

The Fly Dressers' Guild

Fly-Tying Awards

Assessor's guide

Overview

The Fly Dressers' Guild exists to promote fly-tying as an interest for all, regardless of age sex race or ability.

Fly tying is fun. It is important that tiers of all levels enjoy their sessions and see progress from one session to the next.

The assessor's role, whether for a branch member or an out-of-branch member, is important for maintaining standards, ensuring credibility and making any award a worthwhile achievement.

Assessments must be made fairly and objectively. **Assessors' personal style and preferences cannot be allowed to influence their judgement.**

Thank you to everyone who has agreed to act as an assessor, at whatever level.

Qualifications

There are many formal qualifications for assessors however, as The Fly Dresser's Guild is not involved in awarding nationally recognised qualifications at this time, it is not necessary for an assessor to be formally qualified. Any experience of carrying out assessments is clearly an advantage but a sound knowledge of fly-dressing is a requisite.

It is important that the assessor fully understands the techniques and methods used in any level of award so that they can assess the submitted flies in an authoritative way.

Assessors have been chosen by branches and approved by the Guild Awards Manager based on their experience as fly-tiers, instructors and general knowledge about fly-tying.

Branches currently running the Guild Awards Scheme have a list of recognised instructors and assessors. Any branch wishing to start an awards programme for the first time or appoint new instructors or assessors should first contact the Guild Awards Manager (awards@flydressersguild.org).

The assessor's role at branch level

Assessors within a branch will be expected to carry out Bronze and/or Silver level assessments for their own candidates. Whenever possible, the instructor and assessor should be different but it is appreciated that within smaller branches this may not always be possible.

Assessors within branches may also be asked to assess candidates from other nearby branches (see section below). Local branches could act together to formalise a local assessment system to enable all candidates to be independently assessed.

The assessor's role for out-of-branch members

Assessors may be asked by the Guild Awards Manager to carry out assessments for Guild members who are not part of a branch, or belong to a branch that is not taking part in the Guild awards scheme or does not have a suitable assessor. While there is an expectation that assessors will carry out in-branch assessments, there is no obligation to do assessments for out-of-own-branch members. Assessors who are prepared to carry out these types of assessments will be introduced to the candidate and should then make mutually agreeable arrangements directly with them for the assessment.

Assessor's role at Gold Level

Assessors carrying out a Gold level assessment will not be informed of the identity of the candidate who submitted the flies. The flies will be submitted through the Guild Awards Manager, who will forward the flies anonymously to the assessor.

Principles

Only assessors registered with the FDG may recommend candidates to the Guild Awards Manager for awards.

Suitably qualified assessors can perform Bronze and Silver level assessments for members of their own branch, although where possible, instructors should have their own candidates assessed by another assessor within the branch. Alternatively, Bronze and Silver level awards may be submitted to the Guild Awards Manager who will arrange their assessment.

Gold awards are recognition of a high level of tying and will be assessed by instructors acting as assessors appointed centrally by the Guild Awards Manager.

Specialist awards (e.g. Grayling) must also be submitted to the Guild Awards Manager.

Before carrying out any assessment.

Assessors must ensure the subject of an assessment is a fully paid up current member of The Fly Dressers' Guild, as these awards are limited to Guild members only. If there is any doubt the assessor should contact the Membership secretary (membership@flydressersguild.org).

The assessment

The flies to be submitted for assessment are clearly outlined in the relevant booklet:

- for the Bronze level, three flies each of the five set patterns should be submitted;
- for the Silver level, three flies each of the six set patterns should be submitted; and

- for the Gold level, three flies each of the seven set patterns should be submitted.

The examples of each fly submitted should firstly be assessed against the following criteria:

- Correct use of materials: correct type of hook, listed materials or, if a substitute has been used, is it appropriate?
- Proportion : does the fly look “balanced”? Are the tails, wings etc. in proportion, has the candidate used the correct width of tinsel or ribbing?
- Techniques: are the component parts of the fly tied in correctly and in the right place? Is the fly secure? Gentle pressure may be applied to parts of the fly to test this. The techniques used are listed in the relevant level booklet.

