9</b>	<b>Workplace Safety</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Are any asbestos containing materials (ACM) in good condition		

	(refer to your site asbestos register for details of any ACM's on your site)		
	Are any necessary legionella checks being carried out / recorded and any remedial actions being undertaken (as detailed in the Legionella Risk Assessment for your site)		
	Where you have safety film fitted to glazing is it in good condition i.e. no cuts, slits, scratches, not bubbling, not milky in appearance and no wavy lines when viewed at 45 degree angle?		
	Is there a comfortable working temperature		
	Are toilet facilities in good working order with hot and cold water available for handwashing		
	Are main access paths kept clear of leaves / snow & ice		
	Are access paths in good condition		
<b>10</b>	<b>Incidents</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>Comments / Remedial Action</b>
	Are all staff aware of how to report an incident?		