

Scottish Women's Institutes



HANDCRAFTS

PROFICIENCY CERTIFICATE SCHEDULE

RULES FOR CANDIDATES

Revised and Updated 2017

For Certificates applied for from 2018

SCOTTISH WOMEN'S INSTITUTES

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our National Proficiency Certificate Programme. We are delighted that you are considering sitting a test. We hope this booklet will give you all the answers to any queries you may have.

The guidelines are in no way intended to be specific, they are written in order to give some help in selecting the items presented for tests. Candidates must carefully read the schedule, **including the rules** as this is an important part of any test or competition.

Always allow plenty of time to plan, prepare and carefully make the articles to be submitted for judging.

Pre-test schools are helpful and can be arranged within Federations, where members holding relevant bars can give advice and pass on information on various subjects.

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Some subjects may need to be judged outwith the test venue

RULES

Relevant to all tests - Please read this schedule very carefully

1. To gain a real knowledge of materials and processes in any subject takes time and infinite patience. Members are therefore encouraged to send in work for a test in order to learn from judge's critique.
2. A candidate must be a member of her Federation. Members are not obliged to attend a class before entering a test.
3. The Handcrafts & Housewives Committee of Central Council will arrange tests in Federations within the Tour Scheme rota. Tests may be held outwith the rota, by arrangement.
4. The maximum mark in each test is 100. An Honours Certificate is awarded if 95 marks or above are obtained, a First Class if 85 marks or above are obtained, a Second Class if 75 marks or above are obtained and a Third Class if 60 marks or above are obtained.

A candidate gaining an Honours or First Class Certificate is entitled to purchase the SWI Proficiency -Badges and appropriate Bar.

5. A test must be the candidate's own work.

The whole test of all sections must be submitted in the first instance and cannot be built up in stages.

A candidate who gains a Second Class or Third Class Certificate with First Class marks for one or more articles, may enter these articles again when trying a test for a second time. New articles must be submitted for the part of the test in which upgrading is being sought, with the original mark sheet

Where the article required is left to 'Candidate's Own Choice' this should always be a different article from the others in the test.

It should always be stated whether designs are original, adapted or copied.

If desired, washable articles may be laundered before they are submitted for a test, but this must be stated.

6. A non-returnable fee is charged to each candidate per test entered. If for any reason the tests have to be cancelled by Headquarters, then this will be refunded.

Intending candidates should complete the form (printing forename and surname in block letters) and return it to the Federation/Handcrafts & Housewives Secretary.

The form should not be sent directly to Headquarters.

Closing dates for the receipt of entry forms at Headquarters are 1st October for spring tests and 1st March for autumn tests.

7. Numbered labels will be sent to each candidate through the Federation/Handcrafts & Housewives Secretary and should be fixed to each item in such a way as not to interfere with judging.
8. They can be joined by other members who wish to take tests in the future, again with the prior agreement of the participating candidates.'
Candidates will see their own mark sheet briefly prior to post test discussion. Mark sheets will be collected by the national judge and returned to Headquarters.
9. Candidates will receive their mark sheets with critique from headquarters as soon as possible after the test and certificates awarded will follow.
10. ***Demonstrators' and Judges' Certificates.*** Full details on these tests can be found on pages 40 and 41

Points to be judged

15	Design & Use of Colour
10	Suitability of material
65	Workmanship, Techniques & Finish
10	Degree of Difficulty

100

THE JUDGE'S DECISION IS FINAL. NO CORRESPONDENCE CAN BE ENTERED INTO WITH THE JUDGE.

APPLIQUE

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Sampler to show at least five different ways of applying material (machine stitchery to be included).
2. An article, not a picture/panel, with machine appliqué.
3. An article in one distinct technique, Cuna/San Blas, Inlay, etc.

Points to be judged:

Designs	Colour balance
Stitches and workmanship	Suitability of material, thread etc.
General finish	

Hints

1. This may be presented, as a hanging, sampler or picture/panel. Thus, different subject matter within the piece would allow different fabrics to be used, showing different methods of application suited to weave and texture of fabric to be applied. Vilene may be used if material frays badly, and wadding if required to give another dimension.
2. An article for a child or a nursery item would be appropriate. However, there are some most attractive fashion designs for appliqué work, and of course household items, bags and children's clothing are acceptable.
3. This section of test is to show that you understand different techniques which should be named.

NOTES

BASKETRY/CANework

Three articles to be submitted:

1. With a lid.
2. With a handle.
3. Candidate's Own Choice.

NOTE: Only one may have a wooden base. Canework is acceptable

Points to be judged:

Suitability of material	Shape and Finish
Fitness for purpose	General finish
Workmanship (evenness of weave, joins, border, handle, staking etc.)	

Hints

Select materials wisely. Cane ordered commercially is bleached and is light cream. Alternatives may be oriental canes, rush, bamboo or the traditional willow. Wooden base if used should be well finished.

Design, usually traditional for purpose intended. Base should sit flat, handles strong and shopping baskets well balanced, with lids or covers secure and well fitting.

