

# Kingdom of Artemisia

## Arts & Sciences

### Competition Handbook



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Purpose of this Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information and expectations to anyone running, entering and judging an Arts & Sciences Competition (elsewhere just referred to as “Competitions”) in the Kingdom of Artemisia.

**Section 2, Artemisian Competition Requirements**, details the rules/requirements for any competition at any level in the Kingdom of Artemisia (and specifically for the Kingdom Championship).

**Section 3, Safety of Materials**, is a requirement for Competitions, Displays and any other time that toxic materials and allergens are a concern.

All content afterward are suggestions and tips for Coordinating, Entering and Judging in Arts & Sciences Competitions (and are not considered to be strict requirements.)

## 1.2. Purpose of Arts & Sciences Competitions

It is important to note that the purpose of any Arts & Sciences Competition or Display is:

- **First and foremost to encourage and further the Artisan**
- To further the Arts & Sciences in the Kingdom of Artemisia
- To determine the winner of the competition

If we keep these goals in mind, it will help us to provide a more positive experience for all of our Artisans, which will in turn create more participation and a stronger community.

# 2. Artemisian Competition Requirements

## 2.1. All Competitions Within Artemisia

- All Arts & Sciences Competitions in the Kingdom of Artemisia require documentation to be present with the entry. (Note: Documentation does not have to be scored, simply present.)
- There is no single required judging format within the Kingdom, though the Kingdom Library will have judging forms that can be used.
- Whatever format and judging criteria are to be used for a competition should be thoroughly communicated to the populace well ahead of the event. All entrants should have access to judging criteria prior to the event!
- Kingdom Competitions should have their format and judging criteria communicated at least 6 months ahead of time.

- For whatever judging criteria is used, achievement rankings for scoring must be as follows:
  - Masterpiece 90% - 100%
  - Superior 80% - 89%
  - Exceptional 70% - 79%
  - Notable: 0% - 69%
- Judging together as a group is permitted.
- Talking with the entrant is permitted.
- Disputes should be reviewed by the local (or Kingdom) nobility, if present, and the local (or Kingdom) Arts & Sciences Officer

## 2.2. Kingdom of Artemisia Championship Competition

### 2.2.1. Requirements:

- Must be a paid member of the SCA and maintain your membership throughout your tenure.
- Must reside within the Kingdom of Artemisia to win, though any may display or enter.
- The Kingdom of Artemisia Arts & Sciences Competition should be held yearly and communicated to the populace well ahead of time.
- The Kingdom of Artemisia Arts & Sciences Competition shall be a judged competition requiring **3 Entries in 3 Grand Categories**.
- While there is a standard format for Artemisian Kingdom Competitions, the Kingdom Minister of Arts & Sciences, working with Their Majesties and Their Highnesses, may choose an alternate format for either entry requirements or judging style **as long as that format is communicated to the populace as soon as possible, preferably at least 6 months ahead of time to allow artisans to plan.**

### 2.2.2. Responsibilities:

- May attend Their Majesties in court
- May be asked to help during the next competition
- May create an item of Kingdom Regalia
- Help further the Arts & Sciences within the Kingdom as best as possible. Consider:
  - Teaching classes when possible
  - Encouraging other artisans
  - Judging in competitions
  - Representing Artemisia at Known World events

### 2.2.3. Other Kingdom Recognitions

- In the Kingdom Competition, the second-place winner shall be titled the Artemisian Reserve Champion.
- The winner of the Novice Category, will be declared the Novice Champion in the Kingdom Competition.
- The winner of the Youth Category, will be declared the Youth Champion in the Kingdom Competition.
- The populace attending the competition shall choose a Populace Champion by the placing of counters. This option is required at the Kingdom Competition and optional at the Regional Level.
- Entrants winning the highest single point score within each Grand Category will be declared the Lord/Lady (or Champion) of that Grand Category, and will hold that position until another category winner is declared.

### 2.2.4. Judging

- Each entry is to have three (3) judges
- An entrant may judge other entries ONLY if:
  - The entrant is not going for champion and the entry is in a different category than the entrant's items.
  - The entrant is going for champion and the entry is in a different category than the entrant's items AND is not an entry for championship (display/feedback only).
- All judging comments should be reviewed to ensure that the comments are positive and constructive and to avoid significantly abrasive feedback.
- All score tallies are to be double-checked.
- Any score set that is significantly varied (for instance a gap of 15 points between low and high scores) shall be double-checked by an independent judge to ensure that scores are not excessively harsh.

## 2.3. Artemisian Grand Categories

The list of entry categories (Grand Categories and Subcategories) and their descriptions can be found on the Artemisia web site.

## 2.4. Local Group Championship Competitions

Local Group A&S Officers are often required to run competitions either for the group championship or other occasions. Those officers are welcome to use kingdom level format and judging standards but may choose instead other formats and standards. Other format ideas can be found below.

If you have questions not answered in this Handbook, do not hesitate to reach out to the Kingdom A&S Officer ([arts@artemisia.sca.org](mailto:arts@artemisia.sca.org))

## 3. Safety of Materials

### 3.1. Toxic Materials

The period of study of the SCA utilized many substances now known to be toxic. While some may experiment with these substances, it is important to keep the safety of our members in mind!

