

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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APPLICATION FOR THE HONG KONG SCHOOL DRAMA FESTIVAL (The Festival)

1. How can schools apply for the Festival?

Application for the Festival starts at the beginning of each school year. The circular memorandum to invite entries to the Festival can be downloaded from the Education Bureau (EDB) website (<http://www.edb.gov.hk/dramafestival>).

Schools interested in joining the Festival are required to complete and return the application form by post to the following address on or before the submission deadline:

Hong Kong Art School

Room 819, 8/F, Youth Square, 238 Chai Wan Road, Chai Wan, Hong Kong.

Late applications will not be accepted (postmark date taken as the date of receipt). Please ensure sufficient postage to avoid unsuccessful delivery. Late applications will not be accepted under any circumstances.

2. Can special schools apply for the Festival?

Any day secondary schools, primary schools and special schools can apply for the Festival.

3. Can a school join with another school to present one play in the Festival?

Two or more schools may jointly present a play. In such case, the schools will be regarded as one unit for awards and cash grant.

4. Can a school apply for more than one language group?

Each school may apply for more than one language group.

A maximum of 555 drama teams can participate in the Festival 2024/25. If the number of school applicants is below 555, each school will have at least one entry in English Group, Cantonese Group or Putonghua Group in the first round of allocation, according to the language group priority stated in the application form by the school. The remaining quota will be allocated to schools applying for more than one language group by an open computerised ballot in the second and third round (if necessary) of allocation. If the total number of enrolling drama teams exceeds the pre-set quota, an open computerised ballot will be arranged. Each school will only participate in one language group.

The ballot (if necessary) will be held at the venue arranged by Hong Kong Art School. Schools may assign representatives to attend the session to witness the process.

Detailed arrangements will be announced on this website (<https://www.hksdf-hkas.com/>).

5. Why is there a maximum quota for participating teams?

With the sponsorship of the Leisure & Cultural Services Department, the performances in the Public Performance Phase will be arranged at the venues provided. Owing to the availability of the public venues, only a maximum of 42 teams can present their works during the Public Performance Phase. Therefore, a maximum of 42 teams will be selected at the School Performance Phase for the public performances.

SCHOOL DRAMA TRAINING COURSE (Drama Training Course)

6. What is the drama training course mainly about?

The drama training course is about theory and practice of drama, including introducing skills of script writing, directing, devising theatre, stage design, stage management, etc.

CASH GRANT

7. How much is the cash grant from EDB for this school year?

To facilitate schools' production of plays in the School Performance Phase, primary and secondary schools will receive a cash grant of \$3,600 and \$3,950 respectively for each drama team. Each drama team invited to perform in the Public Performance Phase will be eligible for an additional cash grant of \$4,650.

8. When will the cash grant be released?

The cash grant for the School Performance Phase and the Public Performance Phase will be released in December and April respectively by EDB.

9. How will the cash grant be released?

The cash grant will be released directly by EDB through the following means:

School Type	Means of Transfer
Government School	EDB Internal Mechanism
Aided School	
Caput School	
Direct Subsidy Scheme School	
Private School	EDB Internal Mechanism / By Cheque

10. What kind of items could be included in the expenditure of the cash grant?

All expenses related to the drama production for the Festival could be included, for instance, setting, cosmetics, costumes, props, equipment, etc. The schools may also consider spending the cash grant on hiring external drama tutor(s) (please see Question 13 for more details). In such case, schools are reminded that adequate resources should still be allocated to the production items mentioned above.

11. Do schools need to submit all the expenses records of the cash grant?

Schools do not have to submit their expenses records of the cash grant to the organiser in general. However, schools are advised to keep proper financial records related to the Festival for internal record and auditing purpose.

12. Do schools need to return the remaining cash grant?

Aided schools, caput schools, direct subsidy scheme schools and private schools do not have to return the remaining amount of the cash grant. Schools are suggested to allocate remaining amount for their production in the next year, or promotion of drama activities in school.

For government schools, they have to use the cash grant for the School Performance Phase in the 2024/25 school year within the 2024-25 financial year and that of the Public Performance Phase in the 2024/25 school year (held in May annually) within the 2025-26 financial year. Please monitor the spending position and ensure compliance with all government and EDB guidelines and regulations in respect of procurement and accounting records.

If a participating school withdraws from the Festival, the cash grant will be fully clawed back.

In the event of special circumstances that the organiser has to cancel the School Performance Phase and/or Public Performance Phase, only the unused portion of the cash grant will be clawed back.

EXTERNAL DRAMA TUTOR

13. What are external drama tutors?

External drama tutors are professionals in drama who can offer training, advice and assistance to teachers and students taking part in the Festival. Please note that the participating schools should contact external drama tutors at their own discretion. The organiser is NOT responsible for any transaction or dispute between the schools and external drama tutors.