Candidate's own choice should be quite different from 1 and 2. Shape of item chosen, showing skill in staking and shaping most important. Everything should be symmetrical and work done at a reasonable speed, so that it does not 'dry out'

It is wise to show variety in shape, weaves and borders in the three articles. Joins should be neat with ends inside or out/inside or underneath as appropriate.

NOTES

BEADWORK

Four articles to be submitted

1. a) A minimum of six separate braids, minimum length 12 cm, showing Square Stitch, Netting, Brick Stitch, Beadweaving using a Loom and 2 Own Choice. (Braids may be shown as samples or as bracelets, bookmarks etc.) Stitches to be identified.
- b) Tassel with head in Peyote Stitch. Minimum length of neck should be 5 cm (2") Neck Own choice.
2. Amulet or Bag, with fringe in any technique
3. Article – Own Choice – different from above.
(This could be Needlecase, Neckpiece, Tree Decoration, etc and can include beaded wirework and knitted or crocheted beadwork).

NB. Embroidery with beads (i.e. beads attached to fabric) is not appropriate for this test.

Points to be judged

Design/Colour Balance
Tension
Stitches and Workmanship

Suitability of materials
General Finish

Hints

This test is to show the candidate's knowledge of the various 'stitches' used to combine beads into regular patterns. Tension is of utmost importance and good quality beads should always be used. An experienced bead worker would show her skill in creating colour patterns on the firm type of stitch e.g. peyote.

NOTES

BOBBIN LACE

Two articles to be submitted:

1. Handkerchief edging with worked corner, to be sewn on to handkerchief (which need not be handmade).
2. Candidates own choice other than 1.

NOTE: Coloured thread may be used.

Points to be judged:

Suitability of thread	Workmanship (joins, straightness of edge)
Evenness of tension	General finish

Hints

Suitability of thread is important, and should be correct weight for design chosen, and also complimentary to material to which it will be attached. Tension should be very even.

It is important that joins should be firm and neat.

NOTES

CANVAS WORK

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Sampler or Article showing **minimum** of 20 Canvas Work named stitches.
2. Candidate's own choice, not less than 10" square.
3. Candidates own choice worked in different stitches from item 2.

NOTE: Trimming must be used in part of item 1.

Points to be judged:

Design	Suitability of material, thread etc.
Colour balance	General finish
Stitches and workmanship	

Hints

Apart from tapestry wool, a wide range of silks, cotton, stranded cotton and other threads can be used with care, knitting yarns may be used and combined with stitches, these create texture.

1. Use stitches, with which you are familiar, and which cover canvas well. If presented on cards, or in a book, each stitch should be clearly labelled. A design chart of named stitches should be presented with a sampler or article.
2. Own choice of article in Canvas Work, not less than 10" square.
3. Own choice article should be different in shape, size and purpose and worked in different stitches from item 2.

NOTES

COLOUR AND DESIGN

Three Designs to be submitted:

1. One Original Design for named craft.
2. One Original Design for a craft different from above.
3. Adapted Design. The original design on which the adaptation is based should be submitted where possible. If not available a rough copy may be sent and the source stated.

State crafts for which these designs are intended, materials used and method of work. Colours to be shown in at least two sections. Drawn designs plus indications of how they are worked is all that is required, articles do not have to be submitted.

Points to be judged:

Design	Suitability of design for the craft indicated
Colour balance	General finish

Hints

A folio, in which this test would be presented, is suggested.

- 1 & 2. Two original designs 1 and 2 worked on separate large sheets showing development of design from source of inspiration to line drawing and colouring; also shown should be samples of materials to be used in working of design, with threads, templates, graph paper etc along side, and a brief explanation of craft for which designs are intended. These should be for different crafts.

N.B. A well-designed article has a practical use, as well as an intrinsic beauty.

3. Adaptation should be submitted. Source of inspiration in this case could come from a china plate or ornament, wallpaper, carpet, painting, section of a photograph or illustration in a magazine. A sample or photograph of original should accompany this section, but presentation is as in 1.

This Test or part of it could be used by the candidate as a basis for the Contemporary Embroidery Test. This is worth bearing in mind when planning ahead.

NOTES

COLOURED EMBROIDERY

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Article in Wool Embroidery.
2. Article in Silk and/or Cotton Embroidery.
3. Candidate's Own Choice.

NOTE: The three articles chosen should be for a different purpose and show a different technique. A variety of colours is required on each piece. Two articles are to be on a coloured background and one on neutral (i.e. white, cream, ecru).

Points to be judged:

Design
Colour balance

Workmanship and variety of Stitches
General finish

Hints

1. Jacobean work will be accepted and could be in a modern design, working traditional techniques, in wool. Wool of different thicknesses and careful selection of stitches will result in a pleasing texture. As far as possible avoid using transfer.
2. Article may be in counted thread but need not be.
3. This should be different from 1 and 2. Modern and machine techniques are acceptable.
4. Only 1 article in Counted thread, not evenweave fabric.

NOTES

CONTEMPORARY EMBROIDERY

Two articles to be submitted:

1. Embroidered panel or picture.
2. Article or Garment incorporating Machine and/or Hand Embroidery.

NOTE: Source of design inspiration must be submitted along with drawings in colour and samples of fabric and threads used in the execution of the finished work.

