

Rules of the Festival of European Anglophone Theatrical Societies (FEATS)

1. Preamble

- 1.1. This document constitutes an addendum to and forms part of the Memorandum of Understanding signed by AATG, BATS, ECC, FEST and NWTC, who have entered into a formal agreement to ensure the continuity of the FEATS festival.
- 1.2. A representative from each of these groups, together with one from the current Organising Committee, make up the FEATS Steering Committee.
- 1.3. The rules governing the functioning and responsibilities of the Steering Committee appear in Clause 9. of this document, which is not made public.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. **FEATS:** the Festival known as *Festival of European Anglophone Theatrical Societies* held in May or June each year;
- 2.2. **Current FEATS:** the FEATS that starts at the moment of closure of the previous FEATS up to and including 12 midnight on the day prior to the start of the following period;
- 2.3. **Steering Committee:** the body appointed to ensure the continuation of FEATS annually and to take whatever decisions or actions it deems necessary to achieve that objective;
- 2.4. **Host Group:** the group responsible for organising the current FEATS;
- 2.5. **Organising Committee:** formed of the representatives appointed by the Host Group to run the current FEATS;
- 2.6. **Participant:** a group which shall be selected to participate in FEATS.

3. Entrance fee and performance bond

- 3.1. Each Participant shall be required to pay a non-refundable entry fee of an amount to be set by the Steering Committee, this sum to be paid to the Organising Committee at the time of accepting the invitation to perform

in the current FEATS. The sum generated by this non-refundable entry fee shall be used to pay for affiliation to the NDFA, the costs of the Newsletter and the Website, travel costs for the Secretary to the autumn and spring meetings of the Steering Committee, and occasional travel and accommodation expenses incurred by the developer of the FEATS Management System.

- 3.2. Each Participant shall be required to lodge with the Organising Committee a Performance Bond (hereinafter “Bond”) at the time the Participant accepts the invitation to perform in the current FEATS. The amount of the Bond shall be at the discretion of the Organising Committee.
- 3.3. The Bond and non-refundable entry fee shall be made by deposit of the requisite amount by the Participant into the bank account designed by the Organising Committee, all bank and/or exchange costs to be borne by the Participant. In the event that Clauses 3.4. and/or 3.5. below have to be applied to the Participant, the Bond or a part thereof will be retained by the Organising Committee.
- 3.4. Any Participant who, after accepting the invitation to participate, notifies the Organising Committee prior to 1st March that it is withdrawing from the current FEATS shall forfeit fifty percent (50%) of its Bond. Any Participant who notifies the Organising Committee on or after 1st March that it is withdrawing from the current FEATS or that fails to perform at the current FEATS shall forfeit one hundred percent (100%) of its Bond.
- 3.5. The Organising Committee shall have the right to withhold up to one hundred percent (100%) of the Bond from any Participant who fails to provide essential information, including but not limited to technical data, programme information, play scripts, by the deadlines defined by the Organising Committee. The amount to be withheld is at the sole discretion of the Organising Committee.
- 3.6. Subject to Clauses 3.4. and 3.5. above the Organising Committee shall return to each Participant its full Bond as soon as possible following the Participant’s performance in the current FEATS.

4. Selection and eligibility of participants

- 4.1. The groups forming the FEATS community shall be arranged in a single list known as the “Selection Table”. The Selection Table shall be maintained by the Steering Committee and used as the basis for selection of participants in accordance with the procedures hereinafter outlined.

- 4.1.1. During or immediately after the previous FEATS the Steering Committee shall update the Selection Table by moving the participants who have just performed, as well as any groups which had dropped out after accepting the invitation to perform, to the bottom of the list, keeping them in the same sequence as before. A Group shall have been deemed to have accepted the invitation to perform upon receipt, within the prescribed time limit, by the Organising Committee of the Performance Bond.
- 4.1.2. As soon as possible after the previous FEATS the Organising Committee of the current FEATS shall contact all groups, requesting them to indicate by a given date whether or not they wish to take part in the current FEATS. Groups shall be informed that failure to respond for three years in succession may result in deletion from the Selection Table. They should also be reminded of the policy concerning original scripts (see Clause 5.13.).
- 4.1.3. At their autumn meeting the Steering Committee shall carry out the maintenance of the Selection Table:
 - 4.1.3.1. the current Host Group shall be moved to the top of the list. This will provide the Host Group with the right to enter its own FEATS if it so wishes or to remain at the top of the list for automatic selection in the following year;
 - 4.1.3.2. groups that have ceased to exist or have failed to respond for three years may be removed from the list;
 - 4.1.3.3. this maintenance may be automated by the FEATS Management System, subject to supervision and approval by the Steering Committee.
- 4.1.4. The Steering Committee may nominate groups for preferential treatment. Preferential treatment shall normally be reserved for groups entering FEATS for the first time but may also be given for other reasons at the sole discretion of the Steering Committee. Groups nominated for preferential treatment shall be moved to the top of the list.
- 4.1.5. Once the list has been updated as defined above the first twelve groups which have confirmed their wish to take part in the current FEATS shall be selected. The next six groups in the list shall be nominated as reserves. The Organising Committee shall write to all selected groups, who shall be asked to confirm their agreement to participate and to pay the Performance Bond as stipulated in Clause 3. above. Reserve groups shall also be asked to confirm their agreement to act as reserve as stipulated in sub-Clause 4.1.6.below.

