



2021 CUPPERS INFO PACK

For College Drama Reps:

- Please make sure this info pack gets to all the dramatically-inclined freshers in your college - it's your responsibility to reach out to them and make sure they're altogether for every stage of the process.
- We'd strongly recommend that you read this pack yourself as well- even if you did Cuppers in your first year it's good to get a refresher on how it all works, and some things may have changed.
- **Please make sure you have 'liked' the Cuppers 2021 Facebook page (www.facebook.com/oudstaffcuppERS) to get general updates.**
- Share this info pack (with the entry form) in your JCRs and ideally get it to the GCRs/MCRs - we'd love to see some postgrad involvement - as well as giving it to interested groups directly.
- If there aren't enough people to form a team, reach out to freshers@tabsareforflying.co.uk and we'll set you up with another college.
- **Entry into Cuppers is £35 per team**, which should come from your college drama fund/ JCR/ other funding source (this event happens every year so your college should be expecting to have to pay for Cuppers!), but this is your job to sort out, not the responsibility of the Cuppers team(s) themselves.
- You should be their first port of call with any questions, but don't be afraid to direct them to freshers@tabsareforflying.co.uk, or to the Cuppers 2021 Facebook page.
- Please let us know as soon as possible if anything in this info pack is unclear or you have any preliminary questions so we can answer these as early on in the process as we can.



Oxford University
Theatrical
and



CUPPERS INFO PACK

INTRO:

Welcome to Cuppers! Please read this info pack thoroughly before embarking on your Cuppers journey.

Drama Cuppers is an annual intercollegiate drama competition run jointly by OUDS (Oxford University Dramatic Society) and TAFF (Designers and Technicians Society) during 5th week of Michaelmas Term. In the competition, teams put on 20-minute productions (either published or student-written) at the Burton Taylor Studio (an intimate black-box style performance space that seats 40). Performances are judged by a panel of OUDS and TAFF committee members, in competition for 'Best of Cuppers' awards. Overall, Cuppers is a great way to get stuck in straight away with drama at Oxford. You'll meet like-minded people across the university, familiarise yourself with a fantastic performance space, and maybe even take home a prize!

To get involved:

1. Gather a group of students from your college (minimum of 2 actors; maximum of 10 people including cast and crew that will be in the venue for the performance). The maximum can include a director, lighting/sound/set designers, stage manager and/or marketing manager. Your college drama rep should be facilitating this.
2. Find or write a script of 20 minutes (this can be new writing, a parody or an excerpt from a play / poem / collection of scenes... it's completely up to you!).
Note - ensure your script is not copyrighted.
3. Complete the attached electronic Entry Form and pay the entry fee. Then fill out your Technical Form once provided.
4. Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse until 5th week!
5. Turn up for your rehearsal and performance slots, support other teams, and get excited for prize-giving!

Your ports of call for help:

- Your college drama rep is there to guide you through Cuppers, so they should be your first source of assistance.
- Otherwise, please email freshers@tabsareforflying.co.uk, or message the Cuppers 2021 Facebook page (www.facebook.com/oudstaffcuppERS).



TIMELINE:

Like the Cuppers 2021 Facebook page to be kept up to date with announcements of workshops, meetings and deadlines. You can always ask your college drama rep about these as well.

2nd Week

- Thursday 21st October: TAFF technical introductory workshop, BT Studio

3rd Week

- 10:00 Monday 25th October: deadline for entry via electronic entry form and payment.

- 14:00 Wednesday 27th October: Directors meeting with Robert Bristow, the BT Studio manager. This meeting will be immediately followed by a Cuppers technicians Q&A, BT Studio - to give you an idea of what you can achieve with your Cuppers tech, and to give advice on how to fill out the tech form (released following the meeting).

4th Week

- 13:00-14:00 Monday 1st, Tuesday 2nd, Wednesday 3rd November: TAFF store open for Cuppers rentals.

- 10:00 Wednesday 3rd November: deadline for electronic Technical Form submission

5th Week

- Sunday 7th/Monday 8th: Technical rehearsals - crucial members of your team attend

- Tuesday 9th - Saturday 13th: Final rehearsal on the day (12:30-14:00) and performances (18:45-21:15)!