If any items are made with materials known to be toxic or harmful (such as lead, mercury, etc.) are going to leave the strict control of the creator or provider, a sign should be provided as a warning label, listing all toxic materials, and each individual item shall be specifically labelled with the toxic materials present so that any person later finding themselves with said item can determine the toxic materials.

Examples:

- An arts and sciences display with dangerous elements should either be constantly tended or have the required label signage present and prominent.
- A scroll given out to a recipient with toxic pigments (such as lead-based, vermilion or verdigris) should have the list of toxic pigments present on the back of the scroll.
- If a toxic item cannot be properly labeled or guarded, then that item should not be present at an SCA event or activity.

### 3.2. Labeling of Food Ingredients

Food allergies are potentially deadly and it is impossible to predict or control what allergies will be present to judge a food entry or to eat a feast. With that in mind, it is *vital* that all food present for public consumption (this includes food entries for Arts & Sciences Displays and Competitions) contain a list of *all* ingredients present (not just the main potential allergens!)

### 3.3. Other Society Rules and Considerations

The SCA continues to create policies that can affect the Arts & Sciences in Artemisia, such as policies on Symbols of Hate and Plagiarism and Cheating. This handbook may or may not be updated to include or point to these policies but they are in effect regardless.

Other considerations may come into play from federal, state or local regulations or even site-specific rules, which must be taken into account.

## 4. Other Types of Competitions

### 4.1. Themed Competitions

In addition to the basic competition type that may have the simple requirements of X entries in at least Y Grand Categories, it can be interesting and fun to occasionally run themed competitions. This can be run by the A&S Officer or by a sponsoring Artisan to foster interest/efforts in a specific area.

#### 4.1.1. Category Themed

Entries are accepted from only certain areas, such as Woodworking or Cooking (or even more specific like Chip Carving or Breads!).

- Caution should be taken for this type of competition to make sure that there are enough artisans with some skill in the area so that it is not just a competition created so that Lord The-Only-One-That-Does-This-Stuff can win.
- Consider holding classes or workshops after the competition is announced but well before it occurs to encourage artisans to learn about and try out the category!
- This is a good tool for an active Guild to sponsor!

#### 4.1.2. Element or Idea Themed

Entries for an Element themed competition are not restrictive based on the form/category of the art but rather that the art display or somehow support a particular theme.

- An example might be a time period, such as the 14th century, a place such as Spanish or an idea such as Winter.
- This opens up the competition to additional artisans since many art forms can be made to apply.
- Often, there might be an element in the scoring format about how well the entry supports the theme.
- This should definitely be announced well ahead of time, as the entry may need to be made specifically for that theme and some entries take significant planning!

#### 4.1.3. Examples of Themed Competitions

- Baking
- Brewing
- Fiber Arts

- Performance
- Metal Casting
- (See the list of Grand Categories for additional ideas)
- Seasons like Spring or Winter
- Norse
- 16th Century
- The Book
- Tools
- Children
- Costuming
- Iron Chef (on-site cooking)
- Golden Thimble (on-site sewing)
- Heraldic Display
- Death
- Fire!

## 4.2. Displays

Competitions are only one way to let our Artisans shine! Many artisans are turned off by aspects of the Competition but are still doing wonderful things and sometimes a competition can just feel too formal! Ideas for display formats are below.

For all display types, it is recommended that each entry get an index card or other label showing the artisan's name and entry description!

### 4.2.1. Simple Display

A simple display is just that: items put out for viewing with no judging or artisans attending their items.

- Display may or may not require documentation (documentation may only be a very minimal Index Card style.)
- This sort of activity would be a fine venue for something like a Populace Choice, Baroness Choice, etc.
- Ensure that you have enough table space so that the artisans have room to display their items!

### 4.2.2. Laurel's Prize (or Artisan's Showcase)

This is more of an organized activity where artisans display and sit with their entries. It offers a chance to interact with the artisan to ask questions, give kudos or constructive feedback. Artisans can see other artisan work as well.

- Often, those who come to see the works are encouraged to bring small tokens or gifts to give to artisans as they see fit.
- This requires coordination with the event schedule and advertisement, since it will occupy people who will not then be able to do other things.
- This requires significant tables, chairs and space since each artisan will need room for their works and to sit with them.
- Ensure that there are good walkways so that folks can see/visit with each artisan.
- The Laurels of the Kingdom may choose to sponsor/run this activity.
- Whoever is running the activity may determine if this is open to all artisans to display, if Laurels are excluded from display (typical) or even if it may be Laurel's only (known as a Reverse-Laurel's Prize).

### 4.2.3. Queen's Prize (Sponsored Display)

Like the Laurel's Prize, this is a non-judged artisan display where artisans typically sit with their work and are present for questions/kudos/etc. In this case, every artisan who displays is sponsored (more about that later) and the sponsor supplies a Prize for every artisan sponsored.

- Those with an A&S-type award of AoA level or below may be sponsored to display. (This makes for a very non-intimidating atmosphere.)
- Those with an A&S-type award of GoA level or Laurels are the Sponsors.
  - A person with a GoA level A&S type award may sponsor 2 artisans.
  - A Laurel may sponsor 4 artisans.
  - The Queen, or other key sponsor, may sponsor artisans as they and the event coordinator see fit.
  - Each sponsor must supply a prize for every artisan that they sponsor.
  - Sponsors can work with their sponsored artisans to help them be ready.
- Every Artisan receives a prize
  - Starting with the Queen (or key Sponsoring person) who awards a prize to whomever they would prefer.
  - If there are other key sponsors, such as local Baronage, they might go next.
  - All artisans not otherwise recognized is then called in random order to make a choice from the loot present.
- This has a benefit of being a great way to get our beginner artisans out there but also to involve our more seasoned (or more recognized) artisans since they will be doing the sponsoring!
- Space and other considerations here are the same as with the Laurel's Prize Display.

