



# CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN NATURAL DYEING

## SYLLABUS

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In setting out the syllabus it was intended to allow candidates complete freedom of interpretation within the requirements of the syllabus and any stated criteria. The purpose of the assessment is to judge how well the candidate has fulfilled the requirements of the syllabus in the light of her/his interpretation.

This syllabus should be read and used in conjunction with the CoA Handbook.

There is a separate Resource List which is regularly reviewed and updated as required.

Candidates must show evidence of successful study and understanding of the techniques involved in the use of natural dyes on yarns, textiles and any other natural material. Craftsmanship, design, record-keeping, achievement, and presentation will also be taken into consideration in the final assessment.

The work submitted for assessment should include a portfolio of samples and a project piece; the requirements for both are set out below.

Neither the name of the candidate nor any identity-revealing photograph may be shown in any of the submitted work.

### 2.0 PORTFOLIO OF SAMPLES

**Candidates who experiment with and try out different materials before making their portfolio samples will have a fuller experience and emerge with wider knowledge and skills than those who do not do this.**

**2.1 Fibres:** You must show evidence of the use of natural dyes on wool, cotton, silk, linen, and at least two other fibres or combinations of fibres. Samples should include evidence of dyeing both yarn and fabric.

Some samples should show decorative use of dyes and could include space-dyeing, dip-dyeing, painting, printing, stencilling, batik, tie-dyeing and over-dyeing, and other resist techniques. Experiments with dyes on other materials can be interesting; many dyes can be successfully applied to other natural materials such as shells, bone, paper, wood and basketry materials.

You are expected to produce a wide range of well-documented samples indicating the properties of the type of dyes used, quantities and your reason for choosing them.

**2.2 Dyes** should include:

**Substantive Dyes:** which require no mordant to permanently fix their colour to the dye goods, although in many cases the use of a mordant with these dyes will give a different shade and add to their fastness.

**Adjective Dyes:** needing mordants, which should include alum and iron. The natural dyes selected should include the great classic dyes, Madder and Weld, and some of

the other classic dyes such as Cochineal, Logwood, Brazilwood, Fustic and Cutch. You should also include dyes from the garden and/or kitchen, or wild plants which can be harvested without damaging the environment. You should ensure that you are aware of any relevant legislation before collecting from the wild and should make this clear in your notes.

If heavy metal mordants (chrome, tin, and copper) are used, they should be used following the improved methods outlined in the books by Gill Dalby and Jenny Dean. (See book list) Special care should be maintained in the disposal of waste products. They should not contaminate surface water channels designed to carry rainwater. **Wild Colour** by Jenny Dean contains sections on safe disposal. Alum and iron are relatively safe. You will not be penalised for avoiding heavy metal mordants.

**Dye Extracts:** there are several suppliers of this type of natural dye, which has become popular in recent years. As well as producing reliable repeatable colours they can be useful for some of the more creative dye techniques such as space dyeing and dye painting.

**Vat Dyes:** these are mainly used nowadays for obtaining blue from some form of indigo-bearing plant material, and can be made with various chemicals or by fermentation.

### 2.3 Requirements for samples:

1. Samples should be tested for light and/or wash fastness, to judge them fit for intended purpose;
2. Fabric samples should be large enough to show the effect of the dye.
3. Fabric samples must be mounted by securing on one edge only for the assessment presentation. The assessor should be able to handle the sample and examine the back.
4. Yarn samples should be large enough to show the effect of the dye.

**2.4 You must make clear notes about the production of your samples.** It is useful to set each sample's notes out in the same manner and ensure that the assessor can easily relate the notes to the sample.

For each sample your notes must include:

1. Details of dyestuff and recipe used, giving percentages;
2. An accurate identification of the dyestuff, giving the common and Latin name;
3. Fibre(s) used and preparation and mordanting methods;
4. Equipment used and dyeing temperature;
5. Sample(s) of the dyed yarn or fabric mounted with the notes or referenced so that the assessor can find them;
6. Details of finishing including any after mordants or colour modifiers;
7. Evidence of testing for light and wash fastness;
8. Relevant dates;
9. Your comments on the sample. Evaluate what you have done.

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Your notes on decorative techniques should include design inspiration, sketches, and any other evidence of your design process.

Techniques such as using colour modifiers, experimenting with both cold and hot dyeing methods and experimenting with both chemical and natural mordants will often enable you to produce many shades from a single dyestuff. Some colours such as turquoise and a true black are notoriously difficult to obtain from natural dyes and it may be interesting to find ways of obtaining these colours by over-dyeing or using colour modifiers.

Notes for dyeing should include experiments and tests on light and wash fastness. The results of these tests will help you determine the suitability of each dye tested for the project you have in mind. You may then choose to add some comments on your observations and conclusions from your test results, plus some recommendations for the most suitable dyes for different projects and end products.

Dye recipes should be fully described and include percentages. Cold dyes can produce some excellent results. A range of colours in both the purchased and collected-from-nature dyestuff groups will give you a good insight into dyeing, particularly if used on a variety of fibres. Different materials absorb dyes in totally different ways and you can learn a great deal by experimenting in this way as well as 'playing' with exhaust dyes.

All dye vessels and equipment should be kept specifically for that purpose, always cleaned thoroughly and put away securely after use. Mordants and dyestuffs must be kept in a safe place, out of the reach of children. You should make yourself aware of health and safety regulations relating to the use of dyes and chemicals, including responsible disposal of waste solutions.

### **3.0 PROJECT PIECE**

You will be required to design and execute a project piece of your own choice, demonstrating the use of as many relevant techniques as you wish and which you consider will enhance the work. It should be a finished article such as a garment (shawl, jumper etc.) or any other item. It can be woven, knitted, crocheted, felted, or produced in any other way, including the use of commercial fabric. You should choose a method that will enhance your dyeing. If you submit more than one item the pieces must relate and match to form a set.

You must include a written description of all stages of design development and details of all the materials used, showing an understanding of the dyes and the suitability of the materials for the finished piece. Your notes should include design sources and include the samples you made leading up to the decision for your final choice. Ensure all your records are dated. You should describe the finishing process, such as setting, blocking and/or pressing as is relevant to your piece.

You may have your dyed material made up into a finished item by someone else so long as this is made clear in your notes.

Your dyeing is the primary focus of the assessment.

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**4.0 CHECK LIST FOR PORTFOLIO**

Type of Dye	Samples	Type of Dye	Samples
<b>Substantive</b>		<b>Dye Extracts</b>	
<b>Adjective</b>			
		<b>Decorative Dyeing Techniques</b>	
<b>Vat</b>			

## **USEFUL ADDRESSES**

### **CoA Co-ordinator:**

[certificate@wsd.org.uk](mailto:certificate@wsd.org.uk)

Heather Seddon, 15 Asby Road, Asby, Workington, Cumbria CA14 4RR  
01946 861515

**AGWSD website:** [www.wsd.org.uk](http://www.wsd.org.uk)

**Association Web Information Point:** details from your Guild secretary

## **OTHER CoA DOCUMENTS THAT YOU WILL NEED**

- **HANDBOOK**
- **REGISTRATION FORM**

This can be downloaded from the AGWSD website or the Association Web Information Point or can be requested from the Co-ordinator.

- **RESOURCE LIST**
- **LIST OF MENTORS**

These will be sent to you by the Co-ordinator when you have registered.