

SGCNZ UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO SHEILAH WINN SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL 2023
in association with University of Otago, Ministry of Education, Vega Works, Wellington City Council, Ministry of Youth Development, Creative NZ, Sheilah Maureen Winn Trust, Trinity College London, KPMG

GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSMENT ~ REGIONAL FESTIVALS PARTICIPANTS

If you are reading this, we assume you are going to participate in one of our Regional and maybe the National SGCNZ University of Otago Sheilah Winn Shakespeare Festival. That's great!

To give you an idea of what the Assessors are looking for, we are sharing the information from their Guidelines, so that you are literally on the same page! There is a considerable sense of responsibility felt on their part to make fair and consistent judgements.

Although we stress it is a 'Festival', not a 'Competition', most groups are very eager to be selected to be in the National Festival. The chance to come to Wellington and perform on the prestigious St James Theatre stage and attend talks in Parliament, and visit tertiary institutes, other attractions and performances, enhances this. With our Alumni from the flow-on SGCNZ National Shakespeare Schools Production and SGCNZ Young Shakespeare gaining high visibility through their successful careers, which began through their participation in the Festivals, there are more incentives still to participate and be chosen to represent your Region. Other opportunities and references are regularly provided by SGCNZ.

Please do read carefully and adhere to the Guidelines and Criteria as outlined.

SELECTION

Select: One 5 Minute Scene for the National SGCNZ UOSWSF

One 15 Minute Scene for the National SGCNZ UOSWSF

1 Student for Direct Entry to SGCNZ National Shakespeare Schools Production (NSSP) who is NOT in a group chosen to attend the National UOSWSF and is 15 years or older on 1 March 2023.

If there is no student deemed to be suitable for selection of Direct Entry to NSSP, Assessors do not have to choose anyone. This means that, in addition to the 22 chosen from the National UOSWSF, there will be another space for a student to be selected from that.

The groups chosen for SGCNZ's National University of Otago Sheilah Winn Shakespeare Festival participate in all the various aspects, including Workshops, tours, talks, attend performances and perform their scenes in Wellington over King's Birthday weekend from 1-5 June 2023.

SGCNZ National UOSWSF Attendance:

- Selected groups **must** be willing and available to attend the **whole** National Festival – if they are not, another group must be selected. (However, the Scene Assessors' and NSSP Selectors' Feedback Session on Monday 5 June is optional for the students as, for some, travel home has to start early.)
- We do advise anyone in a selected group, who happens to be cast in a local production over that weekend, to let the Understudy have a chance to perform in their place, so that the person selected for the National Festival can be here. Full attendance is compulsory by all.*
- Groups not selected, who pay to attend the National Festival, naturally get very upset when they see people chosen to attend it, come and go as they choose. The weekend is designed to be a fulsome, enriching package.

Please read the attached SGCNZ Board's Policy paper to see the list of rules which have been developed and tweaked to address various aspects and issues over the years. This includes exactly how many groups you may select, depending on numbers of schools/Homeschool/Community Drama groups and participants in the Regional Festival, and the strict eligibility of the NSSP applicants.

Chair Paul Foster-Bell

Chief Executive, SGCNZ Trustee, Member Shakespeare's Globe Council, London Dawn Sanders ONZM, QSM **M** 027 283 6016 **E** dawn@sgcnz.org.nz

Board Shane Bartle | Johan Barton | Colin Macintosh QSO | Neil Strom | Vivienne Thomson | Bronwyn Turel | Prof Stuart Young

Globe Associate Neil Constable | **Youth Observer** Hakaia Daly | Nishaa Senarath-Dassanayake

Patrons Vice-Regal Patron Her Excellency The Right Honourable Dame Cindy Kiro, GNZM, QSO, Governor-General of New Zealand

Sunny Amey QSM

Assistant to the CEO Finley Duncan | **Financial Advisor** Jan Bergquist | **Accent on Shakespeare Editor** Leigh Bredenkamp

- **Larger Regional Festivals:**

Greater representation at the National Festival is permitted from very large regions.

Policy: If there are either **300 or more individuals** participating,
or more than **15 different Schools/ Homeschool Clusters/Community Drama groups**,
or **50 or more scenes** in a Regional Festival

the Assessors are permitted to select 3 groups to attend the National Festival.

The additional scene may be a 5- or 15- minute scene.

- **Small Regional Festivals:**

Conversely, a limit is placed on very small Regional Festivals.

Policy: In regions in which **only 2 schools/Homeschool groups** are participating with **less than a total of 15 scenes**, only one group may be selected to perform at the National Festival.