## 5. Tips for Running an A&S Competition

So, you get to run an A&S Competition!?! This can seem intimidating, but this section can help break it down for you!

### 5.1. Getting Entrants

It is hard to have a competition if you have no entrants! Do not expect a “If you build it, they will come” scenario. Artisans often need some encouraging!

#### 5.1.1. Determine Format

- First, determine the format/theme/requirements for your competition. Then, ADVERTISE THAT enthusiastically, early and repeatedly. There is some information about this under “Types of Competitions”
- Also ensure that your judging format is also communicated early. No one should show up on site and find a previously unknown judging requirement!

#### 5.1.2. Advertising and cheerleading

Our artisans are always doing amazing work, but are not always driven to compete. Chat with them, visit guilds and workshops and otherwise catch them doing cool stuff. Recommend that that would be a great entry in the upcoming competition! Don't just rely on the group newsletter or one post on social media. Keep it in front of folks!

#### 5.1.3. Entry Registration

It is recommended to get entry registrations before the event. That way you can be prepared with the appropriate amount of space, judging forms and other resources .

- For entry registration, you may use nearly any method desired.
  - Official registration form
  - Simple email with the desired information
  - Online web form like SurveyMonkey
- It is discouraged to:
  - Use verbal-only registration
  - Require a paper copy of the registration form (because it is the 21st century when we aren't at events!!!)
- For Regional or Kingdom competitions, give serious thought to an online form. This removes a significant barrier to entering because either figuring out how to fill in a form electronically (or manually and scan in) and then email may be more than some are comfortable doing, but at this point, everyone can fill in a web form!

- The Kingdom MoAS has access to a web form. Please contact them at [arts@artemisia.sca.org](mailto:arts@artemisia.sca.org) and they can help you get one setup for your competition.

## 5.2. Awards and Other Recognition

For each competition or display, there will often be recognitions of some sort. This section will help determine what is needed.

### 5.2.1. Determine Awards & Recognition

First step is to determine what recognitions you would like for the competition. For each type of recognition, determine what would be the appropriate physical item, whether it be a scroll, a prize, a preprinted certificate or something else.

- Competition Winner
  - If your competition is to have a winner, it is customary to have a scroll for that entrant.
  - If this is not a Championship competition (perhaps a themed competition), this could also be a prize in addition to or instead of a scroll.
- Competition Runner-Up
  - For a very large competition or a competition where you would like some additional encouragement to your artisans, you might consider a runners-up recognition.
  - For Kingdom of Artemisia, it is custom to give a “Reserve Champion” recognition.
- Guest Champion
  - For local or Kingdom Championships, if you are expecting entries from those outside of the area and wish to exclude them from the Championship, consider a Guest Champion award.
- Populace Choice
  - Populace choice is a fun way to get everyone to come see the entries. Give each event attendee a single token of some sort and let them vote.
  - Methods for Populace Choice
    - Small tokens (glass drops) and cups - This is fairly traditional but chaotic. It can be difficult to tell which cup (or pile of tokens) is for which entry.
    - Stickers on a label card - Everyone gets a small sticker and can put it somewhere on the label card for an entry. This is a great way to do this with little mess or confusion, but the stickers may turn some folks off.
- Royalty Choice

- Confirm this with what Royalty or Baronage is planning to be at the event first. They may even provide their own scroll or prize, but ask them first!
- Laurel's Choice
  - If there are many Laurels present, they may wish to sponsor a prize.
- Lord/Lady of Categories
  - Recognition of whose entry placed the highest in each Artemisia Grand Category. (e.g. “Lord of Lace”)
  - This is only recommended at Kingdom Level. If a Baronial competition wants something like this, perhaps the “Champion of Lace” would be best.
  - Because of how many may be needed here, this is a perfect candidate for doing pre-prints that can be filled in. Have a calligrapher on standby!
- Entry Achievements
  - This is a nice item of feedback for each artisan telling them how their entry placed overall.
  - It is recommended that every entry that actually showed up get some sort or recognition in this fashion, rather than just those “good enough”. Every artisan worked hard to be there!
  - Because of how VERY many may be needed here, this is a perfect candidate for doing pre-prints from a mail-merge that has everything filled in for every entry except the actual achievement level. Have a calligrapher on standby!
- Other recognition ideas
  - Sponsored prizes for particular criteria
  - Thank you tokens for judges or entrants (or other staff)
- Calligrapher
  - You will need a calligrapher to fill in scrolls and pre-prints.
  - Don't assume that YOU will have the time to do it in addition to running the competition!
- Scribes
  - Check with any reigning Royalty or Baronage as they may be the correct ones to commission scrolls.
  - Make sure this gets on a scribal list and check up on it regularly! Don't expect someone else to remember!
  - Give your scroll commissions to your local scribes as soon as possible well before the event.

## 5.3. Competition Preparation and Packing List

What will you need to run a competition? What are you forgetting?!?!?

