



OVERVIEW

This is a scheme of assessment of ability to produce sound working books which will open at any point so as to be comfortably readable. Where appropriate, they should stand upright on a shelf and lie flat with the covers closed.

Binders gain training and experience from a variety of sources. The scheme is designed to assess the products of that training and experience. It is not designed to be a curriculum or syllabus for a course of tuition.

There is no implied hierarchy of competences in this set of Certificates.

A good working knowledge of appropriate materials (type, weight, quality) and techniques is assumed; attention is paid, for example, to:

- Grain direction of all machine-made materials
- Correct and even tension of sewing
- Minimum damage to sections during sewing
- Accuracy of cutting boards and trimming textblocks (within 0.5mm and with square corners)
- Even distribution of swell and backing, joint suitable to board thickness and binding style
- Suitability of structure to binding requirements
- Uniformity of leather paring (where appropriate)

Applicants should supply a group of about five books for assessment, covering the criteria outlines for the Certificate in whichever way they choose, to show their skill in the design and production of hand-made books. This group should have been completed by the applicant, without aid, during the previous 18 months.

There will also be a timed practical exercise organized on a regional basis in which applicants will be asked to perform a definite task using a supplied kit of materials. This exercise will be waived by prior negotiation for those undertaking recognized courses of instruction.

Photographs of work in progress may be submitted, but this is not essential. Applicants may also submit a brief description of the bindings with reasons for their choice of materials, design, etc., particularly if non-traditional methods are used.

The assessors will provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

The cost of the Certificate will be £30 to cover the assessment, administration and postage.

The holder acknowledges the Society's right to withdraw a Certificate on evidence that the holder's skills have fallen below the standard of the award. The holder may be re-installed by further assessment.



CLOTH CASED-IN BOOKS

Five or six items to show cloth cased-in books, to include at least one example of each of:

- **Different binding structures:**

- single section, soft-backed (this section may also include a flat-backed single section)
- flat-backed multi-section, thesis or paperback re-case
- multi-section, rounded and backed

- **Different styles of cover:**

- full cloth
- half cloth
- quarter cloth

- **Endbands, handmade (not sewn e.g., rolled cloth) or machine-made**

- **Some form of edge decoration (e.g., top edge colouring after trimming/ploughing)**

- **Titling in a suitable fashion (e.g., in foil or carbon)**

- at least one example of lettering by hand on the spine, otherwise blocked leather labels are acceptable

- **There will be a timed practical exercise, organised regionally**

NB: These specifications may change from time to time and according to demand. However, the criteria for demonstrating competence will remain.



QUARTER- AND HALF-LEATHER

Four or five items to show:

- **A Library Binding on tapes with tight back**

- **Quarter and half leather bindings with cloth and/or patterned paper sides**
 - sections sewn on tapes, rounded and backed, trimmed at least at the head
 - common made endpapers
 - sewn endbands
 - Oxford hollow over sawn-in cords (may use an old textblock)
 - boards laced to sewing supports
 - sides trimmed and filled
 - insides of boards trimmed and filled
 - an album in half leather (required)

- **Top edge decoration**
 - colour, sprinkling, etc. (not necessarily gilding)

- **Simple titling on spine in real gold foil or gold leaf and some blind decoration**

- **At least one item in a slipcase**

- **Practical timed exercise**

NB: These specifications may change from time to time and according to demand. However, the criteria for demonstrating competence will remain.



FULL LEATHER BINDINGS

Four or five items to show:

- **Full leather bindings**

- sections sewn on tapes or cords, rounded and backed, trimmed (the head, at least)
- flexible (raised cords) binding on at least one example
- if not flexibly sewn, Oxford hollow with and without false bands
- sewn endbands
- at least one example of a leather-jointed endpaper and doublure
- laminated boards and boards laced to sewing supports
- insides of boards trimmed and filled

- **An example of a Cambridge panel**

- **Edge decoration**

- gold leaf – rough and solid – the head, at least

- **Titling and gold decoration on spine and boards, as appropriate**

- **At least one example to be presented in a drop-back box**

- **Practical timed exercise**

NB: These specifications may change from time to time and according to demand. However, the criteria for demonstrating competence will remain.



LIBRARY-STYLE BINDINGS

The Certificate should show the development of forwarding skills and an understanding of the relationship between the construction and the opening properties of the book, etc.

Four or five multi-section volumes, rounded and backed, to show:

- **Tight-backed library style**

- in quarter- or half-leather, sewn on tapes
- split/laminated boards and exposed cloth joints
- cloth sides
- endbands may be sewn for extra quality; otherwise, library endcaps should be used
- the edges of the tapes may be emphasised with blind lines

- **Full buckram with hollow and smooth back**

- split/laminated boards
- library endcaps and corners
- French or supported grooves at joints

- **Examples of common made endpapers**

- with hidden and exposed cloth reinforcements and an extra fold of 'white', sewn on, with waste sheets forming the flanges for the split boards

- **Insides of boards**

- trimmed and filled

- **At least one item in a slipcase**

- **An example of simple edge decoration**

- at least at the top edge; colour, sprinkling (not necessarily gilding)

- **Titling**

- on spine in real gold foil or gold leaf
- some blind decoration

- **Timed practical exercise**

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