- 4.1.6. The reserves shall be expected to be in a position to enter the current FEATS if, for any reason, one or more of the selected groups drops out. In the event that a reserve group takes part in the current FEATS that group shall move to the bottom of the list in the Selection Table for the following year, in accordance with Clause 4.1.1. above. Any other group that agrees to take part in FEATS within three (3) months prior to the first night of the current FEATS shall retain its position in the Selection Table for the following year.
- 4.2. Selected groups shall be informed that acceptance of the invitation to participate in FEATS shall be considered full agreement by any Participant, without exception, to perform in whichever slot on whichever evening as allocated by the Organising Committee.
- 4.3. Applications from groups wishing to enter FEATS for the first time shall be directed to the Steering Committee. Such groups shall be encouraged to attend FEATS either as Fringe participants or in the audience prior to participation in the main Festival itself.
- 4.4. Groups based in the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man shall not be eligible to participate. Inclusion of new student groups shall be at the sole discretion of the Steering Committee.

5. Rules of competition

- 5.1. The rules of competition are basic and the Organising Committee shall have the right to add to or amend them.
- 5.2. No group shall be permitted to submit more than one competing entry to the same FEATS.
- 5.3. Each participating group shall present:
 - 5.3.1. a complete play, or
 - 5.3.2. an extract from a play, provided that this extract shall be understandable to any member of the audience who has not seen the full play, or
 - 5.3.3. an alternative form of theatrical performance approved by the Organising Committee.
- 5.4. The length of any play shall be not less than twenty (20) minutes or more than fifty-five (55) minutes, which time shall include scene changes during performance but shall exclude the times as specified in Clause 5.5. below. The Organising Committee can set maximum and/or minimum limits within these parameters.

- 5.5. Time allowed for setting up shall be ten (10) minutes and for striking the set at the end of the performance five (5) minutes. The Participant shall start its performance within one (1) minute of the cue from the FEATS Stage Manager to do so.
- 5.6. Failure to adhere to the time restrictions stipulated in Clauses 5.4. and 5.5. above shall result in the following penalties:
- 5.6.1. Exceeding the maximum length of the play as set by the Organising Committee under Clause 5.4. above:
- up to 1 minute: 1 penalty point
 - 1 minute 1 second to 2 minutes: 3 penalty points
 - 2 minutes 1 second to 3 minutes: 6 penalty points
 - 3 minutes 1 second to 4 minutes: 10 penalty points
 - 4 minutes 1 second to 5 minutes: 15 penalty points
 - more than 5 minutes: disqualification from First, Second and Third Best Play Awards.
- 5.6.2. A performance of less than the minimum length of the play as set by the Organising Committee under Clause 5.4. above or that exceeds the setting up and/or striking time stipulated in Clause 5.5. above:
- up to 1 minute: 1 penalty point
 - 1 minute 1 second to 2 minutes: 3 penalty points
 - 2 minutes 1 second to 3 minutes: 6 penalty points
 - 3 minutes 1 second to 4 minutes: 10 penalty points
 - 4 minutes 1 second to 5 minutes: 15 penalty points
 - more than 5 minutes: disqualification from First, Second and Third Best Play Awards.
- 5.7. Each Participant shall be allowed two (2) hours rehearsal period at a time which shall be determined by the Organising Committee. The rehearsal period may be used by the Participant in any way it deems fit.
- 5.8. The Organising Committee shall appoint a FEATS Stage Manager and an official Timekeeper, whose decisions shall be final and binding on all parties except in the event that authorised personnel from the theatre shall have the right to intervene at any time for the physical safety of all persons within the building for whatsoever reason.

