

Lodge and Chapter Badges

The following notes are intended to help Lodges and Chapters in preparing designs for their badges **before** submitting them to the Grand Secretary or Grand Scribe E (via the Metropolitan, Provincial or District Grand Secretary or Scribe E, where appropriate) for the approval of the MW The Grand Master or the ME The First Grand Principal.

The principles explained in the notes apply equally to designs – which also require approval – for Founders' Jewels, Past Masters' Jewels and Banners, etc. (see 'Approval of Designs' in *Information for the Guidance of Members of the Craft*).

It is not possible to foresee every problem that might arise, and it should therefore be noted that adherence to every point in the notes does not guarantee that the design will be approved.

The notes do contain a depressing number of negatives, but design is possible if the guidelines are read and understood prior to submission. (Too much unnecessary time is taken both at local level and in the Grand Secretary's office in returning designs for small amendments which, if the guidelines had been observed, would have been acceptable for approval.) If extreme difficulty is encountered, the Grand Secretary's office (Masonic Services Department) will almost certainly be able to help further.

Designs – the most common pitfalls

On the initial submission of a design, please include an explanation of any symbolism and how each aspect is of significance to the Lodge/Chapter.

Any Latin motto should have its meaning checked by someone who understands Latin as often a translation by someone who is not an expert can have the wrong meaning. The Google translator is not always accurate and a more thorough check should be made. It may be easier to use simple English and avoid Latin altogether.

Avoid dark blue, which is the colour appropriate to Grand Rank, as a background colour. Unless specific reasons can be given for the use of this colour, it is likely to be returned for amendment and unlikely to be approved.

The Square, often shown as part of the Square and Compasses, on any application must, without exception, be at exactly 90 degrees. The dangers of cut and paste, or stretching a design to fit on a computer-assisted design, often distorts the angle.

The name of the Province in which the Lodge/Chapter meets may be included, but the wording should be smaller and less obvious than the Lodge/Chapter name and number

to avoid the design being perceived as a 'Provincial design'. The Provincial Arms should not be used for private Lodges/Chapters.

The Lodge/Chapter name and number must always be included prominently; to standardise designs the name should be shown in full and the number must always be preceded with 'No.' (i.e. the lettering capital 'N', small 'o' and a full stop. {No.})

A letter 'G' within the Square and Compasses (which is, among others, an American and Scottish practice) must be avoided.

A little care in avoiding the above and following pitfalls will result in less time having designs returned for amendment.

Armorial Bearings and Badges

Lodges/Chapters are recommended to adopt Badges in preference to Arms. Arms are heraldic devices borne on a shield. A Badge consists of some object or objects combined to form a design without the use of a shield.

The grant of Arms, which carries the right to bear them, is a Royal Prerogative. Lodges/Chapters, which wish to design and assume Arms, must consult the College of Arms. The Grand Secretary's office (Masonic Services Department) will be able to furnish you with the contact details of the Officer at the College of Arms who is best positioned to provide guidance on Masonic heraldry.

No part of the Royal Coat of Arms may be assumed by a Lodge/Chapter without express consent of the Sovereign, or other Royal Person whose Arms are concerned.

No private Lodge/Chapter is permitted to use the Arms of the United Grand Lodge of England.

No Arms of an individual or Corporation may be adopted without the written consent of such individual or Corporation, and in the case of consent being given the Arms must be used in their entirety. N.B. Even when such consent is obtained, it may not be appropriate for the Lodge/Chapter to use Arms, which have been designed to represent an individual or public body, and therefore approval may be withheld.

No Lodge/Chapter may adopt as Arms a portion of an existing Coat of Arms, even if permission be given by the holder, since such adoption would amount to the assumption of a new Coat of Arms (see above).

Designs may not be approved if they are **heraldic in character** or **attempt to avoid** the Laws of Arms by using a corruption of a shield outline.

Arms that have become extinct cannot be used unless written consent was given prior to their becoming extinct.

A small shield carried by a knight as part of the design of a badge is permitted, since this is only coincidental to his accoutrements; in most cases the shield is seen in perspective, and thus cannot be regarded as Arms in the ordinary sense.

General

Check the Lodge/Chapter records to see if there are any previous approvals or permissions, which should accompany a design submission. A large number of previous approvals are on file at Grand Lodge and it may be prudent to check if there are any previous permissions which could assist approval of a new design.

Many Lodges and Chapters in the distant past have had banners made or included designs on Summonses and paperwork without seeking prior approval. A banner may therefore be extremely old but its renewal may not be approved because no permission for the previous design existed and the design may not be approvable.

Designs for Lodge/Chapter Badges are sometimes submitted with the Petition for a new Lodge/Chapter, but they cannot be approved until a Warrant has been granted.

However, if the matter is urgent, the design may sometimes be provisionally approved subject to the grant of a Warrant.

Symbols foreign to the Craft, for example interlaced triangles (which are Royal Arch) should not occur.

Most Craft badges have a (or the) Square and Compasses incorporated, but these are not essential.

Religious Symbols

Symbols associated with one particular religion or religious denomination for example, the Cross must not be included as a predominant part of the design. If the Lodge/Chapter is named after a Saint who is depicted in the badge, then a small cross may be carried by the Saint.

Imperial Crown

The Imperial Crown is the one shown on Government documents and all publications (e.g. British Passports, United Kingdom Driving Licenses and top right corner on obverse of £5 Sterling bank notes). These vary slightly but are intended to be the same Crown,

and will not be approved as part of a badge. A Saxon crown or a nondescript one (such as is shown in Plate 31 of the Royal Arch Regulations) may be allowed.

Corn and Acacia

A wreath composed of corn and acacia (as shown in the jewels of Grand Officers) is not allowed, since these emblems are symbolic of Grand Rank. Laurel Leaves are a good substitute to avoid refusal.

Chapter Badges

Rules on Lodge badges apply *mutatis mutandis* to Chapter badges. Most Chapter badges are based on those of the Lodge to which they are attached, with some Royal Arch allusion in place of the Square and Compasses, e.g. interlaced triangles, the triple tau, etc. The Lodge's title must be changed to the Chapter's.

Unauthorised insignia 241.

No Masonic jewel, medal, device, or emblem shall be worn in the Grand Lodge, or any subordinate Lodge, unless it appertains to, or is consistent with, those degrees which are recognised and acknowledged by the Grand Lodge in the preliminary declaration to these Rules, as part of pure Antient Masonry, and has been approved or allowed by the Grand Master.