14. What is the standard fee for employing an external drama tutor?

Schools which employ external drama tutors are fully responsible for liaising, hiring and negotiating fees with the tutors. No standard rate will be recommended. Payment should be made directly to the tutors by the schools.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE PHASE

I. The School Performance

15. What is the performance duration for each play?

The performance duration is as specified:

Primary Schools	15-20 minutes
Secondary Schools	20-30 minutes

(Performances exceeding the specified performance duration may not be nominated to enter the Public Performance Phase.)

16. Can schools use existing scripts for their plays?

Yes. Schools can write their own scripts, use or adapt existing scripts (Please also see Question 35). For using or adapting existing scripts, the schools concerned should clear the copyright of the scripts before they stage the play.

17. Where should the performance be arranged?

Performances will normally be staged at school halls or activity rooms. However, schools may also consider using other venues e.g. playground, classrooms, other schools' halls, community halls, town halls or civic centres. When choosing the venues, schools should consider if the venues fit in with the needs or the style of the plays.

18. What can we do if the school hall or activity room is unavailable for the performance?

Schools may consider the suggestions as stated in Question 17. Adjudication will be based on the appropriate use of performance venue and it is not a must for a play to be staged at the school hall.

19. What can we do if we cannot arrange audiences during the performance?

It is highly recommended that schools arrange audiences (students/parents) for the performance for the reasons below:

- A. It recognises students' achievements by sharing their work with the audience; and
- B. Drama is a live art form that the presence of the audience greatly enhances the atmosphere and thus the performance of the acting team.

The adjudication decision will not be affected by the presence/absence of the audience, but will be based on the overall performance of the team which may be affected by the presence of the audience as stated in (B) above.

II. The Adjudication

20. Will adjudicators arrive at the performance venue earlier?

Adjudicators usually arrive at the performance venue 10 minutes earlier than the stipulated performance time. Schools are advised to contact one of the adjudicators to confirm details about the performance time, venue and other related arrangements one week prior to the day of performance.

21. What should schools prepare for adjudicators?

Schools must submit two sets of the following documents for the adjudicators' reference on the day of performance:

- A. The script;
- B. The latest cast list & production team list; and
- C. Relevant documentation, e.g. house programme (if any).

22. Do schools need to take video records of the performance and the post-performance talk?
It is recommended that the schools should video record their school performance and post-performance talk for the following purposes:
- A. For the schools' record;
 - B. For sharing with other students (e.g. Broadcast on the Campus TV);
 - C. For possible future use of the Festival, as an exemplar or demonstration of good work; and
 - D. For facilitation of technical support by the Festival Stage Manager if the school takes part in the Public Performance Phase.
23. How will the schools receive the comments from adjudicators?
Schools will receive both verbal and written comments from adjudicators. Verbal comments on the production will be shared with the participants during the post-performance talk. Written comments are recorded in the comment sheet. The comment sheet will be issued along with the school awards at a later stage.
24. What is the difference between the verbal and written comments?
Verbal comments are the immediate feedback from adjudicators, which will be shared interactively with the performing teams in order to guide teachers and students to reflect on their own work and the process of making the production.
The written comments in the comment sheet can be regarded as a more detailed feedback from adjudicators to schools. After adjudicators further consolidate their views and examined the scripts more closely, written comments may include those not yet mentioned in verbal comments.
25. When will schools receive the written comments from adjudicators?
The written comments are recorded in the comment sheet which will be issued along with the school awards at a later stage.
26. When and how long is the post-performance talk?
The post-performance talk will be arranged right after the school performance. The post-performance talk will normally last for about 30 minutes. The schools should make sure that sufficient time is allowed for this valuable sharing.
27. Where will the post-performance talk be arranged?
The post-performance talk can be arranged at the performance venue or other suitable venues (e.g. classrooms or meeting rooms).
28. Who should attend the post-performance talk?
All participants, including performers, directors, designers and the backstage crew, should join the post-performance talk.

III. The Awards

29. What are the adjudication criteria for different awards?

Award for Outstanding Script	Award for Outstanding Stage Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original/adapted/naturalistic/stylised works are acceptable; can be written by teachers, students in the schools or collaboratively by members of the team • Scripts written by external drama tutors hired by the schools and alumni are not considered for awards nomination • Originality of the script (apply to original script) • Adaptation caters for the characteristics of plays (apply to adapted script) • The theme/topics are understandable by the acting team • Complete structure and coherent style of the script • Logic and coherent development of the script • Proper roles description, tension and attraction • Terse lines of plays and match up with the story <p>Good consideration of the characteristics of drama on adapting script (apply to adaptations script)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Originality of overall idea of stage design • Flexibly and creatively use of existing resources • Aesthetic stage design in different aspects • Stage setting/properties/productions fulfill the needs of the works • Styling/costumes/production fulfill the needs of the roles • Lighting and sound effect fulfill the needs of the works • The different aspects of the stage effect work as a coherent whole
Award for Outstanding Director	Award for Outstanding Cooperation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directing works by teachers and students in the schools are eligible for awards nomination • External drama tutors hired by the schools and alumni are not considered for awards nomination • Unique, creative and adequate interpretation of the script/theme • Aesthetic blocking and clear focus • Coherent, appropriate and unique style of the work • Smooth and good control on rhythm of the work • Appropriate use of stage effect, good control of the atmosphere and good casting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good team spirit • Good communication among the whole team • Various departments understand the purpose and needs of the work • Good stage management (e.g. fluency of scene changes) • Good support from the school (e.g. technical support)
Award for Outstanding Performer	Award for Commendable Overall Performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only individual actors/actresses are considered for awards nomination • The actors/actresses shown their understanding of the script/theme • The actors/actresses shown their trust in the role and have a coherent acting • Clear pronunciation and appropriate use of voice • Use of body language and adequately control the rhythm • Adequate emotion expression • Good communication with other actors/actresses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity in the work • The theme/message is well displayed • The acting team forms a good ensemble and achieves considerable skills level • The different aspects in the production achieve considerable standard • The different aspects work as a coherent and organic whole • Works with highest grading are not necessarily nominated to adjudicators' award
Adjudicators' Award	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nominee may have remarkable or unique achievement in one or more than one of the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Artistic level ➤ Creativity ➤ Theme(s)/message sharing ➤ Effort of the team ➤ Ensemble work among teammates ➤ Others