- 5.9. A maximum of five (5) persons shall be designated by the Participant as its Crew to set and strike the scenery. This can include members of the cast.
- 5.9.1. Additional personnel who shall be permitted to enter the backstage area provided their duties so require and who shall not be deemed as part of the Crew comprise:
- sound and lighting staff; and
 - a prompter provided he/she does not contribute in any way, either verbally or physically, to the setting and striking of the set, unless nominated as one of the Crew.
- Other support personnel shall remain in the dressing room during setting and striking.
- 5.9.2. Backstage shall be defined as:
- the acting area
 - the wings and rear stage area.
- 5.9.3. No member of any other group shall be present during the rehearsal period.
- 5.10. The Organising Committee shall send to each participant a full data package (hereinafter “Data Package”), which shall include but not be limited to instructions, information, technical details, dates for submission of documents, rules of competition.
- 5.11. Participants must provide the Organising Committee with two copies of the script of their production by the date indicated in the Data Package and in the version in which it is to be performed, i.e. with any amendments clearly indicated. Only authorised copies of plays will be accepted, i.e. scripts sent by e-mail are not acceptable as authorisation cannot be proved. Each script shall include a list of characters and indicate if any parts are to be doubled.
- 5.12. It shall be the sole responsibility of the Participant to obtain permission for the use of all copyright material, of whatever nature, and to pay any royalties which may be due thereon. If copyright material is altered in any way it shall be the sole responsibility of the Participant to supply evidence that the owner of the copyright has granted permission for the alteration(s). Photocopies of published scripts are acceptable only with the written permission of the publisher. It shall be the sole responsibility of the Participant to supply to the Organising Committee at least two (2) weeks prior to the opening of the current FEATS, performance licence(s)

and any other such evidence of permission to perform and/or use and/or photocopy copyright material. Any group that fails to do so may, at the discretion of the Organising Committee, be disqualified from the current FEATS and may forfeit its Performance Bond in full.

- 5.13. Groups shall be required, on submitting their script, to state whether it is an original script for the purpose of the relevant award. An original script shall be defined as follows:
 - 5.13.1. It shall be written by a member of the participating group.
 - 5.13.2. Its original production shall have had its first public performance within the previous two years or at the current FEATS; and it shall have the same director, set and interpretation that it had when first performed in public, although individual cast members can have changed since that first performance.
 - 5.13.3. The Organising Committee shall be given, on request, any information it deems necessary to enable a decision to be made on the original nature of the script (including, but not limited to: disclosure of any known works using the same or similar storyline, characters, etc.; and previous works by the same author).
 - 5.13.4. The decision on whether a given script is considered as “original” for the purposes of a particular festival rests with the relevant Organising Committee.
 - 5.13.5. A maximum of four original scripts shall be accepted in any single FEATS. If more than four original scripts are submitted, four shall be selected at random by the organising committee.
 - 5.13.6. A group submitting an original script that is refused under Clause 5.13.5. above may replace it by either:
 - 5.13.6.1. a work that is in the public domain; or
 - 5.13.6.2. a work for which royalties must be paid to a third party unconnected with the group.
- 5.14. The Participant shall notify the Organising Committee if any children or young people (under the age of 18) are involved in the production, either on stage or as part of its Crew or support personnel, and shall comply with all Child Protection Policy and Procedures which may be advised by the Organising Committee.
- 5.15. In the event that two or more Participants submit the same play or the Organising Committee shall consider a play unsuitable, for whatever reason, the Participant(s) shall be advised by the Organising Committee

and invited to reconsider the choice of material. In the event that a Participant insist on its original choice, the Organising Committee shall have the right to take whatever decision it considers to be in the best interest of the current FEATS which may include replacing the Participant(s) concerned by reserve(s) and returning the Bond(s).

- 5.16. Each Participant shall be responsible for insuring its own décor, costumes, properties and transport.
- 5.17. No member of a participating group shall be paid for taking part in FEATS.
- 5.18. The filming, video- or tape-recording of any performance, even for personal use, is expressly forbidden during the public performance, as is any photography that has not been authorised by the Organising Committee.
- 5.19. Under no circumstances shall any Participant be permitted to attempt to influence the Adjudicator in any way or to communicate with him or her in any dispute.
- 5.20. In any dispute arising between a Participant and the Organising Committee the decision of the Organising Committee shall be final. The Steering Committee may use its goodwill to resolve differences, but shall not have the right to over-rule the Organising Committee.
- 5.21. Failure to comply with any of these rules of competition could lead to disqualification from part or all of the competition.

6. Presentation

- 6.1. For the current FEATS the Organising Committee shall provide the theatre together with the basic equipment of a well-run professional theatre. The Organising Committee shall not be obliged to undertake provision of properties and/or equipment over and above those identified in the Data Package. The use of all property and equipment including but not limited to scenery, furnishings, lighting, sound, brought by the Participant shall be subject to the approval of the Organising Committee at all times and must comply with all necessary fire and safety regulations as set out in the Data Package.
- 6.2. A Participant shall be obliged to request permission from the Organising Committee if its entry requires special effects such as naked light(s), pistol shot(s) or substance(s) which could cause damage, and/or if it proposes to use, at its own expense, any additional equipment whether electronic or otherwise, and it should obtain the approval of the Organising Committee in advance if the proposed use of such equipment requires the assistance of any persons who are not members either of the participating

group or the Organising Committee. Such approval must be requested by the date set out in the Data Package. The Organising Committee shall advise the Participant in good time if it considers it necessary to disallow or place limits on the use of the proposed effects.