Points to be judged:

Design	Suitability of material, thread etc.
Colour balance	Stitches and workmanship
General finish	

Hints

1. Embroidered Picture or Panel showing candidates ability to interpret design with good use of threads, stitches and colour.
2. Article or Garment, which will reflect suitability of design in relation to garment. Cushion, evening skirt, bolero or jacket for child or adult, lampshade, book cover, evening bag, belt, pulpit fall. i.e. Designing for a purpose.
3. One of these above articles could be used in conjunction with the Colour & design test.

NOTES

COUNTED THREAD

Articles to be submitted:

1. Sampler or Article showing a **minimum** of 20 named counted thread stitches, to include 5 drawn fabric; 3 hardanger fillings; 3 types of hem stitch; 3 blackwork patterns, the remaining 6 free choice.
2. Own choice article in counted thread.
3. Own choice of article different from above.

Points to be judged:

Design	Suitability of material, thread, etc
Stitches and workmanship	

Hints

1. This is a challenging test and, while offering tremendous scope to candidate, considerable thought must be given to design and preparation.
A minimum of 20 named stitches may be submitted on cards or between film in an album.
Another presentation is in the form of a sampler, which should be carefully thought out and a sketch plan showing stitches used, submitted.
If a sampler is worked, take care that certain areas of pulled thread are not worked too close to each other, as material could become distorted when worked along side blackwork and drawn thread work. These samples can be shown separately.
2. This could be a tray cloth, or tea cloth, showing hem stitching and mitred corners.
3. A Lampshade, Top of a Box (Minimum size 6"/15cm)., Coffee or Tea Cosy are suggestions for a different article. Cross-stitch and Assissi work can be incorporated but must be on evenweave fabric.

NOTES

CROCHET

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Cloth (square or rectangular) showing border.
2. Candidate's Own Choice of article in crochet thread.
3. Garment in wool or wool substitute.

Points to be judged:

Tension
Design

Workmanship, mounting
General finish

NOTE: Patterns to be submitted. Working instructions should be given if own design is used. 1 and 2 in fine yarn no heavier than No 20.

Hints

Apart from tension, which is often the cause of these faults, all spaces, rings and picots must be of same size and according to pattern.

The cloth which should be a reasonable size should have a border, with a minimum depth of 2½"(6.5cm) but this would be increased in depth for tea cloth, supper cloth or alter cloth. This border may be worked in crochet or filet crochet. Filet crochet can only be worked first, with an invisible join in one of four sides, crochet with mitred corners may be worked first and then applied to cloth. This centre piece should be of good quality linen and also have mitred corners with hems "hem stitched" or "slip stitched".

Another method is to crochet around the cloth the required number of stitches over a rolled hem and work crochet outwards. This is more permanent, whereas if handsewn to centre piece it could be used again, if to be an heirloom. A cloth with motifs is acceptable if by an advanced method, such as Irish Crochet.

A garment for adult or teenager is preferred but not a shawl. Make a wise choice of design to suit your ability, making sure that it includes all "points to be judged" in workmanship, including shaping and construction.

NOTES

DOLLS

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Rag doll for a child.
2. Victorian or other Boudoir Doll.
3. Model - Handmade (Character Doll).
Modelling clay may be used instead of fabric, if desired

Points to be judged:

Shape	Appearance
Workmanship	Suitability of materials
Suitability of purpose.	

Hints

1. This should be a very well made rag doll, special attention having been paid to features, limbs, hair etc. The clothes for all dolls would be well designed and constructed, and of standard required for Plain Sewing Test.
2. A decorative doll (not for playing with). This doll may be completely fashioned in cloth; well stuffed and shaped, with extra special feature made of nose, mouth, eyes, hair etc.

or

The type of doll with porcelain head, hands etc bought complete with pattern for body, which has to be constructed, applied and dressed.
Workmanship is very important in dressing of doll and skilful attention to detail is commendable.
3. Papier-mâché, wire or chicken wire accepted. The hand-made model is a challenge, and if not fashioned in clay, it may be in cloth, shaped by fabric manipulation to give detail, but entirely different from 1 and 2.
Everything used in making of model should be in relation to dolls size i.e. buttons, trimmings, shoes (weight of leather or felt) important garments and accessories e.g. parasol, hat, tray, basket etc.

NOTES

DRESSMAKING

Two Garments to be submitted:

1. Shirt Blouse or Shirtwaister Dress.
2. Skirt, lined, with zip or Trousers part lined, with zip.

NOTE: Pocket, buttonholes, long sleeve with cuff and opening; collar revers and facings or collar sewn to a band must be shown.

Points to be judged:

Suitability of Materials
General finish

Stitching (correct seams and processes,
etc)

Hints

Select patterns and material with care.

Buttons should be of good quality and suited to material used in both weight and colour. Pocket may be of any type and shown on blouse, skirt or trousers. A continuous opening is preferable in this test, but a well finished faced opening will be accepted, if according to pattern. Facings should show use of interfacing and these would be edge stitched by machine.

