

ACTT
Code of Practice
for ACTT Theatre Awards Judges
(amended, 2 January 2017)

Auckland Community Theatre Trust runs a community theatre awards competition each year. Community theatre groups can join ACTT and opt to enter their productions into the competition. Three judges view each of the shows entered, compile a list of nominees each year and select a winner in each category.

When attending performances and during their tenure, judges are the face of Auckland Community Theatre Trust and are therefore representing the goals and ideals of the organisation. Judges must conduct themselves professionally at all times when dealing with our member societies and must not do anything to damage the reputation of ACTT or our Theatre Awards competition to anyone including our members, our sponsors or the wider general public.

For the purpose of this Code of Practice, the term 'Committee' refers to the committee of the Auckland Community Theatre Trust. The term 'judge' refers to any person officially appointed as an ACTT judge by the Committee, any person standing in as a temporary judge, and the person appointed as ACTT Convenor of Judges by the Committee.

INVOLVEMENT IN SHOWS

It is expected that judges will not be directly involved in any show entered into the competition during their tenure. This includes involvement on-stage, off-stage or as a member of the production team. Judges may only be involved as a producer (i.e. as a member of the producing committee) or may be rostered to work in the front-of-house during an entered show.

Should a judge be directly involved in a production, that conflict needs to be identified to the other judges and the ACTT committee. They will determine the appropriate course of action which will likely include the judge involved being ineligible for nomination for their role, or the production being removed from all categories of the competition.

SCHEDULING OF SHOWS

Entry into the competition must be by 28 February each year. Entries received by this date will be compiled and distributed by the Entries Co-ordinator, and will include performance dates and booking information. Shows with seasons beginning prior to 28 February will be circulated separately.

After 28 February, should a society wish to add a show, or should a new society join ACTT, any additions to the schedule must be emailed directly to the Entries Co-ordinator and approved unanimously by the judges.

If a society wishes to withdraw a show from the competition, the society President or Secretary must contact the Entries Co-ordinator in writing, officially withdrawing the show. This must be received by the Entries Co-ordinator before the closing date of the last production scheduled in the competition.

READING COPIES OF SCRIPTS

Some judges may want to familiarise themselves with the script of a play before viewing a performance. Societies may oblige, at their discretion, and provide reading copies of scripts to those judges who want them. There is no obligation for judges to read scripts prior to viewing performances, nor for societies to provide them.

If a judge would like copies of scripts provided, they need to request this from the Convenor at the start of the year. The Convenor will forward this request on to member societies. The societies are then responsible for mailing the scripts to judges in a timely fashion prior to each production. The judges are required to return scripts to the box office as they collect their tickets for the performance they are judging.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN JUDGES AND SOCIETIES

Judges may not make direct contact with member societies or individuals within those societies in the course of their role as judges, unless it is regarding the booking of their complimentary tickets or informally while attending a performance. All other official communication should be made through the Convenor of Judges – this includes requests for scripts.

It is not appropriate for judges to comment on the competition, or shows entered, on social media. This includes posting comments wishing casts well for their season, “looking forward” to seeing particular shows, or commenting after seeing a show.

Societies and individuals from member societies must not have communication with any judge regarding the judging process, plays entered, nominations or winners. This includes any request for feedback. All such communication should be addressed to the ACTT Committee. Any society or individual attempting to unduly influence the judging process may have one or more of their plays removed from the competition at the discretion of the ACTT Committee.

CATEGORIES

Award categories are set by the Committee prior to the first show being judged each year. They are:

- Best Costume Design
- Best Properties
- Best Set Design
- Best Lighting Design
- Best Sound Design
- Best Stage Management
- Best Male and Best Female in a Minor Role *
- Best Male and Best Female in a Supporting Role *
- Best Male and Best Female in a Leading Role *
- Best Ensemble
- Best Director
- Outstanding Comedy **
- Outstanding Drama **
- Best Overall Production ***

Notes:

* Minor Roles, Supporting Roles and Leading Roles are mutually exclusive and the same actor-role cannot be nominated in more than one of these categories. It is the judges’ combined discretion as to which category an actor-role fits into.

** Nominations for the Outstanding Production awards are mutually exclusive and the same production cannot be nominated in both of these categories. It is the judges’ combined discretion as to which category a production fits into. These are the ‘runner-up’ awards. Neither winner of Outstanding Production awards can win Best Overall Production.

*** Best Overall Production will not have a nomination list, but will typically be awarded to a show nominated for one of the Outstanding Production awards. This award cannot be won by either of the winners of the Outstanding Production awards.

If they feel they are unable to present sufficient nominees to make an award, the judges may ask the Committee, through the Convenor, to withdraw the category for that year.

If there are more than three productions entered that the judges decide are classed as ‘musicals’, they may ask the Committee, through the Convenor, whether an additional category – Outstanding Musical – may be awarded. Otherwise, judges need to determine whether a musical fits better into the Comedy or Drama categories.

Judges may not confer any other awards on individuals, productions or societies.

ATTENDANCE AT ENTERED SHOWS

Societies need to provide each judge with two complimentary tickets to the performance of the individual judge’s choice, and a complimentary programme. Booking offices must be made aware of and able to issue the judges’ complimentary tickets otherwise a separate booking contact for judges needs to be provided.

Judges will make their own bookings for entered shows, and must notify the Convenor that they have booked to see the show.

Should a judge be unable to see a show, they must notify the Convenor as soon as possible and preferably before the end of the show’s season. If a judge has already booked for the show but is unable to attend, they should notify the booking office and Convenor as soon as possible.

A judge failing to attend two or more productions may be dismissed or replaced at the discretion of the ACTT Committee.

NOMINATIONS LIST

Following the season of the final play entered in that year's competition, judges must compile a list of 4-8 nominees in each category and select one winner. It is collectively up to the judges how they come to this decision, but all nominees must be approved by at least 50% of the judges.

If the nomination list for any category will be longer than 8 or shorter than 4, the judges should seek the advice of the Convenor before making a final decision.

The nominations list and winners list must be in the hands of the Convenor by the first week in January.

AWARDS RATIFICATION

Once the judges have compiled their final list of nominees and chosen a winner in each category, the nominations list must go before the Committee for ratification before being distributed to societies and posted on the website. It is preferable that this be done at a meeting, but may also be done via e-mail if time is critical. The nominations list must be ratified by a simple majority of the Committee.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Where a judge has any conflict of interest (e.g. a personal relationship, an employment situation), other than simply being a member of the society producing the show, they must formally declare that conflict to the other judges and the Convenor. It will then be up to the judges to decide how they will resolve that conflict.

Should any undeclared conflict of interest be discovered, the Committee may, at their discretion, remove an individual or production from the competition or withdraw any affected category from the Awards entirely for that year.

COMPLAINTS PROCESS

Complaints regarding the processes of the Theatre Awards competition must be forwarded to the Committee in writing. If the complaint is upheld and involves a breach of the Code of Practice, the Committee will take all possible steps to maintain the integrity of the competition and pursue the aims of ACTT. If the subject of a complaint falls outside the Code of Practice, the Committee may amend the Code to address the issue in future.

Complaints that are not directed to the Committee in writing will not be addressed.

PRIVACY

It is expected that judges will provide postal and physical addresses, phone and e-mail contacts to the Convenor once appointed.

Postal addresses may be sent by the Convenor to societies for those judges who wish to receive reading copies of scripts.

No other judge's contact information, including e-mail addresses or phone numbers, will be given out except with the express permission of the judge concerned.