This may be either a 5 minute or 15 minute scene.

All schools registering for the Festival are sent the Board Policies, which are also on the University of Otago website on the preliminary page, which they have to accept as having read, before submitting their Entry information and so should have read and become familiar with these rulings.

PERFORMANCE SELECTION CRITERIA

Adherence to the following Criteria is essential:

- All scenes - including if Shakespeare's poems or sonnets - must be performed by **two or more speaking actors**
- **Time – from: curtain opening to closing or, if curtains are open or there are none, walking onto and off the stage, or a definitive beginning and ending.** This includes music/dance introduction/finale if applicable.
Duration must be between:
4 minutes minimum - 5 minutes maximum – **5 Minute Student-Directed Scenes**
10 minutes minimum - 15 minutes maximum – **15 Student- or Adult-directed Scenes**

ANY SCENES OVER THE MAXIMUM OR UNDER THE MINIMUM LENGTHS MUST NOT BE SELECTED BY ASSESSORS TO PARTICIPATE AT THE NATIONAL FESTIVAL

(This is both for fairness sake and because of overall time constraints)

Any group which runs over or under time at their Regional Festival or at the National Festival is ineligible for any awards. However, an individual from one of these may be selected for SGCNZ NSSP if eligible.

- **Timekeeper:** The Timekeeper records the lengths of the scenes throughout the Festival so that the Assessors know which groups are in or out of contention.
- A group does not have to be selected from both categories if there is not one up to a suitable standard – however, this is rare. Rather than being exceptional, a highly innovative or well-conceived performance in a different language could be chosen. Two groups may be selected from the same category, only if the numbers, as stated above, comply with the Board Policies.
- **15 minute Scenes** may be adult- or student-directed (including by non-teachers)
- **5 minute Scenes** must be directed **only** by students
- **One Play or Poem:**
As per the criteria in the Guidelines, content for each performance must be from **ONE play or poem only**. This includes words from the text put to music.
- Scenes enacted from **one poem** or **up to three sonnets** are allowed, if performed as a scene with speaking parts by more than one person on stage at the same time.
- **Monologues** may only be performed within a scene and with other speaking characters in the rest of the scene.

- **Translations of Shakespeare's text into other languages**

This is strongly encouraged. However, the Regional Representative must be advised in advance and the translated script sent in at least 2 weeks in advance to be checked for accuracy by a native speaker or other appropriate person.

School Year & Age Limits:

In response to many enquiries, we have officially opened up the Festivals to students from Year 7 - 13, ages 11 - under 20 years old and still a secondary school age student. For eligibility to be selected for the National Festival, groups including Year 7 and 8s may have no more than 20% of them in the cast.

Variety of Schools:

- We greatly value the involvement of Kura Kaupapa Māori Schools, which increases annually, as does that of Pacific Island and other ethnicities.
- Homeschoolers are another ever-increasing sector. Clusters from them may enter groups.
- Community Groups, with the same age and Year criteria, may now also participate as a group in their own right.
- Some schools may choose to collaborate and present joint performances (up to 4 different schools).

Although it is acknowledged that some schools are very strong, our funders and audiences would like to see as wide a representation of schools/homeschool clusters/community groups as possible in the Regional and National Festivals. Whilst there is no actual Policy regarding this in the Regional selections, the Board is keen for Assessors to try to select groups from different schools. We do not want to put off other schools from participating, which happens if the same ones get through in both categories every year. Note that there is a maximum of 12 entries per school in the Regional Festival now.

Various aspects are therefore considered when selecting, which can include 'raw talent' and 'bravery' eg with different ethnic inclusions. Avoid gimmicky or 'over the top' presentations. If there are definitely obvious choices from the same school, they are still eligible to be chosen.

SGCNZ NSSP DIRECT ENTRY

This category is to enable a student who may be the best actor or excels in their Regional Festival, but is **NOT** in a group selected to perform at the National Festival, to have Direct Entry to SGCNZ's National Shakespeare Schools Production (NSSP). NSSP is a residential intensive week-long course of workshops, rehearsals and culminating performances, which is being held this year from September 24 - October 2 2023 in Scots College in Wellington.

Eligibility for NSSP Direct Entry:

- **Students must be 15 years or more on 1 March 2023**
- **The student must NOT be in a scene being performed at the National Festival**

Re Age: The course is very rigorous and demanding. When younger students used to be permitted to be selected, they found it more difficult to cope in every way...and took the places from students with only one or two more years of schooling left, who could benefit more. If a younger student is excellent, they will have another opportunity to be chosen to attend – whereas older students will not.

