

# HKUST Shaw Auditorium Safety Guidelines

Welcome to the HKUST Shaw Auditorium (SA) Safety Guidelines. This guideline is to ensure the safety of all individuals involved in SA events, including faculty, staff, students, and visiting companies. It offers a general overview of potential hazards, along with safe work procedures and technical notes to be followed.

## General Notes to Users:

- 1. Production File:** Start building the Production File from day one by gradually adding all necessary details, such as licenses, method statements, flame-retardancy certificates, electrical safety certificates, temporary structure inspection certificates, insurance certificates, special effects information, TPPE, special power requirements, and production risk assessments.
- 2. Production Schedule:** Identify all the tasks comprising the production schedule for the move-in period. It is crucial to clearly understand the setup's priorities, allocate sufficient time for rehearsals, and plan for the strike-out phase.
- 3. Technical Meeting:** Arrange a meeting in the venue at least [two](#) weeks before the production date. Complete the production risk assessment before this meeting. Resolve technical issues and ensure that equipment certification and testing are complete before the production period.
- 4. Risk Assessment:** Conduct a risk assessment by identifying hazards, assessing risks, implementing control measures, and monitoring their effectiveness. Assign responsibility for overall health and safety or appoint a dedicated person. Everyone is responsible for good health and safety practices.
- 5. Identifying Risks in Stage Performance Activities:** Be aware of high-level risks such as fire, accidents or injuries, stage electrics, handling of props and equipment, stage weight load, movement of pianos, seating safety, working with access equipment, special stage effects, audience safety, and storage of props and equipment. Consider other risk areas such as medical information, off-site activities, floor conditions, physically demanding activities, and hygiene.
- 6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Proper PPE such as gloves, safety glasses, steel-toed shoes, or hard hats must be worn when necessary.
- 7. Authorized Access:** Backstage access is strictly limited to authorized personnel as specified in the contract or agreed upon with the venue. Friends, parents, relatives, and animals are not allowed backstage without authorization from the venue.

8. **Use of Smoke:** A written request must be submitted to the Venue Manager at least 28 days prior to the performance. This will allow for a risk assessment to be conducted and necessary safety measures to be established.
9. **Food and Drink:** Consumption of food and beverages is not permitted on stage unless it is part of pre-approved rehearsals or performances.
10. **Emergency Procedures:** Identify the locations of emergency exits, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and any other emergency equipment within the venue. In the event of an emergency or incident, promptly report it to the venue management or emergency responders. During such situations, it is essential to follow instructions provided by venue staff or emergency responders.
11. **TPPE (For productions open to the public):** Under the TPPE license, the visiting companies/users are required to provide the latest layout plan and truss plan, specifying the size of all temporary structures. Additionally, there may be additional building safety requirements imposed.

### **Technical Notes to Users:**

12. **Technical Staff:**
- Only qualified and trained personnel deployed by term contractor are allowed to operate technical equipment.
  - Bring-in Technical equipment must be inspected and tested regularly to ensure safe operation.
  - A qualified technician deployed by term contractor must be present during all performances and rehearsals.
13. **Scenery and Props:**
- All scenery and props must be designed, constructed, and stored safely.
  - Scenery and props must be secured and stabilized during performances to prevent accidents.
14. **Flooring and Surface Guidelines:**
- Do not drill, nail, or affix any adhesive material, glue, scotch tape, stickers, nails, spikes, tacks, or any other materials on any floor, wall, or fixture.
  - Any carpets or other textile floor coverings on the stage must be fireproof or not readily flammable. Relevant certificates demonstrating fire resistance may need to be obtained.

- Sheet materials such as hardboard or plywood that are placed directly on the structural floor are not required to be treated with flame retardant. However, it is crucial to ensure that they do not cause any damage to the stage floor. If there is a potential risk of damaging the stage floor, the venue management may request the use of floor protection measures.
- If temporary floor surfaces such as sand, soil, turf, wood, chippings, or straw are to be used, certificates indicating treatment against fire must be provided and approved by the venue management.
- The stage floor has a loading requirement of  $7.5 \text{ kN/m}^2$  and can sustain a point load of up to 10 kN, which is measured over a square area with sides of 300 mm. If the weight exceeds these maximum floor loading limits, the user must distribute the weight of any heavy structure or equipment over a larger area. This can be achieved by using battens or other suitable means authorized by the management.

**15. Suspending Items:**

- Ensure that any items hung on the stage bar, such as scenery, decorations, borders, drapery, gauzes, cloths, curtains, and other similar decorative hangings, are within the Safe Working Load (SWL) and properly rigged.
- All these items must be made of non-flammable material or treated with flame retardant, as per the venue's satisfaction, to prevent easy ignition and maintain fire safety standards.

**16. Electrical Equipment:**

- All electrical equipment, including any brought-in electrical installations and equipment, must be properly installed, maintained, and mechanically and electrically safe to prevent electrical hazards. They should also be suitable for their intended use in stage performances, as stated in [Cap.406 Electricity Ordinance].
- Only qualified personnel are allowed to handle electrical equipment.
- Regular inspections and testing should be conducted to ensure the safe operation of electrical equipment.
- Any faulty or damaged electrical equipment must be stopped from being used, reported, and repaired promptly.
- Ensure that proper grounding techniques are used for electrical connections.
- Follow all relevant electrical safety guidelines and codes.

**17. Prevention of Falls:**

- Access equipment such as ladders and scaffolds must be inspected before use.
- Only trained personnel are allowed to use access equipment.

- Ensure that access equipment is in good condition and properly maintained.
- Use appropriate safety measures, such as wearing appropriate fall protection gear, when working at heights.
- Follow safe practices while using access equipment, such as maintaining three points of contact when climbing ladders.

**18. Special Stage Effects:**

- Any special stage effects, such as the use of smoke, naked flames, pyrotechnics, lasers, chemicals for producing smoke, flying humans, or any other special stage effects, must be approved by the venue management.
- Obtain the appropriate licenses and permits for special stage effects as required by local regulations.
- Thoroughly test all special stage effects before setting them up at the venue.
- Only qualified individuals who are trained in handling special stage effects equipment should operate them.
- Follow strict safety protocols and guidelines for the special stage effects to prevent accidents and injuries.

**19. Costumes and Dressing Rooms:**

- Costume changes should only take place in designated dressing rooms or quick-change areas. Corridors and stairwells must not be used for costume changes. This ensures that all passageways remain clear in case of an emergency.
- If real flame is being used, it may be necessary to fireproof flimsy costumes. In such cases, proper documentation must be retained in the production file to ensure compliance with safety standards.

**Venue Support:**

**20. Venue Technical Staff:** Additional staff, including follow-spot operators, and stage crew members, can be provided for the entire production. The cost for these additional staff members will be charged to the user/ visiting companies.

- The venue reserves the right to establish minimum staffing levels for rehearsals and performances.
- All staff provided by the venue will remain under the control of the venue management.

**21. Visiting Companies Using the Venue's Equipment:**

- While the visiting companies may bring their technical staff, the venue reserves the right to assess the competence of the visiting company's technical staff before allowing them to use the venue's equipment or facilities.
- The venue may require certification of competencies from the visiting companies' technical staff.
- Ensure all technical equipment and facilities are used responsibly and according to the venue's guidelines and instructions.

**22. Front of House (FOH) and Others:**

- The use of venue ushers is required for all performances, and an additional charge will apply.
- For more detailed information regarding work at Shaw Auditorium, please refer to the “Terms and Conditions of Use” provided by the venue.

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