

PRODUCERS' GUIDE

Helpful documents to refer to:

[ADC Theatre Production Handbook](#)

[Corpus Playroom Production Handbook](#)

[ADC Publicity Guide](#)

These are all in this [Google Drive](#), which also has all the other helpful forms linked in this document.

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What does a producer do?

- Producing in Cambridge Theatre is quite different to what producing in the 'real world' is like, but it also is not as hard as it looks! There's quite a little routine you can get into once you know what you have to do.
- Typically, a producer looks after organising a prod team, finding rehearsal rooms, publicity, the show's budget, and liaising with the theatre, and generally keeping everyone and everything organized and on track.
- It is quite common for larger shows to have an Assistant Producer – this can be a great way to get involved if you've never produced before, and it will depend producer to producer what they will ask you to do.
- Having said that, you don't need any experience to produce! The only way you'll get experience is to give it a go, and there are always people such as the CUADC Producers' rep (producer@cuadc.org) and the ADC Management to give you help for anything you have questions about.

Applying to produce

- Keep an eye out for vacancies on [Camdram](#) and the [Cambridge Theatre](#) Facebook page
- More often than not, a director will pitch a show and then advertise for a producer if they are successful. The next term's season is usually confirmed around week 6, so keep an eye out from then for shows looking for producers
- Shows that aren't part of the ADC's season may advertise at different times, so it is helpful to keep checking regularly for opportunities

Budget

Applying

- Keep an eye on camdram, especially towards the end of term, when funding bodies will start to open applications for the following term
- You can see a list of current funding bodies and their contacts [here](#):
- If you want to know more about funding bodies, or are struggling to find funding, email Ellie, the ADC Production Manager, ellie@adctheatre.com, and she is always able to help

Working out a budget

- The ADC has a resource [here](#) to suggest possible budgets
- If you are funded by CUADC, you will attend a funding meeting with the society President and Treasurer shortly after receiving your funding offer where they will give you a budget breakdown and contract. If you feel that some departments do not have enough money, it is always worth asking there for more, which will often involve moving around money from other departments.
- Things like set, props, and costume are obviously variable from show to show, but it's just important when applying for funding that you are able to justify the budget you are asking for – say, you need a specific piece of costume that will have to be bought/hired at an extra cost.
- Skip charge – this is charged by the ADC if you use the skip at the theatre to get rid of any set etc. from the show. A full skip costs £390, and you are charged in increments of 10% (so if you used 40% of the skip you'd be charged £156). An ADC mainshow that doesn't use the set for any of their set, but uses it to empty the stage management bin and other small things over the course of the show will typically be charged 10%. It's worth noting for other shows that don't have a big set (particularly at Corpus) you probably don't need to factor skip charge into your budget
- Insurance charge – some funding bodies have their own insurance, which for societies such as CUMTS and CUADC includes ensuring everyone involved in the show is a member of the society to be covered by the insurance. If your funding body doesn't have insurance included (most college societies do not), your show will be charged £50 to be added to the ADC's Public Liability Insurance. This will be added to the show settlement.
- Music PRS – music that is less than 70 years old is still in copyright, and most of this music is copyrighted by PRS (Performing Rights Society). You have to fill in a

form which can be found [here](#) to list which copyrighted music will be used in the show, and how

- Sundries – these are things like screws, tape, cable ties, and anything else you may get from the theatre. These can really add up but you can always ask management at any time how much your show has spent on sundries so far
- Welfare – particularly for an ADC mainshow, it is worth having a £20/30 welfare budget for prod team to buy breakfast during get in/food for an overnight because they are going to be working hard!
- It is also worth bearing in mind how many tickets you'll have to sell for your show to break even - the ADC has a resource [here](#) where you can plug in the various details of your show and they'll tell you your breakeven point (taking into account theatre hire and ticket commissions)

Reimbursements

- Remind your cast and crew members to keep the receipts for anything purchased for the show as these will be required to claim the money back from the funding body once the show is finished
- If you are funded by CUADC you will need to fill out this [expenses claims form](#) which has to be signed by the producer and the claimant.
- Other funding bodies typically ask you just to send receipts over to the treasurer once the show is done
- Some funding bodies will ask you to wait until they receive the show settlement, which shows how much they have made (or sometimes lost!) from the show before reimbursing you, but you can always ask for your money if you need the money back that you spent on a show
- It is worth, however, reiterating to your team that they should stick within the budgets given to them, as it is much harder for funding bodies to reimburse them if they go over. You should tell prod team that if they do feel their department does not have enough money, they should talk to you first before spending any more so that you can communicate this with the funding body.

