

Research

General Category Rules: Administration of this category is through the mail. Entries are sent to the Middle Kingdom Minister of Arts and Sciences or their designee as published in *The Pale*.
Special rules:

Due to the nature of this category, it has several special rules. Please review them carefully.

- Entries in the Research category are eligible for participation in a principality or regional A & S Faire only within the guidelines set forth in the Pentathlon criteria.
- The deadline for mail-in categories is published in the Middle Kingdom newsletter, *The Pale* by the Middle Kingdom Minister of Arts and Sciences. The deadline may also be published on the Middle Kingdom website which is found at: <http://www.midrealm.org>.
- **This category has a 2-phase acceptance.** Entries will be pre-judged to verify that they meet the requirements as set forth in this guideline. The Kingdom Minister of Arts and Sciences, or their designee, will be the responsible officer for this pre-judging. Any paper not meeting the standards set forth by this criterion will be returned to the author with reasons for rejection given in writing. A second deadline for submission is then set so that the author may choose to revise and re-submit in the same season, by the new deadline, or revise and submit in the next season. Papers deemed to have met the submission requirements are forwarded to the judges as selected by the Minister of Arts and Sciences.
- The entry must be a research paper written in an acceptable format for term paper or thesis. Research notes written in an attractive style or a newspaper article are not acceptable. Entrants in this category should consult a current term paper or thesis stylebook before creating an entry.
- Any evidence of plagiarism will disqualify an entry.
- Length Limit: 30 **double spaced** typed pages, not including illustrations, title page, and any appendices. A valid entry must include four typed copies of the paper on which the entrant's name does not appear, and a completed Entry Registration Form.
- Papers that have already been published will, **under no circumstances** be accepted as an entry if it is presented in its published form; however, it will be accepted in its pre-publication form. *{a question we often get is: "What about if it was in my local group newsletter?"– Think that needs to be addressed? Do we want to say published in a professional journal or a peer-reviewed journal?}*
- Any paper having more than one author must be entered by all the people involved in its writing.
- Any paper whose authorship is easily identifiable is disqualified at the pre-judging level. It may be eligible for re-entry by the later deadline, see above.

Documentation (0 to 4 points): The purpose of this section is to rate the provability of the entrant's research. Consideration to the quality of the sources and citation used is rated in this section.

- 0: No annotation or bibliography.
- 1: Use of annotation only; use of bibliography only; use of annotation and bibliography in an inadequate form. Source material is of a general nature. No critical sources are used.
- 2: Acceptable annotation and bibliography, following a single standardized format; excellent annotation alone; excellent bibliography alone; very good critical sources are used.
- 3: Good annotation and bibliography; citations indicate good choice and use of critical source materials as related to the topic, perhaps specialized research papers, catalog data from museums, photocopies of primary sources, etc.
- 4: Superior handling of all phases of documentation. Excellent annotation and bibliography; excellent choice of critical source materials, including specialized references directly related to the subject material and/or primary sources incorporated appropriately.

Subject Matter (0 to 4 points): This section judges the relevance of the paper's subject matter to the SCA period.

- 0: Subject matter of the paper is out of period or not relevant to an SCA member or activity.
- 1: Subject matter of the paper is out of period but it has very limited relevancy to an SCA member.
- 2: Subject matter of the paper is out of period but it is applicable to SCA Culture or medieval life to some extent.
- 3: Subject matter of the paper is period and an attempt has been made to be as thorough as possible and adapt the subject to the audience.
- 4: Subject matter of the paper is period and it has relevance to an SCA member. It is written with an SCA audience in mind.

Scope (0 to 6 points): Judges will rank the ambition, *not the success*, of the entry on a scale of 0 to 6 for each of the following elements and average for the total Scope score (Total of element scores divided by 5).

- Size of the paper.- Did the author stay within the 30 page limit? Does the author set forth their thesis statement and support it within the page limit that they chose?
- Scope of the research. – How well did the author research their subject matter? Did the author use quality references or not? What efforts did the author use to validate their references? For example, a paper written citing only internet addresses as source material will not score as well here as one that used peer-reviewed literature and primary sources.
- Complexity of the subject matter.- A paper that focuses and explores a single topic should score better than a broad-sweeping generalized paper, (i.e., a paper on the career of Sir Walter Drake should score higher than one on Elizabethan Privateers. The paper on Elizabethan Privateers should score higher than one on the generalized subject of Pirates).
- Detailing of the topic.- Are there adequate details to present and defend the thesis (topic) statement made in the introduction?
- Cohesiveness of the paper – Does it flow well from paragraph to paragraph? Are points clearly outlined and followed through or is the reader left hanging?

Skill (0 to 6 points): How well is the entry written? Rank the success of the entry on a scale of 0 to 6 points for each of the following elements and average for the total Skill score (Total of element scores divided by 4).

- Structure of the paper Did the author use a single format, style? How does the paper rate for readability.
- Concept flow Is the paper well organized? Did the author develop their thesis and use well-constructed arguments to prove it? Is there a conclusion? How clear is the paper – is it easy to identify, follow and analyze the author's point of view?).
- Level of detail Is the detail appropriate to size and scope of research?
- Language Rate the use of grammar, punctuation, spelling, word choice, and sentence structure.

Creativity (0 to 4 points): In this section, the novelty of the entry's concept and exposition are judged.

- 0: The paper is uninteresting and tedious; no effort was made to create something fresh.
- 1: The paper is not very interesting and tedious in spots, it is hard to read or follow, but an effort was made to create something fresh.
- 2: The paper occasionally breaks new ground and an effort was made to write clearly.
- 3: The paper has some gaps in logic, but the entrant has tried to present their ideas in fresh ways.
- 4: The paper has an exciting approach and style of expression which is carried off skillfully.

Judge's Observations (0 to 6 points): Rank the entry as a whole. How well do all the separately judged parts fit together? Judge the entrant's overall effect is in this section. This is the only section of the Criteria where the judge may allow her/his personality, private opinions and personal preferences to influence scoring.

Contributors: Elli Lutemaker & Bronwyn ferch Gwyn ap Rhys (working from a 1984 draft by an unknown author), no date given; Birgit av Birka, Nicholaa de Bracton & Thorhalla Carlsdottir af Bröberg, 1997; Gwyneth Banfhidhleir, Anntionette Rose, 2003.

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