- 6.3. Each Participant shall be responsible for ensuring that its lights are correctly set and the curtain is raised and lowered at the times it requires and that its scenery is correctly positioned and set and struck within the time allocated and that clear and concise cues are given to theatre staff and/or to the relevant Organising Committee personnel in accordance with a previously agreed schedule and/or cue sheet as set out in the Data Package.

7. Awards

- 7.1. All awards shall be given upon the decision of the Adjudicator subject to compliance with the rules of competition, except that relating to Stage Management as specified in Clause 7.3.1. below, for which the decision of the FEATS Stage Manager shall be final.
- 7.2. The marking system shall be agreed between the Adjudicator and the Organising Committee, notwithstanding that adjudicators generally base themselves on the scale set forth by the Guild of Drama Adjudicators.
- 7.3. Presentation of Awards:
 - 7.3.1. The following Awards shall be presented each year:
 - the Founders' Trophy or its replacement for first place
 - the ECC Centennial Cup or its replacement for second place
 - the BATS Trophy or its replacement for third place
 - the Don Luscombe Discretionary Award or its replacement for any aspect of the current FEATS deemed worthy by the Adjudicator
 - the Grand Duchy Award or its replacement for best stage presentation
 - two Blackie Awards or their replacements being one for best actor and one for best actress.
 - 7.3.2. The following Awards may also be presented:
 - the Marcel Huhn/Bruno Boeye Trophy or its replacement for stage management and overall organisation, at the sole discretion of the FEATS stage manager
 - the Verulam Award or its replacement for best original script, at the sole discretion of the Adjudicator; and

- any additional award(s) provided by the Organising Committee, bearing in mind the Steering Committee's reservations regarding any increase in the number of awards to be presented.

8. Fringe Festival

- 8.1. The Organising Committee shall have sole discretion whether or not to run a Fringe Festival. If the Organising Committee decides to run a Fringe Festival it shall invite all groups to participate.
- 8.2. The Fringe Festival shall be non-competitive and shall not be subject to FEATS rules with the following provisions:
 - 8.2.1. Choice of material, décor and/or special effects as mentioned in Clause 6.2. above, which shall be at the discretion of the Organising Committee
 - 8.2.2. Insurance cover as stipulated in 5.16. above.
 - 8.2.3. It shall be the responsibility of the group concerned to obtain required performing rights and to pay any royalties due.
- 8.3. Fringe Festival entries may comprise any form agreed by the Organising Committee including but not limited to drama, music, dance, mime, artistic demonstration in keeping with FEATS.

9. Steering Committee

- 9.1. The Steering Committee shall consist of:
 - 9.1.1. one representative from each of AATG, British American Theatrical Society, English Comedy Club, Frankfurt English Speaking Theatre and New World Theatre Club, who as host groups of previous FEATS have committed themselves to the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding and Addendum "A" and any subsequent addenda thereto; and
 - 9.1.2. one representative from the current Organising Committee.
- 9.2. Each member group of the Steering Committee shall undertake to guarantee a sum of five hundred euros (€500.00) to be used at the discretion of the Steering Committee to assist any Host Group in serious financial difficulties in running the current FEATS. The Steering Committee shall call upon this guarantee solely in exceptional circumstances which could lead to the cancellation of the current FEATS. Unanimous agreement shall be required before the guarantee may be used.
- 9.3. The Host Group shall be the sole body legally and financially responsible for the current FEATS and any profit or loss shall be the full responsibility of the Host Group, notwithstanding Clause 9.2. above.

- 9.4. The Steering Committee shall have sole responsibility for overseeing the selection of Participants as set out in Clause 4. above.
- 9.5. Chairmanship of the Steering Committee shall normally rotate annually. The Chairman shall not be from the Host Group. The Steering Committee shall appoint the Secretary.
- 9.6. The Organising Committee shall write a report as soon as possible after it has hosted FEATS. The report shall be the subject of review and discussion at the Steering Committee's next meeting.
- 9.7. Member groups of the Steering Committee as defined in Clause 9.1.1. above shall host FEATS in an agreed rotation but not to the exclusion of other groups.
- 9.8. The Organising Committee shall choose the adjudicator, who shall be on the list of the Guild of Drama Adjudicators (GoDA) or a similarly registered body.

Signatures

For AATG _____

For BATS _____

For ECC _____

For FEST _____

For NWTC _____

Date _____