30. How can schools know the results of awards?

All results of awards will be announced on this website (<https://www.hksdf-hkas.com>) after the School Performance Phase. Schools will be notified of their own results by email.

31. What types of prizes (certificates/trophies) will be given for different awards?

Award	Prize
Award for Outstanding Script Award for Outstanding Director Award for Outstanding Actor Award for Outstanding Stage Effects Award for Outstanding Cooperation	Certificates of Merit
Award for Commendable Overall Performance Adjudicators' Award	Trophies and Certificates of Merit

32. Who is eligible for awards?

Only students and teachers from participating schools (excluding external drama tutors and alumni) are eligible for the "Award for Outstanding Script" and "Award for Outstanding Director". Other awards are only for participating schools and/or their students.

33. How will schools get the certificates and/or trophies?

The organiser will notify the participating schools of the results and details of award collection by post in April. The Adjudicators' Award will be presented at the Prize Presentation Ceremony. Other awards (including certificates and trophies) will be collected by the participating schools.

To collect the certificates and/or trophies, the school representatives should bring along the letter of results to the Hong Kong Art School Main Campus at a specified period. Please note that if a school joins more than one language group, separate letters should be presented for collection of the certificates and/or trophies. The school representatives are required to sign an acknowledgement of receipt of the certificates and/or trophies.

34. Will the certificates and/or trophies be sent to schools by post?

To avoid unsuccessful delivery, all certificates and/or trophies have to be collected at Hong Kong Art School Main Campus. Certificates and/or trophies will not be sent to schools by post.

IV. Others

35. Are there any scripts or video recordings of the public performances from previous years for schools' reference?

From 2015/16 onwards, the extract of scripts of the public performances of the Festival can be browsed in EDB website (<http://www.edb.gov.hk/dramafestival>). The uploaded scripts are only for reference purpose. As the scripts are protected by the Copyright Ordinance, consent and permission must be sought from the author before using, performing or adapting the scripts.

Video recordings of public performances from the Festival 2022/23 onwards are also available for participating schools' reference. Schools that would like to borrow the video recordings should fill in the form available in the Download section of this website (<https://www.hksdf-hkas.com>) and fax it to 2865 0371. Confirmation will be sent via email.

PUBLIC PERFORMANCE PHASE

36. How many teams will enter the Public Performance Phase?

A maximum of 42 teams will be selected by the panel of adjudicators and enter the Public Performance Phase to perform at the venues sponsored by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department.

37. Will there be any complimentary tickets for schools?

Complimentary tickets for public performances will be available for participating schools. All the schools participating in the Festival are eligible to apply for the tickets. Application details will be announced at this website (<https://www.hksdf-hkas.com>).

38. Can audiences take photos or videos at the public performance venue?

Photography, audio or video recording by audiences are prohibited at the public performance venues. Video will be taken by the organiser and a record will be given to the respective schools.

39. Will the video of the public performances be shared with the public?

All the schools participating in the Festival can borrow video recordings of the public performances for reference. For details, please refer to Question 35.

OUTSTANDING STUDENT DRAMA TRAINING COURSE (Training course)

40. What is the training course mainly about?

The training course is mainly about basic drama knowledge and skills, with a focus on acting skills. Students will work with the tutors to create a piece of drama work to be presented at the end of the training course.

41. Who is eligible for applying for the training course?

Primary students nominated with "Award for Outstanding Performer" and secondary students nominated with "Award for Outstanding Script", "Award for Outstanding Director" or "Award for Outstanding Performer" are eligible for applying for the training course. All applicants will be invited to attend an audition if the number of applicants exceeds the places available.

42. Do students need to pay for the training course?

EDB will fully subsidise the training course so participants do not have to pay the course fee.

43. How long is the training course?

It is a 50-hour training course. It will be held from mid-July to August.

44. Will certificates be issued after finishing the course?

Certificate of attendance will be issued upon 85% attendance of the course and the recommendation of the drama tutor.

[The End]