### 5.3.1. Space considerations

- Ensure that the site has plenty of space for the competition or display. (Try to have the competition close to other main events, rather than far off.)
- Does the site supply adequate tables for displays? If not, you may need to arrange for additional tables or let artisans know to bring their own.
- Try to put out some basic tablecloths to cover the tables if you have access to some. Remind the artisans to bring tablecloths as well!

### 5.3.2. Printouts

This is the key expense of a competition (if you don't have somewhere to print for free). The correct amount of printouts are vital!

- Judging Forms
  - If you plan to have three judges for each entry, you **MUST HAVE THREE COPIES OF THIS FORM FOR EVERY ENTRY.**
  - If you are using a scoring system with different forms for different categories (e.g. one for performance, one for object entries...) then you will need the correct forms for what entries you are expecting.
- Labels for Judging Forms
  - Judging forms need information for the entry that they are for so that judges know what to judge.
    - While you can fill this out with a mail merge, managing this stack and finding what you want can be a nightmare.
    - DON'T hand fill this out or make someone else do it except for a last resort.
  - Consider simply doing a merge and printing out labels for each entry. Then a blank form can get a label and be ready.
    - Remember, for 3 judges per entry, you will need 3 labels per entry.
    - There is a sample Entry Labels Merge document in the Sample Merge Files.zip file on the Kingdom site.
- Judging guidelines
  - If there are any guidelines for the judges to let them know how the scoring will work, have them available. Your judges will thank you!
- Entry Achievement recognition preprints
  - Because of how VERY many may be needed here, it is recommended to do pre-prints from a mail-merge that has

- everything filled in for every entry except the actual achievement level. Have a calligrapher on standby!
  - There is a sample Entry Achievement Merge document in the Sample Merge Files.zip file on the Kingdom site.
- Lord/Lady of Category preprints
  - There is a sample Champion of Category Merge document in the Sample Merge Files.zip file on the Kingdom site.
- Judge's / Entrant's Oath
  - For a championship, it is traditional to have the Entrants and Judges give an oath before the competition. If your herald doesn't like winging it, bring one for them.
  - Examples may be found under judging tips and entry tips.
- Scrolls
  - While these aren't typically printouts, have you checked to make sure that they will be on site?!

### 5.3.3. Packing List

- Pens
  - Inexpensive pens for judges to borrow.
  - Good pens for you to use!
- Index Cards and Markers
  - Have entrants make an index card sign for each entry
  - Helps judges know which item is which.
  - Can be used with stickers for populace choice or put tokens next to
  - For many entries, consider pre printing labels for each entry
- Calligraphy Pen & Ink
  - Someone has to fill in all of those scrolls and preprints!
- Populace choice tokens
  - If you are doing a populace choice award, you will need a way for folks to vote.
- Stapler
  - Grouping sheets to return
- Scissors
  - You will want this at some point!
- Thank you tokens
- A PC, tablet, phone, calculator, etc
  - Score calculations
  - PC/Tablet can be very useful to run a spreadsheet to calculate scores, track judges, etc.

## 5.4. How to Keep Track of this Crazy Whirlwind

The key to keeping a competition running smoothly (or at all!) is planning for success with some organization!

### 5.4.1. Spreadsheet: Coordinator's Best Friend

Whether you fill it in onsite by hand and calculate scores manually or have a computer/tablet on hand and let it do the work for you, this means a Spreadsheet!

- A sample spreadsheet for tracking entries, judges, scores, etc can be found on the Kingdom site!
- Use the spreadsheet to keep track of
  - Who is entering
  - What they are entering
  - Who you asked to judge
  - What the scores are
  - Tallying your scores
  - Finding your winner
  - Determining each entry's achievement level

### 5.4.2. Judging Labels!

When you have a larger competition (more than 20 entries?) handwriting the entrant/entry information on each judging sheet (x3 judges!) can be a pain. Pre-printing the information on the judging sheets can work BUT may be difficult to find the right sheet for the right judge in the chaos that is the day of the competition.

**Consider pre-printed labels** (like address or return-address labels) with the relevant info. Then you just need to manage a bunch of blank forms and several pages of labels. You can even put some useful tracking info onto the label for help tallying/organizing the sheets.

### 5.4.3. Mail Merge

While we are talking about spreadsheets and labels, this is a good place to mention that mail merge is your friend. This is useful for creating Judging labels, ranking/achievement certificates, Entry Display Card labels, Champion of Category certificates and so on.

### 5.4.4. But I really don't know how to use this tech?!

Fair enough! You can absolutely do whatever works for you, though I recommend that you plan ahead! But if you are just feeling a bit daunted,

the Kingdom site should provide a collection of helpful examples, including:

- Competition Tracking spreadsheet example
- Word document examples for merging labels and certificates
- Instructions(!) for doing a mail merge

## 5.5. Other Considerations

### 5.5.1. Organizing Judges

It is best to know ahead of time who your key judges will be. If you know that you have entries in [insert category here], then feel free to seek out someone (who isn't entering) that has expertise in [insert category here]. But there are almost never enough experts in the required categories!

Be open minded. Most experts in one category should have enough experience with the A&S format and experience (combined with the information in the documentation) to provide accurate, encouraging and helpful feedback to our artisans.

Be even more open minded. Give some newer folks a chance. There are plenty of folks out there with alternate experience or that want to help and just need some guidance. Pair them with more experienced judges and let them go. (Hint: This is how you get experienced judges!)

