

Kingdom of Northshield Scribal Standards

To ensure that the scrolls that you create are around for years to come, acid free paper should be used whenever possible. Buy the best that you can afford. It will show in the end product. If you are having trouble getting the supplies that you need let your signet know. They may have resources or supplies available to help you out.

The following materials will yield the best results:

- Water colors
- Gouache
- Period pigments/inks
- Tempera/glair
- Bristol Board
- Hot press water color paper,
- Vellum / parchment
- Pergamenata or 'spam' vellum
- 90lb-140lb smooth archival/ acid free papers
- Inks that are light fast

There are a number of good pens available for calligraphy and outlining. Please use whatever brand you are comfortable with or ask for recommendations. Try to choose lining pens with waterproof ink if you will be painting over what you have outlined.

I have good luck with Micron pens.

Please try to avoid these materials:

- Felt tip calligraphy pens
- Markers
- Colored pencils
- Crayons
- Oil/acrylic/enamel/poster paints, etc (These should be avoided when working on paper. However, they may be the best options if you are working on wood or another ground/medium)
- Calligraphy writing/practice paper
- Imitation vellum writing paper
- Scrapbook paper
- Newsprint paper
- Photo copy / printer paper

Try to avoid flimsy papers in general. Scroll blanks made on lightweight papers do not hold up well to handling and storage. Cold press watercolor paper and other papers with a rough surface can make it difficult to get a good result when doing calligraphy (the nibs tend to skip over the rough surface and splatter or skip, so it is best to avoid them).

If you are not sure about something, feel free to ask. This is by no means a comprehensive list. I don't like to recommend brands for paint and calligraphy pens because there are so many and different people like different things.

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Information for Scroll Blanks and Award Scrolls

Leaving a minimum of 0.5" of blank space around the edge of your work will allow it to be handled without smudging or touching the artwork and will also allow it to be matted and/or framed without losing any details under the edge of the mat or frame. More is better in this case. I like to leave about 1.5" of border space on my own work.

Scroll size is at the discretion of the scribe but keep standard mat and frame sizes in mind when creating your scroll. A pre-cut mat for an 8"x10" photograph does not have an 8x10 opening. The opening is smaller so the picture will not 'fall through the hole.' Take a trip to the local craft store and measure the openings and keep the easily available frame sizes in mind. 9"x12" and 12"x16" are standard sizes for Bristol, but it's hard to find a frame that size. Using a 9"x12" Bristol with a 10.5"x13.5" artwork area will fit perfectly into a 16"x20" frame with a pre-cut mat.

Scrolls should attempt to follow period traditions and examples whenever possible. Themes from period illuminated pages, writs, and period documents are all wonderful things to try. Modern pattern books and stencils rarely have the right medieval feel to them, so be selective. There are some good knotwork pattern books on the market. Personalization is always welcome as long as the overall scroll uses a period style. If you are not sure, ask the Signet to recommend someone for you to work with.

Scroll blanks may be altered by the scribe doing the calligraphy or by someone else. This may include adding a badge or device, outlining, erasing pencil lines, or adding a little white-work or detail to the scroll blank.

Sign your work! You made it, now be proud of it!

Suggested information to include on the back of your scroll would be:

Name of scribe: SCA and Modern

Contact information: post address or email address

A general description for the time period and style of the scroll (if known)

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Information for Finished Awards

The heralds appreciate a typed or handwritten copy of the scroll text to make it easier for them to read scrolls in court. Works in runes or those that are not in English should provide a translation.

Unless you need to finish on site, please turn your scrolls in at the royalty room or the designated drop off area as soon as you arrive at an event. If you need to finish on site, let the signet or court herald know and have your scroll ready to be signed at least an hour before court is scheduled to start.

Often an AoA is the ONLY award a person may receive. Be considerate of that fact when making an award scroll. The scroll is the documentation for the award given and should be treated with respect. Because it's "just" an AoA is not a reason to do less than your best.

Very few of us can keep their calligraphy straight without drawing lines on the page. Please erase your pencil lines when the ink is dry. It's fine to leave a line for the King and Queen to sign, but erase the rest unless it is part of the design. Please also try not to press too hard when drawing lines for your calligraphy. Pressing too hard can dent the paper and leave marks that won't come out with erasing. Some people use a light-box with their lines drawn on a template beneath their scroll so they don't have to draw lines on the paper.