- TBC: Cuppers awards ceremony

The 'Best of Cuppers' award categories for drama Cuppers may include:

- Best Marketing
- Best New Writing
- Best Supporting Actor
- Best Actor
- Best Director
- Spirit of Cuppers Award
- Best Graduate Input
- Best Lighting Design
- Best Sound Design



THE RULES:

- ❑ Your performance slot is **up to 20 minutes** (if you run over, the show will be stopped and the next performance will commence- we will be running an exceptionally tight schedule!)
- ❑ You can choose to do either a published script or write your own. If you are looking to use a published script, please ensure that it is **not copyrighted**. There are many rights-free scripts available, but if you are having difficulty with scripts please seek assistance.
- ❑ The entry fee is **£35 per team** and no more than £50 can be spent on the production (**not** including the entry fee).
- ❑ Your college JCR/MCR, arts fund or drama society will fund your show. Your college drama rep should be sorting this out for you, but if you are having difficulties sourcing it, email freshers@tabsareforflying.co.uk and we should be able to help you out.
- ❑ If you cannot find anyone at your college who wants to get involved, email freshers@tabsareforflying.co.uk, and we will put you in touch with another college.
- ❑ There will be an awards ceremony after the end of the competition week. Exact location and time will be released closer to the day. Every production is welcome to come along!
- ❑ You will need to provide us with a list of cast and crew and their respective roles, for the purposes of judging the awards categories and contact tracing. This is usually asked for in your technical rehearsal.
- ❑ The BT Studio will make available a series of standard set items (tables, chairs etc) and you are encouraged to use the TAFF Store to hire any props that you might need - more detail on this later. You can of course bring along or buy any other necessary set or prop items, but be mindful of your production budget (£50) and the regulations outlined in the 'Tech Info' section below.
- ❑ TAFF will organise all sound and lighting - the equipment available will be standard for all Cuppers teams. During your tech rehearsal we will programme the lights with your group's technician. Sound is usually run using the software QLab on someone from the group's laptop. Either a member of your team can operate lights and sound on the night, or the Duty Technician can do this for you- you will let us know this when you complete the Technical Form. (There is also the opportunity for more advanced lighting/sound if you have prior experience - information will be sent separately to your technical contact regarding this.
- ❑ We will need a copy of your team's script (for writing in cues). Again this is usually requested for the tech rehearsal.



ENTRY FORM:

Once you have your team together, you must complete and return the electronic Entry Form by **10:00am on Monday 25th October (Week 3)**. The entry fee cheque for £35 should be made payable to “Oxford University Dramatic Society” (talk to your college rep about getting this), and placed (in an envelope) into the OU DS pigeon hole at the Burton Taylor Studio*. Alternatively, we can accept bank transfers if that’s easier, but please ensure that this is processed by the entry deadline (10:00am Monday 25th October).

*Please post your cheque in a labelled envelope through the post box on the BT Studio door. Or if someone is in the office, leave it in the file holder outside the University Drama Officer’s office. Do NOT hand it in to the Oxford Playhouse box office.

TECH INFO:

- You will receive an electronic Technical Form once we have received your completed Entry Form and payment. This must be completed and returned by **Wednesday 3rd November (Week 4)**. If we do not receive this form, you will not be able to perform.
- You can have a maximum of **ten company members** in the Studio during your show, including your crew. No extension on this is possible due to capacity limits.
- As many of your cast as possible should attend your technical rehearsal, but we require your technician and director to be present as an absolute minimum. Nothing can happen in your performance if it is not approved in the technical rehearsal.
- You may not have food, drinks, or any liquids in your show.
- You may not use smoking or any form of fire in your show.
- You may not use sharp objects in your show.
- Any fabric you intend to use must be brought to your technical rehearsal to be flame-proofed. This fabric will be kept at the Burton Taylor Studio until your show, but no other items can be stored at the BT.
- You must bring all your props to your technical rehearsal, excluding those hired from the prop store, which will be delivered for you.
- Any glass props must be covered in clear sellotape or clingfilm.
- You must be able to carry all your props up the two flights of stairs at the BT Studio.



- ❑ There will be a final mandatory rehearsal on the day of your performance (12:30-14:00) to practice get in and get out. As many of your team as possible should attend.
- ❑ You will have ten minutes before your show to set up your stage and props.
- ❑ Any stage fighting (hitting, shoving etc) or stage falls must be fight-called in the ten minutes before your show.
- ❑ You will have **20 minutes only** to perform. If you overrun, the Duty Technician will stop the show and the next performance will commence.
- ❑ You have five minutes to clear the space after your show ready for the next show to come in.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:

❑ **Sound design**

- ❑ Think about how you can use sound to create an ambience and also for effect in particular scenes. Consider how you have seen sound used in other productions.
- ❑ Software to consider is QLab (for Mac) or Multiplay AV/Show Cue Systems (for Windows). See this link for more information:
 - ❑ <http://www.theatrecrafts.com/pages/home/topics/sound/sound-playback-software/>

❑ **Lighting design** (<https://www.tabsareforflying.co.uk/pages/guides-lx>)

- ❑ Again, consider how you have seen productions use lighting for effect.
- ❑ Think about where each scene is set, and what sort of lighting you would expect that location to have. Consider using lights for effect - for example, if an actor is giving a monologue outside the action of the rest of the play, you might want a spotlight on them.