### 5.5.2. On Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

While we expect our artisans and judges to be honest and honorable, it is important to avoid conflicts of interest (or the appearance of it!)

- An entrant may judge other entries ONLY if:
  - The entrant is not going for champion and the entry is in a different category than the entrant's items.
  - The entrant is going for champion and the entry is in a different category than the entrant's items AND is not an entry for championship (display/feedback only).
- Try hard to avoid having someone judge their close friends/family member's entries, though sometimes it is unavoidable.
- If the competition coordinator wishes to enter, it should either be for display only or someone else should line up judges and tally scores. Generally, try not to actually enter (for champion) at your own competition!

### 5.5.3. Vetting Comments

Comments are crucial feedback for our artisans! Beyond the simple scores, they can relate what was good and they should keep doing and what they might do differently next time to get even better. Comments should be helpful and uplifting... But negative comments can also suck the will to create/enter/thrive out of an artisan.

We recommend that every judging sheet be reviewed by an independent and experienced judge to verify that we don't let that last type of comment back to an artisan. Look for language equivalent to "this is bad because" (or anything even worse!) If there are very negative comments, try to get the judge to re-write. You may have to have the item re-judged. Always let the judge know why this was done so that they can improve. (If repeated efforts fail, you may choose to not use that judge in the future.)

Always encourage our judges to make "improvement" type comments in the wording of "Next time, try \_\_\_\_" instead of "I had to score this item down because of \_\_\_\_". It will always be received better and as less of an attack.

### 5.5.4. Tallying Scores

When tallying scores, especially on more complicated scoresheets, always have a doublecheck on the score. The judge can do the first score if someone else verifies!

### 5.5.5. Score Spread Check

If you have multiple judges (recommended), try to keep an eye if the scores are wildly different. (e.g. Two scores in the 60s and one in the 40s). Were two of the judges excessively nice or was one excessively cruel? Consider asking some more experienced judges to give a rescore judging. If the answer comes back higher, you may choose to do a re-do on the very low score (or a re-do on the high scores.. But at least that is less likely to embitter the artisan!)

Typically it is recommended to check a spread of more than 15 points in scores.

## 6. Tips for Entering an A&S Competition

### 6.1. Picking your entries

When preparing for competitions, many times an artisan may not be sure what items to enter. The entry criteria may vary from competition to competition, so it is important to know what is needed. Artemisia Kingdom Championship requirements, for instance, are likely to be 3 items in 3 different Grand Categories (typically 3 very different art forms, though that is subject to change well ahead of time). An artisan can typically enter for championship or just for display/feedback.

For championship, an artisan would do best to understand the judging criteria and make sure that they enter things that are likely to do well. Consider:

- Entries made from period materials/sources will do better than entries made from modern materials/sources.
- Entries made by hand will do better than entries made using modern sources.
- More complex entries (entries that required more steps/skills) will do better than less complex entries.

When entering for feedback/display, an item does not need to be as polished. An artisan may be:

- Looking for feedback on a new skill (what next steps to take)
- Wanting to show around an item that they worked hard on
- Just not that interested in competition but still wanting to participate

### 6.2. Scoring: What are the categories and how successful will an entry be?

#### 6.2.1. Complexity: What is it and how to introduce it?

Typically complexity is based on the difficulty of the task (not how well the work was done or anything about the talent of the artisan!)

- How many steps were there? Were there many diverse steps or many, many repetitions of the same steps?
- Were the steps intended to be hand done or done by modern methods?
- Were the skills required more simple/introductory or ones that required significant practice?
- Were the steps clear or was experimentation required?
- Were there embellishments added that were extra to the requirements?

One question about complexity that is often asked: “Do I really have to shear the sheep, wash the wool, etc, and then weave the shawl??” Nope! A typical competition would put all of this effort into the complexity category, but honestly after just spinning the wool and then weaving a small shawl, an artisan has already maxed out complexity. More steps won’t increase the score! If you want

to do all of that, break them out into multiple entries. “Sheep to Yarn” and “Yarn to Shawl” are two great entries!

### 6.2.2. Authenticity: Research then recreate!

One element that is scored is Authenticity. The best way to score high on this is to research first! It will always impress the judges more to have an entry based on some existing item/recipe/etc (even if it is not an exact duplication). It is also very frustrating for the artisan to try and find something similar to compare their entry to while trying to get ready for a competition!

Entries are rarely direct reproductions. When a substitution is made (ingredients, imagery, colors, materials), the documentation should state the original and what substitutions were made and why. (Costs, availability, toxicity(!), adapting the item to SCA use, customizing the item to a particular person.)

An item that is internally consistent will also score better. This means trying not to combine elements that are otherwise period but clash horribly with each other due to place/time, such as:

- Using a 15th century hand with Celtic knotwork.
- Putting tablet woven trim on a cotehardie.
- Playing a 15th century song on a Greek lyre.
- Using saffron in your lutefisk.

### 6.2.3. Workmanship: Put your best foot forward!

One area that is scored is workmanship. This is where the artisans efforts can really shine through! To score high in workmanship, take care with your efforts. Entering an item that is quickly “slapped together” will end up being reflected in the score.