The Assessor/s will be given the list of NSSP eligible applicants, as entered on the University of Otago's SGCNZ UOSWSF Registration platform – noting that their date of birth must be prior to 1 March 2008.

It should also be noted that students may not attend the SGCNZ YSC course at Shakespeare's Globe if under the age of 16 – as per The Globe's regulations.

- If there is no outstanding student who is **not** already in a group going to the National Festival, an NSSP Direct Entry selection does not have to be made – instead it will be announced publicly that it gives more chance to the ones at the National Festival to be chosen, as it will make an extra place available for one of them.
- Students may be selected to attend SGCNZ NSSP for a second (or occasionally third!) time.

- However, students who have been members of SGCNZ Young Shakespeare Company (YSC) previously, and are still in secondary schooling, may not be selected for SGCNZ NSSP again. (They may be, and often are, in scenes or direct them, which they are welcome to do, and share their experience!)

ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER

- **Understanding and delivery of the text - ONLY Shakespeare's words are to be used**
Assess evidence of:
 - Comprehension of Shakespeare's text and the essence of what is being conveyed
 - Knowledge of the whole play and faithfulness to the intent of it
 - Intelligent and empathic editing of the text (from one play only) to create a cohesive and cogent performance
 - Articulation and understanding of the words
 - Appropriate portrayal of the characters
 - Clarity of the presentation of the concepts of the play/scenes so they can be understood and enjoyed by the audience
 - Audibility and clear diction - exploration, development and use of the voice as a flexible instrument, remembering to project well and understand that shouting seldom creates the most powerful effect
- **Staging**
 - any context, ethnicity, period, place or style may be used - with integrity, but not simply gimmicky effect
 - other arts forms may be included:
 - * live music, rather than recorded, and Shakespeare's words, are preferred
 - * use original and royalty-free music
 - * if APRA royalty fee applies, it is the responsibility of the group to gain permission and pay to use the music if necessary
 - * dance elements may be incorporated in any style or culture, where and as appropriate
 - preference will **not** be given to thematic, gimmicky productions
- **Interpretation and presentation of characters and their interaction within the play**
 - relates to context, period or place, and has a logic and unity which bind these elements
 - sincerity of interaction and connection between the actors
- **Connection with the audience**
 - embracing and inclusion of the audience, whether it can be seen or not
 - performers may be placed in or move through the audience - NB safety is paramount – adherence to Health and Safety briefing specifications is essential
- **Vitality and integrity of performance**
 - the vitality of the performers, the freshness, use of imagination and appropriateness of the rendering of the performance
- **Sincerity of presentation**
 - this includes how the scene/s is/are performed and if the style could be sustained in a production of the whole play
- **Design and use of the space**
 - as there is only a 2 minute set up and strike time, any physical set must be minimal
 - design of the production is about use of dimensions and space rather than actual set
 - maximising use of the stage area, effective groupings and varying physical levels are taken into account
 - the Stage Manager must be advised of any objects being thrown on stage or into the wings
 - there are strict guidelines re no naked flames, liquids – water, fake blood use, paint... (water-soluble body paint which must be cleaned off the stage immediately after the scene performance if necessary)
- **Overall impression** – the impact of the performance, the intelligence of its quality, whether it will linger in the audience's memory
- ***Selection Form***

To ensure no errors are made in the selection and communication as to which groups have been selected for the National Festival, including the specific scene they performed, and the SGCNZ National Shakespeare Schools Production Direct Entry student has been selected. The announcements will be made at the Award and Certificate Presentation Ceremony at the conclusion of your Festival.

- *Awards & Presentations*

If applicable, Regional Representatives may have secured some local awards to be assessed as well.

The Regional Representative will arrange for an Assessor/s, and /or a local dignitary, to present the Participation Certificates to a representative of each School/Homeschool Cluster/Community Drama Group and all the Student Directors, and Award Certificates to recipients of these (if there are any).

While previous SGCNZ YSC members may not be selected for NSSP again, they may receive awards and be in or have directed scenes selected for the National Festival.

At the National Festival, there are no 'winners' - various areas of excellence and expertise are acknowledged through a variety of awards.

Feed-back

- Assessors are required to write a brief written report each performance. These will be sent to you by your Regional Representative within a month following the conclusion of the Regional Festival. This means those selected for the National Festival will receive them prior to King's Birthday, in time for them to take note of any advice given. Constructive criticism, as well as positive endorsement, is valuable.

Assessors **may** choose to discuss the performances with the students and/or teachers if they wish. Permission for contact with the Assessors will be advised, if they agree, through each Regional Representative or the CEO, as is applicable.