The show settlement

- Shortly after the show finishes, you will receive a document with ticket commissions from the ADC's box office administrator. This shows how much your show took from tickets, and from that how much the theatre will be taking in theatre hire and ticket commissions.
- Theatre hire is 37% of box office takings plus VAT, and ticket commissions are 9% of box office takings plus VAT
- The show settlement will be sent by the theatre's operations manager and is usually sent around 4 weeks after the show's end, although sometimes it can take a lot longer
- The settlement contains all the charges the theatre is taking (so the theatre hire, ticket commissions, and also anything you bought from the theatre such as sundries), and then it will tell you the total amount the show made which will go to the funding body.

Production teams

Finding a production team

- To add a production team ad to Camdram, you will need to be made an admin of the show, which you can do either by asking a current admin to add your CRSid under the 'Edit the Show's Admins' section, or you can request to be an admin at the bottom of the show's page
 - To add an advertisement, log in via Raven and go to your show's page
 - At the top in an orange box there will be options to open several advertisements
 - Select the relevant one (usually 'Edit/Renew technical team advert') and fill in the required information, including an email address for applications and a deadline
- Note - if you are funded by CUADC, you need to have applications open for at least a week
- When sending out rejection emails, it is useful for the unsuccessful applicants if you offer them feedback.
- Once you have confirmed your production team, add them to your show's camdram page with their permission
- Some roles are more difficult to find than others. If you are ever having difficulty filling your prod team, it is worth getting in touch with the relevant rep on the CUADC committee who will often be able to help you find someone
- It's also worth stressing that most of the time people don't need any experience to do a role – the ADC is always there to offer the necessary training, so you should encourage everyone to apply!

Meetings

- It's worth managing your production team by having regular meetings, either with everyone or with individuals. This is also a great way to make sure everyone knows each other!
- Other necessary technical meetings include the paper tech. This is a meeting in which the stage manager (and deputy stage manager if you have one) discusses lighting and sound cues in addition to scene changes with the lighting designer and the sound designer. The director should be in this meeting too.
- Liaise with the relevant crew members as to when suits them best, but usually the paper tech happens a week or so before the tech run. Depending on the nature of the show, these can take several hours, or they can be very quick and sometimes cues for smaller shows can be worked out at a tech run.

Rehearsals

Scheduling

- It varies from show to show whether you or the director organise rehearsals, but a good way of keeping track of everyone's availability is to use [calltime](#)
- On the homepage, click 'Create a new show', put in the details, then click on the 'Actors' tab to add people.

Room bookings

- As producer, it will usually be you who organises room bookings for rehearsals.
- To book rooms in the ADC or Corpus, use roombooking.adctheatre.com
- If you need to book a room before 11am (and have someone who is keytrained!), email Ellie to book it for you
- Some colleges have good rehearsal space. There's a google doc here with a big list of college rooms, including whether they are accessible, and how to book them [here](#)

Theatre deadlines

- When you receive your welcome email from Ellie, you will also receive a production schedule. This includes deadlines from the theatre that you are expected to meet. It's not the end of the world if you're a bit flexible with the deadlines, but it does make things easier if you stick to the deadlines and plan around them.