Ensure that the entry does its best to show good/sturdy/appealing workmanship and that the item is finished wherever possible! What will be looked for will vary dramatically by category! If there are any write-ups available for that category, it is a good idea to take a look while preparing the entry! Otherwise, look at the judging criteria and do your best!\

### 6.2.4. Display: Setting the Scene

The display score is the smallest score but still has benefits. This area boils down to “How well can we see/understand this item.” Some of the score is

straightforward: is it well labeled and is the required (3 copies!) documentation present. The rest of it will be slightly more effort.

Instead of just setting this item (that has had a lot of hard work put into it) down on a table, try for a bit more of a display! This isn't requiring a full science-fair show but consider:

- Putting some examples of the materials and tools used with the items
- If there were intermediary steps, can those be shown?
- Making sure that we can see the item. For a dress, if a dummy isn't available, make sure that it is draped nicely on the table, showing the best parts!
- Can we see the item in use? (For an outfit, consider putting a picture of it ON the wearer so the fit can be seen!)
- For a food item, make sure that appropriate serving ware are available (and do what can be done about temperature/dryness/bugs!)
- For a music item or demonstration, try to have musicians dress appropriately for the entry.

All of these things will help the judges as well as all the viewers understand more about the entry simply by putting it into context!

### 6.2.5. Documentation

Documentation is an important (and required) part of an Arts & Sciences entry. It is important to know about how an entry was made and what it was based on. This element can be intimidating (or irritating) to an artisan because:

- "I don't know what/how to write it"
- "This isn't my entry... why should this be judged?"
- "I don't have time for this"

While documentation is required in Artemisia, a research paper is NOT required. The next section will give more information on Documentation for an Arts & Sciences entry.

## 6.3. Documentation

### 6.3.1. Purpose of Documentation

Documentation is an important (and required) part of an Arts & Sciences entry. It is important to know about how an entry was made and what it was based on. The purpose of Documentation is to:

- **To inform the judge about the tools, materials and methods used in the entry.** Judges rarely simply know what steps were taken or (unless it is ok to set the dress on fire and sniff it!) what materials were used. They use this knowledge to help them score authenticity and complexity.

- **To inform the judge about the period basis of the entry.** What was this based on? What was the original recipe? What made the artisan decide to do it this way? Even a judge with some knowledge may not be aware of the specific recipe or example the entrant is using! This information may be very helpful in determining authenticity and workmanship.
- **To inform any who are interested about the item.** It isn't just about the judges. An entry's documentation could be what inspires another artisan to get interested and involved (and then know what to do next!!)

### 6.3.2. Basic questions to answer

Make sure that your documentation answers the following questions

- Does the documentation include: who, what, where, when, why, and how?
  - What is it?
  - What was the item like in period? (Give period examples or discussion)
  - Where was the country/region of origin?
  - When was the time period it was made/used?
  - Who used it in period?
  - Why was it used in period?
  - Why did the entrant create the item?
  - How was it made in period?
  - How did the entrant make it? (Types of materials, techniques, and tools )
- What were the steps used and are the technique(s) being demonstrated clearly explained?
  - Add drawings, photos, pictures, diagrams, recipes included where appropriate
  - Give for why any substitutions/compromises were made in materials/tools/techniques
- Does the documentation utilize good sources which support the entry and prominently include primary sources ?
  - Is information appropriately cited? (i.e. Can you tell where the information came from?)
  - Is there a bibliography of some sort? It should contain information on the sources (books, articles, museum entries, recipes, etc)

### 6.3.3. Play to the judges

Remember that the judges need this documentation to determine much of the scores. Give them details on the process and sources and this will help the judges, which will in turn help the entry.

### 6.3.4. Other things to think about

Some other things to consider adding

- A section on Lessons Learned: What went well? What would you do differently next time?
- Be concise. If your documentation is too long, the judges will have to spend a long time reading it (which can make them cranky!) If there are more than 3 pages of text (other than an Intro page and a Bibliography) then maybe put some content into an Appendix, or consider a Research Paper entry!.

### 6.3.5. Template suggestions

Documentation does not have to be from scratch! There are many templates that simply allow the artisan to write in the answers to questions. The artisan will still need to know the period sources and background, but it can be a good place to start.

Look at the Kingdom Web Page for more information and examples!

### 6.3.6. Bring Three Copies!!!

Make sure and make 3 copies of the documentation so that the judges don't have to fight about it.

## 6.4. Other Tips for Entrants

### 6.4.1. Before the Event

Before the event, remember:

- **Pre-Register:** Many competitions require pre-registering so that the coordinator can plan. Even if you are on the fence about entering, pre-register! You can always back out but you can't register late.
- **Grand Categories:** Make sure that your entries cover the required number of Grand Categories! The list of Grand Categories is on the Kingdom Website.
- **If you can't make the event** and you would still like to enter, request permission from the coordinator and the relevant nobility (King/Queen for a Kingdom Championship, etc). Know that, since you won't be there to setup your display or to answer questions, some scoring may suffer.

### 6.4.2. At the Event

- **Be on time!** This will give you time to setup and keep the coordinator from fretting! If something happens and you will be late, send word!

- **Entrant's Oath:** Before a competition, judges and entrants both will often be asked to take an oath before the crown. Take it. It may vary, but an example is:

This day do I, \_\_\_\_\_, enter into the competition for  
Championship of the Arts and Sciences of the Kingdom of  
Artemisia.

I swear that all entries are the work of my own hands.

