

A Submitters' Guide to Submissions

This guide is intended to help you submit names or armory to the College of Arms in the SCA for registration. It gives you an overview of the standards Laurel will use to evaluate your submission and gives you tips on how to make sure that it doesn't have any problems.

There are a few places where this guide may direct you to a specific part of the full Standards for Evaluation of Names and Armory, which are the authoritative version that your submissions are judged by. Don't panic! You'll only need to look at those full Standards in limited cases and this guide directs you right to the part you need. If there's anything that doesn't make sense to you, just ask for help – there are heralds who are happy to give further guidance and help.

Introduction

There are three broad categories of submissions: personal name submissions, non-personal name submissions, and armory submissions. Feel free to skip down to the section for the type of submission you're working on - just remember that armory needs a name to be attached to.

Personal Names

Personal names are pretty straightforward – they're names for individual people. You'll need to show that it's a reasonable name for someone in the places and times included in the SCA, that it's not too close to one that someone else has, and that it doesn't claim something special about you. There are more details below, but that's the basic idea.

First, you must document each part of your name. Name parts are sometimes called "elements". There are two ways you can show this (sometimes you'll use one way for part of your name and the other way for another part):

- Show that the part of your name is plausible for a normal period person to have. This may mean that it was used by everyday people before 1600 (that is, not mythical or legendary people, not gods). It may mean that it is constructed from period name parts. It may mean that it follows a period pattern of borrowed literary or religious names. It may mean showing that it is grammatically correct for its place in the name, which Appendix A of the full Rules for Submission can help you with.

OR

- Show that the part of your name is legal for you to register. You may use parts of your legal name, or use the registered name of an SCA branch (in its registered form). You

A Submitters' Guide to Submissions

may use parts of a name already registered to you or a close legal relative (the Grandfather Clause).

Second, you must document that your name as a whole is a plausible combination of parts. There are three ways you can show this:

- Show that your name as a whole is plausible for a specific time and place. This generally means two things. First, that each part of your name does not mix languages. Second, that all parts of your name date to within 500 years of one another. SCA branch names and legal names may be combined with any language or date.

OR

- Show that the languages in your name are listed as okay to combine in Appendix C of the Standards for Evaluation. It has a straightforward table which puts each language into “regional groups” and describe which of those groups are okay to combine.

Your name can combine any languages that are in a single regional group. If you do this, all parts of your name must date to within 500 years of one another.

Your name can combine any two languages in regional groups that are listed as okay to combine. If you do this, all parts of your name must date to within 300 years of one another, and it cannot combine more than two languages. SCA branch names and legal names may be combined with any languages and dates.

OR

- Show that the languages in your name were combined in personal names before 1600. This means showing that names were written down that mixed both languages in the same name. It's not enough to just show that people who spoke those languages lived together or that names were written down in both languages separately.

Third, your name must not be too close to any registered SCA names or unintentionally give the impression that you have a close relationship to a person with a registered SCA name, like being that person's spouse or child. We call both of these things “conflict”. To avoid this, your name needs to be different in sound and appearance – that is, it has to sound different when it's said out loud and look different when it's written down – and it needs to not use someone else's SCA name.

In general, changes which affect at least two syllables are enough. Substantially changing both the sound and appearance of a single syllable (not including articles and prepositions) is usually

A Submitters' Guide to Submissions

enough. There are special rules about changes to very short names. If your name indicates a close relationship with someone, it needs to not be *unmistakably* using a registered SCA name.

We encourage you to get help with checking that your name doesn't conflict with any registered SCA names! The tools for searching the Ordinary and Armorial don't know about all the possible spellings of names. Fortunately, name conflict is pretty uncommon, given that there are so many possible names out there. However, if you find that your name would conflict with a registered SCA name, one option is to find that person to ask for a letter of permission to conflict. A letter of permission to conflict allows you to register a name that is close but not identical or a name that appears to claim a close relationship.

Fourth, your name must not claim something special about you that isn't true in the SCA or that we don't let anyone claim. We call these kinds of claims "presumption". There are two main kinds of claims like this that you need to avoid:

- Your name cannot be too close to the name of an important person outside the SCA (like George Washington or Diana of Wales) or give the impression of having a close relationship with such a person, like being their spouse or child. Due to the number of important people this includes, we don't list them all in the Ordinary and Armorial.