Modern machines can accomplish so many things, when used by a skilful worker. Use your machine for buttonholes and inside finishes, If wished.

NOTES

FABRIC BOXES

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Round Box.
2. Box with corners (square, rectangular, hexagonal, etc).
3. Box with a Hinged Lid.

NOTE: Boxes must be constructed by the candidate and at least one must have either a tray or a drawer.

Points to be judged:

Workmanship
Suitability for Purpose

Design
Interior fit

Hints

Accuracy is most important, when handling card, to ensure a good fit.

All interior parts should be removable:- ie no glue or stitching of these parts

Drawers should open and close easily and the lid should fit well. Inside of box is just as important as outside, so design wisely. Choice of material e.g. weight and texture is very important. Avoid sheer or very light weight materials and pattern, if any, should be in relation to size of box. Consider purpose of box i.e. jewellery or trinket, stationery, needlework or general work box and design accordingly. The lid provides an excellent means of displaying other crafts: -

Handmade buttons, tassels, cords etc. enhances boxes and show your skill.

NOTES

FABRIC COLOURING

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Article decorated by painting.
2. Picture/panel showing colouring by a different method other than in (1). It may include embroidery.
3. Several small examples produced on separate pieces of material to show various means of colouring (examples should be mounted in a book or on card[s] giving details of method and possible uses. Materials should also be named).

Points to be judged:

Suitability of material
Workmanship

Design
General finish

Hints

Embroidery should be included in this Test in either item 1 or 2 but not on both.

This is a test, which allows candidate to paint on many different fabrics, using modern colours, manufactured for the purpose.

Batik, tie and dye, crayons, transfer painting etc. may be chosen.

These will be embellished by stitches or embroidery, as required.

Several small samples (13 x 13 cms) should be mounted giving details of fabric, method used and possible uses.

NOTES

JEWELLERY

Three pieces of jewellery to be submitted, one with stone inset.

Points to be judged:

Suitability of Design
Overall presentation

Craftmanship
Colour balance

Hints

This is primarily a test using a variety of metals but one item in Beadwork is permitted.

The pieces should all have a different use:-

i.e

- Neckpiece
- Bracelet
- Ring
- Brooch
- Pair of earrings

The pieces should be chosen to show variety in technique and skill.

Eg:-

- Metalwork using suitable metals such as copper, silver, gold
- Soldering
- Lapidary
- Enamelling
- Wirework (knitted or crocheted)
- Beadwork (one piece only)

If beadwork is used do not choose the item with “set in” stone

Indication of source of design and techniques should be indicated, in each case, as this is helpful to the examiner.

Stones should be carefully set, with no blemishes or scratches. Jewellery is usually presented as a display, over velvet or in boxes.

Please note this is not a Beadwork test

NOTES

KNITTING, HAND

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Pair of mitts or socks worked on 4 needles, showing grafting.
2. Lady's or gent's cardigan or jacket with buttonholes and pockets.
3. Child's Garment with motif, OR Shawl in 1 or 2 ply

Points to be judged:

Even knitting and tension
Casting on and off
Increasing and decreasing

Seams and joins
Proportion
General finish

Hints

Since tension is so important, practice until a good result is achieved; use wool or 80% wool with 20% synthetic. Ball Band to be attached (cone to be taken if necessary). Few synthetic yarns give such a good result. Avoid mohair or yarn, where it is difficult for examiner to see tension and stitches of pattern.

1. Socks or mitts, well knitted with careful shaping showing grafting should be submitted.
2. A plain garment well done would be acceptable, but an interesting modern design would show skill and understanding of pattern.
Buttons should be correct size, weight and colour for garment. Hand made buttons would add a distinctive touch. Buttonholes should be firm, with no slackness at ends. Sewing up should be done in back stitch, ladder stitch or interlacing for open work designs.
Avoid "over pressing" hand knitting. Follow instructions on band, around ball!
3. a) Child's garment showing several different colour changes i.e. knitted motif (no swiss darning).
b) Shawl using fine wool with centre piece, border with mitred corners and edging.

NOTES

LACEMAKING
(Any type except Crochet, Tatting and Bobbin Lace)

Two articles to be submitted:

1. Handkerchief edging with worked corner to be sewn on to handkerchief (which need not be handmade)
2. Candidates own choice other than 1

NOTE: Coloured thread may be used.

Points to be judged:

Suitability of thread	Workmanship (joins, straightness of edge)
Evenness of tension	General finish

Hints

1. Provided knitted lace is not an edging "eased round the corners", it is acceptable.
"The complete D.M.C. Encyclopaedia of Needlework" (available in HQ library) illustrates working of corner with 11 stitches, by an acceptable method. Four corners or one corner, distinct from other three, or extended motif, at one corner. The following are acceptable: -
Very fine knitted lace in cotton or linen
Filet lace
Embroidered lace
Needle made lace
2. If candidate has chosen a knitted lace edging for handkerchief, her choice would perhaps be collar and cuffs set, or a circular cloth for a coffee table, or a large mat in knitted lace, otherwise the whole test would be in filet lace, embroidered lace or needlemade lace.
It is wise to experiment, when knitting, with weights of thread 100-40, as with same pattern and different needles, interesting results are obtained.