I swear that I will try to receive all feedback as a gift of time with  
the intent to guide me forward.

I swear that, should I win this day, I will serve as the Champion  
from this day until the next competition;

To represent the kingdom,

To encourage other artisans,

And to help further the Arts and Sciences in the Kingdom.

So say I, \_\_\_\_\_.

## 6.5. Judging feedback

### 6.5.1. What is feedback?

The goal of the judging comments is to let the artisan know things that went well in this project and other things that would do even better in the future.

Feedback does NOT mean that the judge did not like the entry or that they were not impressed. A judge is *instructed* in these competitions to suggest future improvements. Almost all skills or projects can be event better.

Some artisans crave feedback. Others hate it because it can feel like an attack. It can help to remember that the judge is trying to help and that, as an artisan, you have already impressed the judges by creating an entering your item!

### 6.5.2. How to use constructive feedback

Look through the feedback received (comments and scores alike) and try to determine what the judge was looking for. If your entry got good comments/scores on certain areas, keep doing that! If your entry had suggestions for the future, consider them. That is all that is suggested. If you have more questions on suggestions, most judges welcome friendly follow-ups!

### 6.5.3. What to do with feedback (or scoring) that is unpleasant

If your scoring or comments were not what you had expected/hoped for, the first step is to try to look at it through the judge's eyes. What is the wording of the question? Based on that wording, is the scoring understandable? For the comments, do the suggestions make sense?

Coordinators try to catch problematic judging, but if you find yourself with judging forms with scores that are wildly off what the question/rubrics suggest OR if the comments entered are abrasive or mean, please follow up with the competition coordinator, the local Arts & Sciences officer or even the Kingdom Arts & Sciences officer. The Arts & Sciences community would rather help our artisans than turn them off of sharing their entries (... probably forever!) Let one of these people mediate between you and the judge in question.

#### 6.5.4. Ask your judges – Be polite

If a judge makes suggestions, they are typically up for follow-up questions. Some will even suggest it (because they likely have a lot of cool resources that can't be shared in one comment page!) If you do follow-up with a judge due to questions or due to issues with scoring, please keep it polite. Just as artisans have been discouraged from entering due to bad experiences, so have judges been discouraged due to being confronted after competitions. If you have an issue with the judging, have someone mediate conversations!

## 7. Tips for Judging an A&S Competition

### 7.1. Remember the purpose of the competition

Remember the purpose of A&S Competitions, from the Handbook Introduction:

- **First and foremost to encourage and further the Artisan**
- To further the Arts & Sciences in the Kingdom of Artemisia
- To determine the winner of the competition

This means that your job as a judge is to be fair and honest with the goal of encouragement. This should be reflected in your scoring and especially your comments. Whatever scoring criteria is used, follow it as best as you can to remain objective but bolster the artisan with your comments as much as possible. Not every entry is a masterwork, but EVERY entry represents time, energy, hard work and dedication on the part of the artisan!

### 7.2. Understand the criteria and follow it

Whatever judging criteria are being used, read the scoring and follow as closely as possible! Regardless of the exact scoring methods, below are some thoughts on the general categories:

#### 7.2.1. Thoughts on Complexity

Typically complexity is based on the difficulty of the task (not how well the work was done or anything about the talent of the artisan!)

- How many steps were there? Were there many diverse steps or many, many repetitions of the same steps?
- Were the steps intended to be hand done or done by modern methods?
- Were the skills required more simple/introductory or ones that required significant practice?
- Were the steps clear or was experimentation required?
- Were there embellishments added that were extra to the requirements?

One question about complexity that is often asked: “Do I really have to shear the sheep, wash the wool, etc, and then weave the shawl??” Nope! A typical competition would put all of this effort into the complexity category, but honestly after just spinning the wool and then weaving a small shawl, an artisan has already maxed out complexity. Judging an item based on excessive expectations is unreasonable. Remember, in period, one person rarely did all of those things!

#### 7.2.2. Thoughts on Authenticity

Authenticity is shown in how well an item conforms to period examples, practices, materials, tools, etc. Entries are rarely direct reproductions. When a substitution is made (ingredients, imagery, colors, materials), the artisan should state the original and what substitutions were made and why. (Costs, availability, toxicity(!), adapting the item to SCA use, customizing the item to a particular person.) The more reasonable and seamless the substitution, the less it should affect the Authenticity score.

An item that is *internally consistent* will also score better. This means trying not to combine elements that are otherwise period but clash horribly with each other due to place/time, such as:

- Using a 15th century hand with Celtic knotwork.
- Putting tablet woven trim on a cotehardie.
- Playing a 15th century song on a Greek lyre.
- Using saffron in your lutefisk.

### 7.2.3. Thoughts on Workmanship

Workmanship is where the artisans efforts really shine through! Careful, thorough work is likely to score higher while an entry that is quickly “slapped together” will end up being reflected in the score.

Some categories may have guides on what to look for in workmanship. If that is not available, use the documentation, as well as other experts, to try and understand what good workmanship looks like (as it may well be different than what is considered good in modern times!)

### 7.2.4. Thoughts on Display

This area boils down to “How well can we see/understand this item.” Instead of just setting this item (that has had a lot of hard work put into it) down on a table, did the artisan use the display to help with the understanding for the entry by putting it into context?