The Assessor/s' ultimate recommendations and decisions are binding.

SGCNZ's new Vision and Objectives

VISION:

To transform lives by mentoring potential through experiencing Shakespeare

OBJECTIVES:

Hauora – to build resilience and wellbeing

Atawhai – to cultivate empathetic communication

Mana – to enhance confidence with gravitas

Whanau – to connect people, regionally, nationally, and globally

Tautoko – to include and unite people from diverse backgrounds

Pūkenga – to develop life skills

Manaaki – to provide opportunities for personal and professional development

Mahi hou – to inspire creativity and innovation

FAQs

Please note there is an FAQ section on our website – sgcnz.org.nz/FAQs. It is worth reading this in advance to ensure you have all the same information that the students do!

FACTS re the FESTIVALS

Please absorb the following notes for your information when speaking to the media, individuals or writing articles about your participation (errors and misconceptions are frequently made in relation to these):

- The Festivals were initiated in 1992 by, and have always been a corner-stone activity of, Shakespeare Globe Centre New Zealand, making this year's, the 32nd year of them
- The first Regional Festivals were called the SGCNZ Secondary School Shakespeare Festivals
- The late Sheilah Winn, through one of her Trusts, was a sponsor of the first National SGCNZ Festival . In her honour, we named it, at that time, the SGCNZ Sheilah Winn Festival of Shakespeare in Schools
- Whilst we have been given some funding from this source ever since, the amount does fluctuate and now makes up only about 1,5% of the funding we require each year
- At the Sheilah Winn Trust's request, its grant is used towards assisting with some of the Regional Festival funding which SGCNZ offers as 'seeding money' to each of the 24 Regional Representatives, who 'micro manage' their Regional Festival to the blueprint of the CEO, who does the macro-management
- The University of Otago 17 years ago generously came on board as a considerably more significant funder, and requested the shared naming rights – hence 'SGCNZ University of Otago Sheilah Winn Shakespeare Festival'
- As these two funders alone cover just over 15% of the total costs of the Regional and National Festivals, a large number of other funders are sought by SGCNZ each year in order to facilitate the Festivals
- As all know, the Ministry of Education has 'stepped into the breach' – we are **very** grateful. It is a one-off contract, not long-term funding. We will be seeking feedback to include in our longer- term tender in due course.
- The Ministry of Youth Development funding contract is currently only till the end of April. Applications to new MYD schemes will be made early this year.
There is no guarantee these will be successful. It is vital that all participants between 12 and 24, in whatever capacity, complete the very short MYD Survey (takes 3 mins) about their participation in the Festivals.
- This also encompasses the younger directors post-school age, and crew, front of house and volunteers
- Please do complete the MYD's Survey **must** be completed (obviously with positive overtones) by 3500 young people in this age demographic. The Reg Reps have the Survey details; they are also in the programme and on the SGCNZ and University of Otago websites.
- It would be helpful if you can push the above and the fact that we **always need financial support** – sponsors, donors, 1000 Club members (\$1000 once or annually), donors by regular Automatic Payments, Payroll Givers,...
- Neither the Sheilah Winn Trust, nor University of Otago have administrative roles in the Festivals – it is all done by SGCNZ – which has only 2 modestly paid staff - the CEO and a part-time Assistant to the CEO - plus, thankfully, the 24 wonderful Regional Representatives, volunteers, interns, and those willing to be involved as Assessors regionally to help encourage and advise the enthusiastic and talented rangatahi of NZ!!
- SGCNZ brands itself as an organisation which mentors potential and enhances pūkenga through experiencing and the performance of Shakespeare
- We aim to enhance literacy skills, foster leadership, nurture team players, encourage creativity, collaboration, innovation and self-assurance, so replacing anxiety and depression with feelings of self-worth and confidence in their ability to contribute to society and the workforce in vibrant, entrepreneurial and imaginative ways
- We have an express objective to provide opportunities to students from low socio-economic sectors. We do not charge students to participate, eliminating barriers to them and to tautoko to ensure inclusivity of all gender, ethnicities, migrants, refugees and sectors .

- Many Alumni do become stage and screen arts practitioners of various genre including roles 'behind the scenes', while others enter un-directly-related professions, and are excelling in a wide variety of positions – including Prime Minister Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern and Chris Bishop MP (Shadow Leader of the House)
- Then there are those who contribute to the workforce in myriad different ways, benefitting from the transferable skills learnt

Thank you very much again for participating! Please do contact me if you wish to clarify anything.

Wishing you an inspiring and enjoyable time!

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7.01.23