General information form

- The general information form needs to be filled out no later than six weeks before the start of your production. It can be found here for the ADC, and here for Corpus.
- This form asks for some key information about your show, including what technical aspects from the theatre you require, any furniture you may need, and any licenses the show may require
- It is worth making sure you reserve any furniture you think you may possibly need so you don't find out you need it and another show has it that week! If it is a case of two shows reserving a piece of furniture, it is first come, first served for who gets it, so that's another reason to fill out the form early.
- You can see Section 3 of the production handbook for more information on licenses, but these include special effects, performance rights, and the involvement of under 16s in the show

Initial meeting with the production manager

- This meeting is useful to discuss your initial ideas and plans for the show with Ellie, so the theatre are aware of what to expect. You can also go through any ideas you have for publicising the show, and how the theatre can help

Risk Assessments

- Depending on the scale of the show, your involvement in the Risk Assessment varies. For example, for smaller Corpus shows without a stage manager, this will be your job. This just involves listing any risks that the show may pose, and how these will be mitigated. You have to get the risk assessment signed off by the production manager!
- For ADC shows, the Risk Assessment has multiple sections that are looked after by the technical director and stage manager. The production manager will contact these members of your team directly about these sections, but you should check up to make sure everything is on track.

Technical Representative/Stage Managers

- Other deadlines include making sure you have a trained TR (Technical Representative) and Stage Manager
- The TR is the person who is responsible for the safe planning and execution of a production. Typically a show has two people signed off as TR - someone like the Lighting Designer who will make sure that the lighting rigging and patching is done safely; and someone like the Technical Director who will make sure that the set construction is done safely.
- A TR and SM will be able to email Ellie to arrange their training themselves if they are not already trained, but you should make them aware that they need to do this and the deadlines for doing so.

Publicity

Publicist

- Having good marketing strategy is so important when it comes to selling your show, so you may want to consider hiring a publicist to manage this.
- While it isn't necessary, bringing a publicist on board is most popular with ADC Mainshows.
- As a producer, there will be plenty of other things to do in the run up to the show, so it is incredibly helpful having someone solely focused on creating a good publicity campaign. This could also be incorporated into an assistant producer's role.
- A publicist's role is not to design your publicity (that is the role of the publicity designer), but to manage your social media presence, liaise with student press by arranging previews and booking reviewers in well ahead of time, along with organising any other publicity events that will help promote your show.

- For a detailed breakdown of a good publicity campaign with a suggested timetable, see the [ADC's Publicity Guide](#)

Photographer

- Production photographs are at the core of a good publicity campaign. These can include, but are not limited to:
 - Headshots for all cast and crew
 - Photos of rehearsals (useful for publicity content, and for previews)
 - Photos of the dress rehearsal (important for reviews)
 - You may want a photograph to be the centre of your publicity image
- You can advertise for a photographer in your initial camdram advert for a prod team. Sometimes you may be able to combine your publicity designer and photographer.
- Make sure that your photographer(s) is properly credited whenever their photographs are used.
- It is important to include them in the team by adding them to camdram, giving them a complimentary ticket to the show and inviting them to the post-show meal and celebrations.
- You can advertise on the Cambridge Theatre [Photographers group](#), which may grab people's attention more!

Posters and flyers

- These are the absolute basis of your publicity. Pretty much every show should aim to have a poster to be put up in the theatre, around town, and in colleges, and also flyers to flyer shows.
- Posters and flyers need to be approved by the Production Manager and usually by your funding body before they are sent to print, and they usually need your funding body's logo on them.
- Popular websites for printing publicity are Instantprint and Solopress, and both do next day delivery. You can also ask Ellie to order publicity for you. This is more expensive, but it means you don't have to pay for it yourself (it will go on the show settlement), and it will be sent straight to the ADC
- A1 posters are printed by the theatre – these cost £5 each, and you can ask for up to 3 to be printed
- Posters:
 - You need an A3 and A1 version
 - These need to have your show's banner at the bottom. These are available [here](#)
 - If your show has performance rights, your rights company will probably have some text that they require on the poster – you can check this in the license they send you
 - Posters that are going outside need to be laminated – you can do this in the ADC if you ask management, and you can also get cable ties to put them up from the theatre. Remember! Laminating costs 55p per A3 sheet so make sure to factor that in to your budget!
 - A map is available in the publicity guide of the best places to put up posters, but generally the rule is you can put posters up where there are other posters.
 - Posters can also be put up in colleges – you can do this by distributing them amongst the cast and crew to put up in their own colleges, or you can do it yourself by just asking the porters if you can put up a poster.