- Putting some examples of the materials and tools used with the items
- If there were intermediary steps, can those be shown?
- Making sure that we can see the item. For a dress, if a dummy isn’t available, make sure that it is draped nicely on the table, showing the best parts!
- Can we see the item in use? (For an outfit, consider putting a picture of it ON the wearer so the fit can be seen!)
- For a food item, make sure that appropriate serving ware are available (and do what can be done about temperature/dryness/bugs!)
- For a music item or demonstration, try to have musicians dress appropriately for the entry.

### 7.2.5. Thoughts on Documentation

Documentation is an important (and required) part of an Arts & Sciences entry. It is important to know about how an entry was made and what it was based on. The purpose of Documentation is to:

- **To inform the judge about the tools, materials and methods used in the entry.** Judges rarely simply know what steps were taken or (unless it is ok to set the dress on fire and sniff it!) what materials were

used. They use this knowledge to help them score authenticity and complexity.

- **To inform the judge about the period basis of the entry.** What was this based on? What was the original recipe? What made the artisan decide to do it this way? Even a judge with some knowledge may not be aware of the specific recipe or example the entrant is using! This information may be very helpful in determining authenticity and workmanship.

### 7.3. But I'm not an expert in that category!?

Frequently, judges are asked to review an entry that they are not an expert in. It is rarely possible to get only experts as judges! However, there are many things that you can use to help augment your knowledge in a category.

- **Read the documentation.** This should give a solid grounding on the item including Time/Place, examples in period, tools and materials used and the steps required. Many times this information, combined with general knowledge of the time period, will allow a judge to give fair and encouraging feedback on an item.
- **Ask and expert.** Sometimes there may be an expert on site that you would like some more information from. (Chances are, they are one of the other judges.) Ask them questions! Try to keep the questions specific and not just “What do you think?” Otherwise, your judging form just reflects theirs. But they are a good resource.
- **Ask the entrant.** If the entrant is onsite, in Artemisia it is allowed to go and ask them questions. You may learn a whole lot more about the entry and the art! Chances are that the entrant would love to talk about it. They did enter it, after all!

### 7.4. Let the coordinator know if you are having trouble

If you agree to judge an entry (or entries), be honest with the competition coordinator if you have too many entries to judge or are hitting a snag. They can find someone to help or take some of the entries off of your hands.

Waiting until the end to finish judging (or admit that you need help) just results in frazzled judges, coordinators and likely an overly quick judging process for the entry/entrant. (In fact, just get it done early! 😊)

### 7.5. Comments and how to leave great ones

#### 7.5.1. What are comments?

Comments are feedback letting the artisan know your thoughts on the item above and beyond the score. Comments can be encouraging or very off-putting even when they say essentially the same thing. Try following the recommendations below to ensure that you are doing what you can to make the competition a good experience for the artisan.

### 7.5.2. Tips for leaving great feedback

- **Write what you liked about the item:** There were likely some aspects of the entry that were well done (or well conceived). Make sure and list some!
  - *Your stitches were very even.*
  - *The use of orange here was an excellent touch.*
  - *This was a very ambitious effort and I liked that you were trying something new!*
  - *You choice of color was perfect.*
  - *Great job on your lettering.*
- **Write what efforts would raise this item to the next level:** What would get this item to be even better! Don't mention every single thing. (That can be overwhelming.) Just your top 2-4 suggestions for improvement. But ALWAYS try to keep it talking about the NEXT effort. That helps remove any sting about *this* effort.
  - *Next time, I would love to see what this would look like done with linen.*
  - *Have you considered trying a diapering pattern here? I bet it would make your next piece even better.*
  - *You already mentioned in your documentation but definitely keep an eye on your oven temperatures next time.*
  - *I would like to see what this design would look like if you tried it with hand tools.*
- **Do not use this to justify your score:** If we try to justify our (low) scores in the comments, it is generally take as negative... even if *you* didn't mean it that way! Your scores are your scores. (Though try to be as fair and objective as possible.)
  - *I had to take points off due to your uneven hem. (Artist will read as "Your hem was bad.")*
  - *You would have gotten more points if you had used hand tools. (Artist will read as "Your efforts weren't enough.")*
  - *Low authenticity because this wasn't really period. (Artist may be new. What about this could be adapted to our time period for next time?)*
  - *Your display didn't really enhance your item. (Artist may not even have set this up. How is this giving them ideas for next time? What would you like to see?)*
- **Bad news sandwich:** Sometimes you do have to give direct feedback. This is proved to be best received in a "bad news sandwich", or putting the feedback between positive comments.
  - *Your display did a good job of showing your ingredients. THE texture of your pie was somewhat dry, though that could have been just due to it having to sit out! The cheese was perfect here!*

- *I really liked the illuminated capital on your scroll. Your text lines were somewhat uneven.. Definitely try to use lines or some other guide. Your lettering was beautiful!*

- **Bring a pen:** The ones on site suck.

## 7.6. Judges Oath

Before a competition, judges and entrants both will often be asked to take an oath before the crown. Take it. (Even if you aren't sure if you are judging!) It may vary, but an example is:

This day do I, \_\_\_\_\_,

Swear to serve this kingdom and its artisans as an Arts and Sciences judge.

I swear to judge honestly and fairly.

I swear to provide written feedback in order to encourage and further the artisan and the Arts of the Kingdom of Artemisia.

So say I, \_\_\_\_\_.