Available technical equipment

Lighting

- When you arrive for your tech session, there will be a fixed rig already set up with warm and cold washes.
- Additional light fixtures will also be available. The exact rig will be on the Technical Form, but it is likely to include:
 - 5 LED Par Cans which can be used to add colour.
 - 3 profiles set up as spotlights. One focused on centre stage, 2 which can be re-focused or fitted with gobos upon request.
 - Lighting is controlled by an ETC Element lighting desk, and cues will be programmed by the Duty Technician during technical rehearsal.

Sound

- 3.5mm mini jack input for laptops/phones/etc.
- Sound is passed through the mixing desk to front and rear stereo speakers.
- If you are planning to use sound effects in your show, please bring whatever device you plan to use to your technical rehearsal.

Props available at the BT

- 3 black 7'10" x 4' stage flats.
- 1 small square table.
- 1 long desk-like table.
- 3 black folding chairs.

Remember:

- No elaborate cardboard sets due to fire hazard.
- You won't be able to store furniture at the BT, so you should avoid bringing any! The judges will take this, and creativity with what is available, into account.



Props available from the TAFF Props Store

- ❑ You can contact the Hires Managers at [hires@tabsareforflying.co.uk](mailto: hires@tabsareforflying.co.uk). Directions to the props store can be found here: <https://www.tabsareforflying.co.uk/hires>
- ❑ Opening hours for Cuppers are:
 - ❑ Monday 1st November 13:00-14:00
 - ❑ Tuesday 2nd November 13:00-14:00
 - ❑ Wednesday 3rd November 13:00-14:00
- ❑ Props are free to hire.
- ❑ Any props required for Cuppers will be reserved by teams at the props store and then brought over by the TAFF Committee, so they will be ready for you when you arrive at the BT Studio for your technical rehearsal.

Stage

- 40 seat black-box theatre.
- Playing space approximately 7.5m x 4m.
- No wing space or backstage area.
- Black drape backdrop.
- Lighting and sound operated from a box at the rear corner of the theatre.

Some examples of previous show titles are :

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|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| - Waiting for Hassan's | - The Mass of St. Aubricious |
| - Whose JCR is it anyway? | - Cleaning House |
| - 12 Angry Men | - Absurd Person Singular |
| - You May now Applause | - Hamlet in Space |
| - Grimm Tales | - Incomplete Works of Shakespeare |
| - Providence | - Love & Information |
| - No Exit | - A Crime Wave at Blandings |
| - Stockport Syndrome | |



COVID-19 INFORMATION

Certain Covid-19 restrictions are in place at the BT, in order to ensure that performances can go ahead whilst also keeping staff, volunteers, and performers as safe as possible. Please note that every member of your group is required to adhere to restrictions in place.

- **Face masks must be worn at all times**, except when on-stage performing. This includes backstage, in the audience, and before and after performing. This is in line with BT studio policy.
- Capacity limits are in place at the BT - your company (cast and crew) **must not exceed 10 people**.
- Audience numbers are limited - make sure your supporters get their tickets quickly. We will let you know when they go on sale, and once they sell out they are gone!
- Performance slot times are strictly limited to **35 minutes** each (10 minutes to prepare, 20 minutes to perform, 5 minutes to get out).
- Please ask every member of your company to take a rapid lateral-flow Covid test **before** coming to the BT.
- **You MUST NOT come to the BT / any Cuppers meetings if you are experiencing any Covid symptoms or have tested positive for Covid-19 within the previous 10 days.**

WELFARE

Please do not hesitate to contact either OUDS or TAFF welfare reps if you have any questions or queries, for shame-free, confidential advice.

OUDS: Email welfare.ouds@gmail.com or contact the OUDS Welfare page on Facebook (www.facebook.com/oudswelfare). These accounts are not accessible to anyone else, including the wider OUDS committee.

TAFF: Email welfare@tabsareforflying.co.uk or use the anonymous contact form at www.tabsareforflying.co.uk/welfare.



FINAL QUESTIONS:

Please direct any questions you have to your college drama rep (if you don't know who that is, you should be able to find them on the OUDS and TAFF websites), otherwise, feel free to ask us at freshers@tabsareforflying.co.uk or on the Drama Cuppers 2021 Facebook page (www.facebook.com/oudstaffcupperts).

Good luck - we can't wait to see your Cuppers productions!