This works like "conflict" does - your name needs to be different in sound and appearance. In general, changes which affect at least two syllables are enough. Substantially changing both the sound and appearance of a single syllable (not including articles and prepositions) is usually enough. There are special rules about changes to very short names. If your name indicates a close relationship with someone, it needs to not be *unmistakably* using an important person's name.

AND

- Your name may not make a claim to a rank you don't permanently have in the SCA. This includes using a protected title, a family name used only by royalty, and so on. It also can't make a claim to magical powers, divine origin, or things like that.

Again, we encourage you to get help with checking that your name doesn't presume on any important names outside the SCA or make any presumptuous claims. However, there isn't any way to get permission to make these kinds of claims.

Lastly, the name must not be offensive. The standards for offensiveness are quite high – just don't go out of your way to be offensive and it's unlikely you'll have a problem.

A Submitters' Guide to Submissions

Non-Personal Names

Names that aren't for an individual are called "non-personal names". They come in four major kinds: branch names, household names, order and award names, and heraldic titles. You'll need to show that it's a reasonable name for one of those things in the places and times included in the SCA, that it's not too close to one that someone else has, and that it doesn't claim something special about the group, household, order, or herald. There are more details below, but that's the basic idea.

First, each part of the name you are submitting must be documented. Non-personal names all have two parts – the part that says what kind of name it is (a designator like "House" or "Shire"), and the part that says which one it is. There are two ways you can show this (sometimes you'll use one way for part of your name and the other way for another part):

- Show that the part of your name is plausible for a normal period person or group of people to have used for this kind of non-personal name. This may mean that it was used by normal people before 1600. It may mean that it is constructed from parts of period names from the same time and place. It may mean that it follows a period pattern of borrowed literary or religious names.

OR

- Show that the part of your name is legal for you to register. You may use parts of your legal name, or use the registered name of an SCA branch (in its registered form). You may use parts of a name you or a close legal relative have already registered (the Grandfather Clause). For the "designator" part, you may use the standard SCA terms.

Second, the name as a whole must be documented to be plausible for a given time and place and for the type of name it is. This generally means three things. First, it means that all the parts of the name are from the same language, or that the "designator" part is the standard SCA term and the rest of it is all from a single language. Your non-personal name can only mix languages if you can document those languages being mixed in that kind of name during our period. Second, it means that all parts of the name date to within 500 years of one another. Third, it means that the name as a whole is constructed like the names for the same kind of group of people, order, or heralds.

Third, your non-personal name must not be too close to any registered SCA non-personal name or give the impression of being owned by or affiliated with any registered SCA name. We call both of these things "conflict". To avoid this, your name needs to be different in sound and

A Submitters' Guide to Submissions

appearance – that it is, it has to sound different when it's said out loud and look different when it's written down – and it can't use someone else's SCA name. That means you can't register, for example, "House of Cariadoc of the Bow", unless you're actually him.

In general, changes which affect at least two syllables are enough. Substantially changing both the sound and appearance of a single syllable (not including articles and prepositions) is usually enough. There are special rules about changes to very short names. If it indicates ownership by or affiliation with someone, it needs to not be *unmistakably* using a registered SCA name. However, changing the "designator" part doesn't count.

We encourage you to get help with checking that your name doesn't conflict with any registered SCA names! The tools for searching the Ordinary and Armorial don't know about all the possible spellings of names. If you find that your name would conflict with a registered SCA name, one option is to find that person to ask for a letter of permission to conflict. A letter of permission to conflict allows you to register a name that is close but not identical or a name that appears to claim ownership or affiliation. In some cases, that letter can let you register a name where only the "designator" part changes (see section NPN.3.E of the full Standards for Evaluation for Names and Armory if you need details).

Fourth, your non-personal name must not claim something special about the group of people (or the herald) that it refers to that we don't let anyone claim. We call these kinds of claims "presumption". There are two main kinds of claims like this that you need to avoid:

- Your non-personal name cannot create the appearance of ownership by or affiliation with important people outside the SCA. This means you couldn't register the Order of George Washington or the House of Henry Tudor. These names are not listed in the Ordinary and Armorial, but are identified when the case comes up. This works like "conflict" does - your non-personal name needs to be different in sound and appearance.

In general, changes which affect at least two syllables are enough. Substantially changing both the sound and appearance of a single syllable (not including articles and prepositions) is usually enough. There are special rules about changes to very short names. If it indicates ownership by or affiliation with someone, it needs to not be *unmistakably* using a registered SCA name.