It is most important to "dress" finished work – launder, starch lightly, stretch and pin out to dry, most carefully, over accurately measured tracing paper on board and attach lace to handkerchief.

NOTES

LAMPSHADE MAKING

Three lampshades to be submitted, not necessarily on stands, all different shapes and materials:

1. Pleated lampshade.
2. Shade with hand made trimming.
3. Candidates own choice.

NOTE: One lampshade must be lined, all may be; one must show handmade trimming, bought trimming if required allowed on the others. One lampshade must be pleated.

Points to be judged:

Workmanship
Suitability of materials

General finish

Hints

Selection of suitable fabrics and frames are most important. Crochet, Macramé or Basketry shades would be worked over white painted frames.

1. Make careful choice of diaphanous material, which does not fray too readily. Drapery and pleating should be very accurate, resulting in a soft, flowing effect. When binding frames avoid "lumpy" finish and always make neat joins. Seams in materials should lie over struts.
2. This could be a band of matching material, worked in counted thread, Spanish blackwork, or drawn fabric. Embroidery would accentuate design of shade. Fine crochet, hairpin lace, macramé, bobbin lace, knitted lace are also acceptable, provided they complement design and material used.
3. Own choice different from 1 and 2.

NOTES

MACRAMÉ

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Sampler showing a minimum of six different sennits (bars), single and double crosses, section of alternating flat knots, section showing horizontal, vertical and diagonal double half hitch (or clove hitch) bars, and whipped tassel.
2. Bag of any type.
3. Completed article of own choice.

NOTE: Hairy jute or hemp not recommended.

Points to be judged:

Tension
Design

Workmanship, mounting
General finish

Hints

1. Ensure that this is of a reasonable size and includes what is requested. Several small sample pieces would be worked beforehand in order to explore medium being used for tension and also to work out size and string required to work out an effective design. Then, and only then, embark on sampler. Make sure that all lines across sampler are horizontal, accompanied by diagram naming different parts and that sides are kept straight. Tassel or tassels should be well designed, if used to finish at lower edge.
2. Again, consider design before beginning, taking into account gussets, base and handle, as well as main part. Finish on base is important and should be worked to retain design on rightside or wrongside. Ends would be knotted and sealed, using PVA Glue or other appropriate method acceptable and perhaps covered by a base. Handles should be attached very securely.
3. Suggestions are, lampshade over white painted frame if lined, frame would be bound and only very sheer material used for lining. Belt - an interesting design created, as in sampler, with introduction of beads etc. An elaborate plant holder. Bag in silk cord, for evening use, entirely different from 2. Hammock for nursery toys. A screen or divider for room.

NOTES

METAL THREAD EMBROIDERY

Two articles to be submitted:

1. Picture/Panel (minimum finished embroidery 20cm x 20cm or 20cm diameter, before mount and frame)
2. Any article other than above.

Points to be judged:

Design	Choice of background material
Use of thread to give texture	Finish and presentation

Hints

1. The fascination of this embroidery lies in the rich effects achieved by metal thread where the direction of the threads and the play of light alters the tone and makes the surface appear to lie on different levels. Careful thought must be given to the design in order to obtain the maximum effect and a quick and easy design tends not to work. Aim for simplicity and richness. Background material should complement the design in colour and texture.
2. A variety of techniques and weight of gold should be used.

NOTES

PAPERCRAFT

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Quilling or Parchment Craft.
2. Decoupage or 3 dimensional decoupage.
3. Own choice other than above techniques (papier-mâché, paper sculpture, etc.)

Points to be judged:

Materials
Workmanship

Design
General finish

Hints

This is a test where imagination, neatness and accuracy are paramount.

1. If unsure of these techniques there are now many inexpensive books on the market, which include chapters on designing and making.
2. In decoupage very striking effects are achieved if prints are chosen wisely, the result, from a distance resembling a painting.

Own choice permits a wide range of techniques. Papier-mâché, paper sculpture, origami, sophisticated paper flowers (tissue paper or any other type of paper acceptable). Christmas decorations, showing skilful workmanship. 3 different, very decorative crackers etc.

This test is a challenge, so guard against making a choice from items that are too simple.

NOTES

PATCHWORK, HAND

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Article using at least three different shaped templates.
2. Article in Log Cabin, Cathedral Window or Folded Patchwork e.g Somerset. Machine stitchery not acceptable.
3. Own choice with or without templates.

Points to be judged:

Design
Colour balance
Workmanship

Suitability of material
General finish

Note: Where templates are used, these should be provided

Hints

Design for purpose of article, e.g. cushion, waistcoats, cosy covers, small quilts or hangings, place mats, mixer covers etc., etc. Select items different in size, shape and purpose and **certainly not all flat**. Choose colours, so that they compliment each other, and are subtle, then use them skilfully to give good colour balance.

Weight of material should suit purpose of article. For a beginner it is helpful to "colour" paper templates, moving these around until a satisfactory result is obtained, before cutting out pieces in fabric.

Iron on "VILENE" may be used with difficult material. Use strong cotton thread, either white or matching which will give a firm result. Stitchery should be fine and very firm. Stitches on rightside hardly show, if the work is well done.