- It's recommended you order about 100 posters for ADC shows and a Playroom Mainshow, 75 for a Playroom Lateshow, and 25 for a One Night Stand.
- Flyers
 - These are typically A6, but there's nothing stopping you from doing something different! Sometimes shows may go for bookmarks, or business cards, to distribute if they are fitting with the show
 - You want a thicker GSM for your flyers, probably around 250 or 350gsm, so they aren't too flimsy
 - The back of a flyer usually has the blurb for the show
 - Exit flyering relevant shows is really vital for publicity! Particularly to attract the town audience who probably won't see your Cambridge Theatre publicity posts. You can make a flyering schedule and encourage all of the cast and crew to flyer at least once – it's easy if they're already going to see the show!
 - At the ADC, you can flyer at the bottom of the stairs by the box office, and at Corpus you have to flyer outside. The best way to find out when shows finish is to ask someone involved in that show what the runtime is, so you can be sure you're going to catch audiences when they're leaving.

Programmes

- If you are an ADC Mainshow, you will usually need a programme
- It is best to try and find a programme designer, but if not it's not that difficult for you to design a programme yourself using InDesign (this is available on the computers at the ADC)
- It is up to you or the programme designer what to include, but it is typical to have pages such as a show description, cast and crew headshots and bios, rehearsal pictures etc. You can get creative!
- You need to include a blurb on the back written by the ADC. This is available [here](#):
- As with posters and flyers, programmes can be ordered from Instant Print or Solopress. It's recommended you order around 250 for a sold out show.
- Let Ellie know how much you would like to charge for the programmes, either £1 or £2

Press Release

- For ADC Mainshows in particular you should write a press release.
- This sounds intimidating, but it's actually pretty easy! Put at the top all the key info for the show: what it is, when, who, when.
- You then want to identify the show's Unique Selling Point and really emphasise this
- It's also common to get a quote from the director talking about the show, which gives the press something to use - you basically want to write the article for them!
- This should be done at least a couple of weeks before the show, and sent to Ellie to be approved. She will then send you a list of press contacts to send it out to (sending personal emails is usually best, but if you are in a rush there's always BCC)
- You can see an example press release [here](#).

Previews

- You can email Theatre Editors at The Cambridge Student (TCS), Varsity and The Tab to see if they have anyone who would like to preview your show

- Depending on where you are in the process, a preview could entail: performing part of the show, interviews with the director/actors/set designer, or anything that you think would help to publicise your show

Reviews

- A few weeks before your show opens, email the Theatre Editors at TCS, CTR, Varsity and The Tab to see if they would like to send someone to review your show. Often they will have planned to send someone any.
- Though not necessary, it is worth emailing the same editors the week before opening night to confirm they are still sending reviewers in.
- Send photos of your dress rehearsal before your opening night if possible, so there is no delay in reviews being published

Social Media

- A Facebook event is a good way of drawing attention to your show on social media
- It's helpful to get your funding body to co-host the event, as they will have a larger social media following. You should also get them to share publicity on their page.
- Putting up headshots on social media around a week before you show is a good way to grab people's attention, particularly if everyone changes theirs at the same time.
- You can have fun with social media. You can see the publicity guide for more ideas, but well-timed posts on your event and Cambridge Theatre are always a way of grabbing attention.

Ticketing

Ticket sales

- If your show is at the ADC or the Corpus Playroom, you can check your ticket sales [here](#)
- The password is your print code, which you will have been sent by Ellie in your Welcome email

Comps

- Comps are complimentary tickets which are given at your discretion to members of the company
- Usually this is one per person involved in the show – they aren't for people's friends and family!
- Usually the director and assistant director like to have comps for every performance, and anyone you think has had a continuous contribution to the show (yourself included!) will usually be able to get more than one comp.
- To book comps, email Ellie with the full names and roles of the people requesting comps, and the days you would like them for.