AND

A Submitters' Guide to Submissions

- Your non-personal name may not make a claim to rank that you don't have in the SCA or a claim that we don't allow anyone to make. You may not use a title you don't have permanently. You may not use a family name used only by royalty. Titles can be used in place names (like Kings Crossing), as that usage makes no claim to rank. You may not make a claim to magical powers, divine origin and the like.

Again, we encourage you to get help with checking that your name doesn't presume on any important names outside the SCA or make any presumptuous claims. However, there isn't any way to get permission to make these kinds of claims.

Lastly, the name must not be offensive. The standards for offensiveness are quite high – just don't go out of your way to be offensive and it's unlikely you'll have a problem.

Armory

In addition to registering names, anyone in the SCA can register armory. The primary piece of armory you register is your device (also called arms, and is what you think of when someone says "coat of arms"). You can also have badges to mark your belongings or people associated with you – they can either be fielded, looking like devices, or be fieldless, meaning that it doesn't have a specific background. A Crown can also award you an Augmentation of Arms, which lets you add to your already registered device. Together, we call these "armory".

This guide will talk about the first three kinds (devices and both kinds of badges), including the devices that augmentations go on. There are special rules that apply to augmentations; if you have been given an Augmentation of Arms, you will want look at section A.3.A.3 of the full Standards for Evaluation of Names and Armory for those special rules or get heraldic help.

When you are preparing your armory for submission, you should know that we register the image (emblazon), not the description (blazon). However, we use the description for many purposes, and scribes will use the description when making scrolls for you with your arms on them. So, we have to be able to both recognize all the parts in the image *and* describe it in heraldic terms (blazon).

Just like with names, you'll need to show that your design is suitable armory for someone in the places and times included in the SCA, that it's not too close to armory that someone else has, and that it doesn't claim something special about you. There are more details below, but that's the basic idea.

A Submitters' Guide to Submissions

First, your armory must be compatible with period style heraldry. Unlike names, we have a set of standardized style rules that you can use without documenting every single part of your armory, called the “Core Style” rules. If you want to do something outside those rules, you can document each part of your armory under the “Individually Attested Pattern” rules.

For the “Core Style” rules:

- You need to show that all the parts of your armory are compatible with pre-1600 heraldry. Most of the time, you won't need to do anything special for this. Just use standard tinctures (colors and metals and furs) and standard charges and you'll be ok.

For some things, you'll need to do a little more work. For example, you must document charges that have not been registered before or that have not been registered for several years. In some cases, you must document that the specific part of the armory is legal for you to register – such as it being a part of armory that is already registered to you or a close legal relative (we call this the Grandfather Clause).

- You need to make sure your armory has good contrast. This is sometimes described as “no colors on colors, no metals on metals”. We call all the things in the box of markers “tinctures” and split them into “colors” and “metals”:
 - Colors: red, blue, black, green, and purple plus any furs that have those colors as their main background. They have good contrast with metals.
 - Metals: white and silver, yellow and gold plus any furs that have those metals as their main background. They have good contrast with colors.
 - Neutral: things that are evenly split between a color and a metal. They have good contrast with either color or metal.

You can only put charges directly on fields or charges that they have good contrast with.

When you divide up a field or a charge into parts, the parts are next to each other, not on top of each other, so it depends on how you are dividing it up. A field or charge divided evenly into two parts may combine any tinctures that do not share a background color. A field or charge divided evenly into four parts (per saltire or quarterly) may combine any tinctures that do not share a background color. Other divisions must generally have good contrast between the parts.

- You need to make sure that the charge groups in your armory are simple and arranged in a way that we can describe with heraldic terms (that “blazon” thing again). For

A Submitters' Guide to Submissions

example, groups with more than two types of charges are not allowed. The big, main, central charge or charges need to be big and important enough that they can't be confused with any smaller, secondary charges around them. Ordinaries need to be in a charge group by themselves.

- Overall, your armory must be simple in period ways. For example, if you count up the number of types of charges and the number of tinctures, that number shouldn't be any bigger than eight. If your armory uses more than two charge groups, you must show that it matches a period pattern for arranging the groups.

For the Individually Attested Pattern rules:

- You need to show that the design is compatible with the armorial style of a specific time and place, including the charges and placement of charges. Such a design can break the rules described in the above sections. To do this, three closely matching examples or six examples that bracket the submission in complexity must be documented.