Cushions should be lined, where there are raw edges. The cushion may have a hand made pad, just slightly larger than the finished cushion., or a bought pad may be used and cover made to fit it. Covered piping cord can be used to finish, using correct cross cut with joins. Zip fastener or Velcro may be used to fasten "housewife pillowcase style" of opening. *****Final construction only can be by machine: eg binding & piping in zips**

NOTES

***** Please note this has been changed and will adhere to tests applied for from Autumn 2018 onwards**

PATCHWORK, MACHINE

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Article in foundation patchwork.
2. Article using different shaped templates.
- *3. Article in **Traditional** Log Cabin, or any other strip patchwork.

Points to be judged:

Design	Suitability of material
Colour balance	General finish
Workmanship	

NOTE: Please provide pattern for foundation piecing in item 1 and templates for item 2
All items submitted must be candidates own work.
Articles should not be quilted by a professional

Hints

The pieces should be firmly stitched, by machine, in matching thread. Attention should be given to detail. i.e. material should be cut "straight by a thread". Angles should be correct. Pieces must match accurately.

1. Foundation piecing is the sewing of patchwork shapes in a predetermined order (unless crazy patchwork which is randomly placed) on to a background material such as calico, light weight cotton, light interfacing, paper, stitch & tear or similar. The permanent/temporary 'foundation' adds body to the finished piece of work.
2. It is sometimes helpful to assemble a "mock-up" in colour templates, before cutting out in material. Observe selvedge by marking each paper template and cut out accordingly. All lines must be parallel, when assembling, and all angles accurate. Very careful workmanship is required otherwise effect of colour and design is lost. Colour balance is important, as is design.
3. All pieces should be cut straight by a thread, checking and re-checking width and length for accuracy. Pay great attention to use of colour and weight of colour in certain areas.

NOTES

***** Please note this has been changed and will adhere to tests applied for from
*Autumn 2018 onwards**

PLAIN SEWING

Articles to be submitted:

1 garment

plus a sample book, to cover the required skills.

Points to be judged:

Sewing (including correct seams and processes)

Suitability of material

General finish

Notes

Skills for PLAIN SEWING must show machine and hand sewing including back stitch, a decorative surface stitch, scalloping or other sewn decorative edging, binding an edge, facing a curved edge, attaching a lace edging, tucks, gathers, opening with button and worked buttonhole and attaching a hook and eye or press stud.

Hints

All items should be very well finished. The finish required here, is a good foundation on which to build for other tests.

Choose "fine" material in cotton/synthetic, easily handled, non-fraying and crease resistant. Show neat seams, hemming, slip hemming.

Experienced needlewomen wishing high assessments would be wise to show several examples of each process, where applicable.

A good presentation of "opening" is to show ½ size sleeve with continuous opening, set into cuff and fastened i.e. three specimens in one. Opening, setting of gathers into a band with buttonhole and button to fasten. A plain seam would be used in this sleeve.

Specimens may be mounted on card or set between film and clearly named.

NOTES

QUILTING, HAND

Two articles for different uses to be submitted each using a different method of quilting.

Points to be judged:

Design
Workmanship

Suitability of material, including colour
General finish

Hints

N.B. Do not use design of fabric and quilt over it, although this would be ideal, when learning spacing of stitches etc.

Choose material for purpose most carefully. Design for purpose of article to be made. Material should handle easily, be of a firm weave, with mat or shiny surface suited to purpose.

It is important to have wadding of correct thickness and weight. Excellent wool and cotton wadding is available.

Thread should be strong, matching, but not so strong that it would cut silk. Use evenly spaced small stitches, when hand quilting.

After stitching it is important that padded areas catch the light, when viewed from a distance, thus enhancing design.

Covered piping cords, with correct cross cut join, is often used as a method of finishing article.

NOTES

RUGMAKING

Two rugs to be submitted:

1. Pile rug, any method. Rag rug accepted.
2. Flat stitch wool rug or wall hanging using minimum of three different stitches.

Points to be judged:

Texture and weight	Design
Colour	General finish
Workmanship (back and front) etc.	Evenness of work

Hints

1. Choose attractive design. Preferably design own rug on graph paper and enlarge. Texture should be even and top surface clipped, when finished. Canvas is usually folded back and worked double, at ends. This is not possible on shaped rug, when carpet binding would be used.
2. To understand this, it is wise to have done the canvas work test first, or to have practised many stitches and worked rough samples of ideas. Stitches chosen should cover surface well and are repeated in such a way as to give an interesting, well balanced design. This type of rug or wall hanging is often fringed.

N.B. Rugs should be presented when newly made and surface not trodden down.