Stewards

- Check that you have the right number of stewards for each night of your show as your show week nears. Corpus shows need 2 stewards, and ADC shows usually need 3.

- If you do not have enough stewards, it is worth advertising the opportunity to see the show for FREE on Cambridge Theatre. Often, however, it does fall to you as producer to steward the show if you do not have enough stewards, or if someone doesn't show up
- To sign up to steward, you need to visit stewarding.adctheatre.com

Pre-show

Get-in

- The ADC Mainshow has Sunday, Monday and Tuesday for the get-in, tech and dress while the Lateshow has Wednesday
- Sometimes get-ins will require an overnight on the Saturday/Sunday, which is usually spent rigging lights
- The day-time part of the get-in usually starts around 9am after breakfast, depending on how complex your set is
- Encourage all the crew to come to the get-in and as many of the cast members as are available
- There is a rule that no one can stay in the theatre for more than 16 hours in one go without an 8 hour break, so make sure your company is getting enough sleep! You must have a break lasting at least 8 hours or longer, you cannot pop out of the theatre for a couple of hours and return to continue working.
- If you are at the ADC, you will need to get the stage signed off by management before you begin your tech and dress

Tech run

- The tech run is when you test all the technical aspects of the show
- You can do a tech run relatively quickly in a cue-to-cue, but for more tech-heavy shows a full run (with a focus on the tech) would be better
- The tech runs can be surprisingly long as some cues will need to be repeated multiple times to ensure that tech, acting and set come together

Dress rehearsal

- Depending on what time your show opens, the dress rehearsal usually takes place either the day before or the morning of your opening night.
- You and the Stage Manager should arrange who needs to be there and when ideally well in advance of show week so the required people can keep the day as free as possible.
- You should also book more time than you will need on the show night to account for problems with the set, technical issues or costume malfunctions.
- Try to leave time for the cast and crew to rest before the evening so you can open the show to the best of your abilities.

- The dress rehearsal is the best opportunity to get pictures to send to reviewers, so make sure someone is there to take some shots, even if this means arranging a photographer in advance.

Welfare

- Get-in weekend can be stressful! The company are expected to do a lot in a short time and often things don't go to plan. As producer, you can be prepared to deal with any welfare issues that may arise, and plan ahead to prevent these as much as possible
- Try and keep track of how things like set, costume, and props are going beforehand so you don't get to get-in weekend and find out these people have a lot to do in a short time
- Make sure people actually don't stay in the theatre for longer than 16 hours!
- Manage people's expectations – for example, make sure cast know that tech runs can often take a long time, and they should be prepared for this, but also make sure everyone is being given enough breaks

Post-show

Dinner

- If you are a Lateshow, you can begin your get-out straight after the show finishes.
- If you are a Mainshow, however, you need to vacate backstage and the dressing rooms for the Lateshow.
- Going out for a post-show dinner with all the company is a good way to fill the time
- Pizza Express is the most popular since it is just around the corner from the ADC. You can book this the week of the show either online or by ringing the restaurant:
- There is less of a go-to for after Corpus shows, but there are lots of restaurants nearby that you can go to before the get out
- Given the number of people who will be eating just before the restaurant closes, they ask that you send them your order before you arrive. You can email pizza express before the evening at cambridge2manager@pizzaexpress.com.
- It is important to remind people that they CANNOT drink until after the get-out is finished, as otherwise they cannot be on stage and they should be sent home, which isn't fun for anyone.

Get-out

- Your Technical Representative (TR) is usually the Technical Director (TD) and they are in charge of the get-out.
- Your TR will need to decide on your timings for the get-out in advance and add them into the relevant section in the ADC/Corpus Playroom Production Handbook before checking them over with Ellie.
- If there is a show on before or after yours, you should coordinate timings so that you have an efficient get-out

After-Party

- After the get-out, there is an after-party at the ADC Bar. Often funding bodies will give the cast and crew a free drink if the show has sold well – you should check this with them beforehand.
- All shows that week are invited to the afterparty – for Corpus shows, it's probably best to liaise with someone at the ADC get-out to check when they're finishing, as it will likely be a lot later than your out.