If you want to use these rules, you will want to look at section A.5 of the full Standards for Evaluation of Names and Armory and probably get heraldic help.

Second, your armory must not be too close to any registered SCA armory or give the impression that you have a close relationship to a person with registered SCA armory, like being that person's spouse or child. We call both of these things "conflict". Your armory doesn't conflict with someone else's armory if it has a single large change from their armory or if it has two smaller changes like those used for cadency. "Cadency" is what we call the changes to armory that people used in the SCA's period to show that they were related to someone. We call these changes "distinct changes", because the changes used in period "cadency" changed over time and from place to place.

We divide all the charges on the field into three kinds of charge groups, which we call "primary", "secondary", and "tertiary". The primary charge group is the big, main, central charge or charges on the field. Secondary charge groups are other charges that are on the field. Tertiary charge groups are charges that are "on" other charges.

Larger changes that make your armory not conflict with someone else's (you only need **one** of these):

- Your armory adds or removes the primary charge group.
- Your armory makes a single substantial change affects the entire primary charge group. This includes substantial changes in type, in number, in arrangement, or in posture of

A Submitters' Guide to Submissions

that group. If you make a smaller change to the primary charge group, it may still count as one of the two smaller changes you need below.

- Your armory makes a substantial change to the field, **if** it doesn't have a primary charge group.

OR

Smaller changes that count towards making your armory not conflict with someone else's (you need at least **two** of these):

- Your armory changes the field in a way that affects half the field. If your armory or theirs is a fieldless badge, it automatically gets this, even if both of them are fieldless.
- Your armory adds or removes any charge group.
- Your armory changes the tincture of at least half of any charge group.
- Your armory changes the type of charges of at least half of any charge group.
- Your armory changes the number of charges within any charge group. However, this doesn't count if both your charge group and their matching charge group has six or more (including "semy") charges in that charge group.
- Your armory changes the arrangement of charges within a charge group or changes where the charge group is on the field (like "in canton", or "in base").
- Your armory changes the posture or orientation of at least half of the charges in any charge group.

We encourage you to get help with checking that your armory doesn't conflict with any registered SCA armory! There are lots of ways that things can be blazoned that are equivalent for conflict (like dogs and wolves), so searching the Ordinary and Armorial takes some training. If you find that your armory would conflict with already registered SCA armory, one option is to find that person to ask for a letter of permission to conflict. A letter of permission to conflict allows you to register armory that is close but not identical or armory that appears to claim a close relationship.

Third, your armory must not claim something special about you that isn't true in the SCA or that we don't let anyone claim. We call these kinds of claims "presumption". There are three main kinds of claims like this that you need to avoid:

A Submitters' Guide to Submissions

- Your armory must not be too close to any non-SCA armory that we protect. Generally, we only protect the armory of important people and places. We list protected non-SCA armory in the Ordinary and Armorial. The standards for this are the same as for “conflict” as described above.
- Your armory may not make a claim to a rank you don't have. For charges that are restricted to certain ranks (like chains and crowns), you must show that you are entitled to use them. Some things cannot be registered at all, like the Red Cross on a white background.
- Your armory may not give the impression that it combines multiple inherited or personal arms, known as marshalling. In general, this means that, if your armory uses a “per pale” or “quarterly” line of division for the field, it should either: have no charges; have only a single type of primary charge; or use a complex line of division for the “per pale” or “quarterly” field (like wavy or indented).

Again, we encourage you to get help with checking that your armory doesn't presume on any important armory outside the SCA, make any presumptuous claims, or look like marshalling. However, there isn't any way to get permission to make these kinds of claims.

Lastly, the armory must not be offensive. The standards for offensiveness are quite high – just don't go out of your way to be offensive and it's unlikely you'll have a problem.

Conclusion

As you can see, the basics of registering a name, device, or badge in the SCA are fairly straightforward ... there are only four things you need to do:

- Show that it's reasonable for someone in the times and places in the SCA to have used.
- Make sure that it doesn't conflict with anyone else in the SCA.
- Make sure that it doesn't presume on anyone important outside the SCA, by saying there's something special about you, or by looking like you inherited it.

AND

- Make sure that it's not offensive.

Hopefully, this guide gives you enough direction to get well on your way towards registration. If not, heralds are standing by, ready to help you.