NOTES

SMOCKING

Two articles to be submitted:

1. Sampler of tubing (gathering without dots) minimum finished size of smocked section to be 6 inches (16 cm) square. Minimum of three stitches should be used, grouped in various ways; tacking threads to be left in.
2. Article incorporating traditional or modern or both techniques of smocking

Points to be judged:

Design
Colour balance
Workmanship

Suitability of material etc
General finish

Hints

1. The finished work should be lightly mounted on suitable card, alongside names of stitches used should be indicated. This is a 'Sampler' to be used for reference and to interest others in craft. When beginning and ending on wrongside make sure that smocking covers small stitches. It is necessary to count pleats, as design in smocking must be 'centred' // \\, so that it is balanced at sides. All smocking should be elastic when gathering threads are removed.
2. Material should drape well and be easily handled, with woven design, should there be one. Spotted material is a bad choice, as often spots are unevenly printed.
Traditional choices are baby's or child's dress, a 'modern' smock for an adult, a nightdress, an elaborate 'full' sleeve set into a cuff, or a blouse, 'Setting in' smocking to yoke: When applying yoke, use a 'setting in stitch' and watch appearance of work. Everything should fit accurately and on no account must it drag.
Standard of work required (methods etc.) is that of plain sewing practical test. Avoid flattening smocking when pressing. Steam press, very lightly, over muslin.

NOTES

SOFT FURNISHINGS

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Loose Cover for occasional chair.
2. Pair of Curtains with attached lining.
3. Candidate's own choice, other than above.

Points to be judged:

Suitability of material	Workmanship
Matching of pattern and placing of material	General finish

Hints

1. Display cover on chair. Material, of a firmly woven non fraying type, pattern on back and seat should be centred. If plain material is used, warp threads in back and seat should be aligned. Piping to match, or contrast, would give a smart finish. Also box pleating, knife pleating, or a frill would add interest, depending on material.
2. Pattern should be continuous when curtains are closed. Sew hem first then finish top. Use covered weights if needed and little pockets at top for ties. Mitre bottom corners.
3. Often a box cover, 'boxed' cushion, padded strip for window seat, garden lounger, or cushion.

NOTES

TATTING

Two articles to be submitted:

1. Handkerchief with tatted border and worked corner.
2. Article of own choice.

Patterns to be submitted

Points to be judged:

Evenness of tension
Workmanship

Suitability of thread
General finish

Patterns must be submitted, with test articles.

Hints

1. "Worked corner" may be an elaborate version of border pattern, or cut away corner of handkerchief, with tatting designed to fit. If handkerchief is cut, bias edge should be neatly slip-hemmed. Joins in tatting should be 'invisible', worked in if possible, if not, woven in neatly through a solid area. Launder most carefully, stretching out and pinning picots.
2. A variety of stitches should be used, showing skill. Suggestions: - A mat of reasonable size; collar and cuffs; bride's or bridesmaid's head-dress or collage tatted picture.
3. Needle Tatting is acceptable.

NOTES

TOYMAKING

Three toys to be submitted:

1. Jointed toy or doll, using discs.
2. Four-legged toy (wiring not allowed).
3. Candidate's Own Choice, other than 1 and 2.

NOTE: Knitted toy and wooden toy are acceptable. Patterns, design and method must be submitted. All toys should be washable or at least spongeable.

Points to be judged:

Shape	Workmanship
Appearance	Suitability of material
Suitability for purpose	

Hints

Patterns, or books containing these, must be submitted, so that size and position of limbs may be checked. N.B. Standard safety requirements for toys must be complied with at all times. Advice is available from www.tradingstandards.co.uk

1. It is important to understand purpose of discs and how they are covered. Paws, arms, legs and head will be turned many times when examined, so make sure that they are secure. Ensure that 'shape' is true to animal chosen. It is wise to allow a few days for stuffing to settle before finally adding extra and ladder-stitching join. Avoid catching in pile when doing this! Leather, chamois or velvet make long-lasting pads. Claws and fingers should be emphasised, using embroidery stitches. Features should give expression to toy. Eyes may be made using felt and embroidery, or safety eyes used.
2. This should stand well on all four legs on a level surface.
3. If a rag doll is submitted clothes and accessories should be very well constructed and should be of a standard suitable for Plain Sewing Test. Wooden toy would be of pull along variety i.e. train, tractor, lorry etc. With knitted toy tension, sewing up of seams and stuffing are important.

NOTES

TRIMMINGS

Samples of 10 Braids, 10 Edgings, 4 different Buttons, 3 Cords and 4 Tassels.
From which 1 Braid and 1 Edging to be attached to a small piece of appropriate material'.

Points to be judged:

Suitability of thread/wool, cord etc.
Workmanship

Evenness of tension

Hints

This test can be mounted on individual cards, or in a book, and should show good lettering and presentation. Braids, edgings, buttons, cords, tassels should show a variety of cord, wool, silk threads, etc., with texture suited to purpose. Edgings could include knitting, crochet, hairpin crochet, macramé, lace fringing, and tatting, as well as edging using needle and thread i.e. needle lace.

NOTES

UPHOLSTERY

Two articles to be submitted:

1. Upholstered stool, chair or drop in seat with wooden frame, using webbing and wadding. (Springs if needed).
2. Candidate's own choice other than above.

