

## Equal opportunities policy

The South Devon Players are committed to offering equal opportunities for people to become involved in theatre and film productions regardless of background, race, religion, or gender. Due to the nature of historical theatre and film which is our primary focus, – we may have to adhere to character requirements dictated by script or story (gender, age, racial appearance, mobility), there may be limitations imposed upon us by venues (accessibility or age limits), or there may be issues regarding team work, general behaviour, etc, set out below.

These rules apply both to any time the group are working together at rehearsals, shows, or social events, as well as in online spaces (discussion, research, preparation for shows, or simply socialising.)

### Religion

There is no bar to anyone of any religion becoming involved in the group.

### Gender

Gender is no bar whatsoever from becoming involved in the group. Please note that some roles may be limited by script or story to a specific gender.

### Race

People of all racial appearances are welcome to auditions for shows. In many cases racial appearance will not preclude being considered for any role, unless a character's racial appearance is specifically dictated by a script or historical setting. (if in doubt please check with the show director.)

### Age

We tend to be a theatre group for people over the age of 16, however, you are welcome to audition for any role for which you may be suitable. We require that the parent(s) or guardian(s) of anyone aged under 16 in the group, supply written permission for the child to be involved in the show, and that they attend rehearsals/ shows with the child. We may however cast someone, taking age into account, for a specific character. If, for example, a character makes an adult innuendo in the script, we are unlikely to cast someone under 16 in that role, or in a scene with children, then someone of 60 is unlikely get cast as a 10 year old!

### Physical ability/ illness

Physical ability does not automatically preclude being involved in a production, however it may be taken into account if specific movement required by the script is not possible for the person auditioning, or if the venues where we perform have access issues. If it is an issue such as not being able to stand for a long period of time, but the scenes in the show allow for a chair, it may be possible (at the directors discretion) to make provision. If in doubt always speak with the show director.

If you have a long-term physical illness, this is unlikely not be an issue, as long as you are able to attend the rehearsals and shows. Please, however, make sure that the group committee and director are confidentially aware of the nature of the illness, in case of emergency.

## Alternative needs/ mental health

This is unlikely to preclude someone from taking part, with the requirements that the person must be able to memorise a script and actions, perform a convincing role in a high-quality theatre or film performance, attend rehearsals and shows on time, comprehend discussions, act upon direction, communicate clearly in voice, expression, and body language, and be able to function sensitively as a team-member, with full regard to traditional social niceties, as is required of all involved in the show. They must not cause distress, discomfort, distraction, fear or harm to others.

If behaviour deemed to be problematical occurs, the same disciplinary process as applied to all other members, will be adhered to. If the incident is a minor issue, the director and/or committee reserve the right to speak with the person involved and issue a formal warning. If the problematic behaviour continues the member may be required to leave. If the issue is deemed to be serious (involving physical harm, harassment, threats, or anything sexual, for example) or affecting the professionalism, rehearsal process, and/or audience enjoyment of the theatre production itself (severe regular lack of discipline, causing distraction, etc) then the director/ committee reserve the right to immediately require the member to leave the group, and reserve the right to contact law enforcement authorities.

We have had several people seek to join us but due to conditions linked to anxiety and panic attacks, not wish to perform in public or on camera, or attend rehearsals. However, due to the nature of what we do, we can only consider people who are able to participate in performances and projects.

## Criminal records

We do not usually ask new members about any previous criminal records, although if someone is helping with tasks such as cash handling, working with children, peoples personal details, etc, we reserve the right to require references (which would be followed up by the committee) and /or DBS clearances (as applicable).

Members are expected to behave in a socially acceptable manner at all times, with full regard to the social niceties, as is required of all involved in the show. They must not cause distress, discomfort, distraction, fear or harm to others.

If behaviour deemed to be problematical occurs, the same disciplinary process as applied to all other members, will be adhered to. If the incident is a minor issue, the director and/or committee reserve the right to speak with the person involved and issue a formal warning. If the problematic behaviour continues the member may be required to leave. If the issue is deemed to be serious (involving physical harm, harassment, threats, or anything sexual, for example) or affecting the professionalism, rehearsal process, and/or audience enjoyment of the theatre production itself (severe regular lack of discipline, causing distraction, etc) then the director/ committee reserve the right to immediately require the member to leave the group, and reserve the right to contact law enforcement authorities if the nature of the problem is deemed to require such a response.