If you are doing calligraphy on a scroll blank for a court, please email the signet the name of the person who did the blank, if you know it, so that they can be acknowledged in the Northwatch. Some people who only do blanks are discouraged because they never see their name in print. Please try to encourage the makers of scroll blanks by allowing them the recognition they deserve.

Northshield has a rich history of 'stuff' awards: blades, furniture, plaques, hats, pouches, weapons, embroidery, books, etc. These are all great and appreciated by the recipients. Please let your signet know what you are planning. They may have ideas or insight that can help you with your project. Minimum suggested wording on non-paper awards would be the names of the Royalty, award name, recipient, and date/event. The connecting words are not necessary. When in doubt, feel free to ask.

Example: King and Queen
 Order of the Doobus
 Lord John Smith
 October 30, AS XLVII

The royalty of our Kingdom drop their surnames when they become Prince and Princess. For example, If Lord John Smith and Lady Jane Gray win Crown, they are to be called Prince/King John and Princess/Queen Jane until the end of their reign. Please do not include their last names, Smith and Gray, on the scroll.

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If you mail your scroll, let the signet know so they can look for it. If you mail your scroll to Royalty or someone else, or give the scroll to someone to deliver, please let the signet know so they know who to find at the event if it doesn't show up in the royalty room. Also please check before mailing to find out when your person will be leaving for the event. Lots of scrolls don't make it because they were delivered on Friday afternoon and the person who was supposed to take it to the event left on Friday morning.

Regency courts are courts held on behalf of a Monarch, but presided over by someone else. The Regent can be anyone the King and Queen designate, including the Prince and Princess, a former member of the royal family, a Baron or Baroness, or anyone else that Their Majesties hold in high esteem. The wording on a Regency scroll is exactly the same as the wording on any other scroll given by the current King and Queen until you get to the closing statement. The closing should include the line, "By the hand of Our Regent XXXX." Who ever the Regent (or Regents) are will then sign the scroll. A line or lines should be left at the bottom of the scroll for the Regents to sign. No line will be designated for the King and Queen to sign later. You can add the words "pro Rex" and/or "pro Regina" under where the Regent will sign, indicating that they are signing for the King and Queen.

Check the OP on the Northshield website before you get started and make sure the spelling is right or that the person does not already have the award. It has happened in the past that people have been given an award under their mundane name because the person writing them in didn't know their SCA name or only knew them by a nickname. There is also a bit of a lag between the time a person receives an award and the time it shows up on the website. The Signet and many of our royalty try to check on these things before a court list is assigned, but things are occasionally missed. Many sets of eyes are better than one. If you find a problem, just email the signet. They will notify Royalty for you.

Northshield strives to have an award scroll or object for every recipient at every court, but in the case of backlog, every attempt should be made to complete your backlog assignment within six months. To get a backlog scroll signed and sealed, arrangements should be made with the signet and Royalty who gave the award. Large events (Coronation, Crown, Boars Head, 12th Night, etc.) are the easiest places to find everyone you need.

If anything is confusing, or you would like more clarification, please feel free to ask.

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Things That Make the Signet Grumpy

Scribes who repeatedly fail to get their scrolls to court on time without warning may no longer be assigned scrolls. I know things happen and that the postal service isn't always reliable. Once in a while a scroll doesn't make it for whatever reason. This is understood and not a reason to bar someone from doing scrolls. If someone says they mailed a scroll and it never shows up and it happens over and over you probably won't get any assignments that aren't in your home group. If you know for sure that a scroll isn't going to make it, let someone know so the Royalty and signet aren't spending time waiting for it all day. This gives time for a promissory or some other arrangement to be made.

Doing award scrolls means that you know things that no one else in the Kingdom knows. It is a trust between the scribe, the signet, and the King and Queen. Secrecy should be maintained so as not to spoil the surprise. We whisper to each other once in a while that we need to make sure someone stays for court, but we shouldn't be telling what they are getting.

I hope this is helpful and hasn't caused too much confusion. I am available to answer questions for anyone who needs help or clarification. Have fun and keep scribing!

THL Gabrielle le Chevreuil
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Many thanks to Drachenwald, who allowed me to use their standards as a template for our own.