Points to be judged:

Suitability of material	Workmanship
Matching of pattern and placing of material	General finish

Hints

Ensure that the frame is in good condition and well polished before beginning. All measurements must be very accurate, with an adequate allowance for turnings, matching and "handling". New webbing, springs, canvas and scrim should always be used. Examine workmanship carefully, after each stage or process. Top covering should be chosen with thought, colour scheme to match decor, but most_important, a firmly woven durable fabric. Design should be 'centred' and corners matched. In "points to be judged", the matching of pattern is quoted, so if there is no design, selvedge or grain of material should be centred on back and seat. Use transparent adhesive on gimp or braid, which should conceal all tacks and be joined neatly. Gimp or braid should be of very good quality, firmly woven and matching upholstery. Ensure that piece of furniture is well padded and that finished result has a professional finish.

A folder containing photographs showing the various stages through to the finished item should be submitted for each article.

NOTES

WHITEWORK

Three articles to be submitted:

1. Article in either Ayrshire, Broderie Anglaise or Mountmellick work.
2. Article to show any type of 'Cut Work' e.g. Simple Cut Work, Renaissance, Richelieu.
3. Panel or picture (suitable to show a variety of techniques) in white or ecru thread on white or ecru material with a list of techniques used e.g. Ayrshire, Broderie Anglaise, Richelieu etc.

Points to be judged:

Suitability of material
Workmanship

Design
General finish

Hints

1. As the name implies this is white fabric as a background, with stitches worked in white thread.
 - a) Ayrshire Embroidery is used for personal adornment and not for household items.
 - b) Broderie Anglaise may be worked on household items or personal items.

Mountmellick work is shown on household items, bedcovers, mats, etc. Background material is heavier than that used in a) or b).

All of above require careful selection of materials and thread in traditional weights and articles should be selected with care.

2. Simple cut work should have a crisp edge, with careful cutting to the edge, with no fringe or stray threads showing. Renaissance and Richelieu, although fragile to look at, the open work bars and picots should be well worked with a firm edge to withstand frequent use and laundering. Ecru is acceptable here.
3. Panel/picture allows candidates scope to experiment with modern methods. It is possible to have many weights and textures, in white or ecru thread, and the background would be chosen accordingly. 1 and 2 are traditional, but 3 experimental. Acceptable are any of the above techniques, also painting with thread, modern needle weaving and needle lace.

NOTES

DEMONSTRATORS' CERTIFICATE

Each candidate will be asked to give a demonstration in the presence of judges and SWI members. The Demonstration would last 45 minutes and this would include setting up and clearing away. Each candidate will be asked to submit a written work schedule before the test.

Hints

A title should be chosen and the subject expanded.

Candidates should aim at interesting the members in the craft, so that they may desire to have a course of lessons after seeing the demonstration.

Points which will be taken into consideration:

- Power of interesting the audience in the craft
- Arrangement of different sections of demonstration
- Ability to demonstrate and explain in a simple and clear manner
- Method of delivery
- Knowledge of materials and tools, choice, costs etc.
- Knowledge of actual workmanship, ability to explain methods, defects to be avoided, etc

Institute members are invited to watch the demonstrations and act as audience.

DICTION

Audibility is most important. A monotonous tone of voice and the repetition of the same word or phrase should be avoided.

STAGE PRESENCE

Be confident, with an outgoing approach. Include the audience in all aspects of your Demonstration. Explain what you are doing and why.

CHECK LIST

- Does the Demonstration give pleasure?
- Have you got an interesting or new approach?

COMMON FAULTS

- Dropping voice at the end of a sentence, so losing information.
- Getting too involved in work, so shutting out the audience visually and audibly.
- Addressing the 'front row' only and forgetting to smile.
- Turning away while talking, so breaking 'eye contact'

JUDGES' CERTIFICATE

These tests are open to members who are experienced craftswomen and will be held nationally, at least once during a Triennium.

Before applying for a Handcrafts Judge's Test candidates need to hold a minimum of three Handcraft Proficiency Test Certificates with Honours or First Class Passes of 85% or over. At least two of these Test Certificates must be taken from the following list (to gain a judge's bar the candidate can only sit tests in the subjects she holds proficiency test certificates in) -

Applique, Bobbin Lace, Canvas Work, Coloured Embroidery, Contemporary Embroidery, Counted Thread, Crochet, Dressmaking, Fabric Boxes, Knitting - Hand, , Lacemaking, Metal Thread Embroidery, Patchwork - Hand, Patchwork – Machine, Plain Sewing, Quilting Hand, Smocking, Tatting, Whitework.

Candidates can apply for and sit a maximum of 4 subjects.

Candidates will be asked to judge two sections in each chosen craft. Each section will be composed of a number of articles (usually 4) to be judged and marked within a time limit.

i.e. eight articles (2 sections of 4 articles each) must each be given a mark out of 20 using the SWI System with a short written comment justifying the marks deducted. Breakdown is as follows –

Design and Use of Colour	4
Suitability of Materials	3
Workmanship Techniques, Finish & Presentation	10
Degree of Difficulty	3

A total of 50 minutes is allowed to judge both sections of the test . There will also be a short oral assessment when the candidate's marking is discussed with the National Judge.

A Judge's Bar is awarded when three first class passes have been gained which must include 2 (two) from the above list.

NOTES

NOTES

Hndh&g updated 2017
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