The flies then should be compared against each other for consistency. Are all the flies identical or as near to identical as makes no difference? Count the number of turns of ribbing, measure length of tails against each other and so on.

The assessment sheet

Each booklet includes the assessment sheet for the corresponding award. The sheet has a space beside each fly for the assessor’s comments. There is also a Pass or Fail check box for each fly.

The assessor should record any errors, problems or areas for improvement identified for each set of flies, and whether each set is a pass or fail in the appropriate column.

Pass or Fail?

It will always be difficult to say exactly what constitutes a failure on any given pattern. Clearly a major error will be an immediate fail. However a minor error, repeated consistently on all three flies may not be. We do not expect perfection at the Bronze and Silver levels and flies with one or two minor mistakes may still pass.

It may be that one or more sets of the requisite flies submitted is marked as a fail while the flies for the other patterns are all of an acceptable standard. In that case, the candidate will have failed the award, but will not be required to re-submit the set(s) that were classed as a pass – they only need to submit a full set of the pattern(s) that they were failed on.

Feedback

It is only right that the candidate gets full and constructive feedback for all award submissions. In the case of Bronze or Silver levels at branch level, this should be done locally and candidates should be given a copy of the assessment sheet.

Feedback should be accurate and constructive, offering guidance where the candidate has clearly struggled with a technique or particular fly. It should also contain praise where, for example, a set of flies is particularly well tied. Assessors should provide an indication as to when they feel that the

candidate should progress to the next level of awards, and if that is not immediately, give the candidate a time scale to aim for.

Record keeping

Candidates should keep a record of their progress, which should be signed off by an instructor at appropriate stages and be submitted to the assessor with the flies presented for assessment. The form is set out in the Appendix to each booklet.

It is only by keeping proper records and retaining photographs of the flies deemed to have met the relevant award standards that The Fly Dressers' Guild can ensure consistency across assessments and maintain confidence in the system.

Assessors must therefore complete an assessment sheet for each assessment performed.

Previously, the candidates, assessors and Guild Awards Manager were each required to keep one example of submitted flies to allow for possible subsequent verification of the awards. With the volume of flies being assessed, it is no longer practicable to continue to do this. Instead, we ask that, in the case of a candidate that has successfully completed an award level, the assessor send a copy of their assessment sheet to the Guild Awards Manager, so that the award can be recorded and sent out. Both the assessor and the Guild Awards Manager should retain a copy of the assessment for six months.

Ideally, the assessor should also photograph the flies assessed for future reference and send a copy of the photographs to the Guild Awards Manager, in case of a challenge or appeal. Both the assessor and the Guild Awards Manager should retain the photographs for six months.

If the candidate has failed one or more of the set patterns, the assessor must complete the assessment sheet (clearly highlighting the areas for improvement) and return it to the candidate. The candidate must subsequently submit the original assessment sheet with any re-submitted flies, to aid the subsequent assessment.

In case of any appeal against an assessment, the candidate must make the original flies and assessment sheet available for a second assessment to take place.

The Guild Awards Manager will maintain a record of all successful candidates and the award(s) they have attained. This will no longer be published on the website due to data protection regulations.

Appeals process

It is likely that some candidates will be disappointed with a failure to reach a standard. This disappointment should be managed by the assessor, by giving good feedback, positive encouragement and suggesting how the candidate can achieve the standard.

However, in some cases the candidate may feel that they have been judged unfairly or too harshly. They may wish to appeal the assessor's decision, in which case, they must follow the process set out below.

At branch level:-

Bronze level awards:

The candidate should submit their appeal in writing to the assessor and person responsible for the Guild Awards Scheme within the branch within 4 weeks of the date of assessment. A second assessment can be arranged within branch. If the candidate is still not satisfied they should follow the appeals process for the Silver level.

Silver level awards:

The candidate should submit their appeal in writing to the person responsible for the Guild Awards Scheme within the branch within 4 weeks of the date of assessment. That person will send the full set of flies and the assessor's report promptly to the Guild Awards Manager, who will arrange for an independent assessment to be carried out.

Gold level awards:

The candidate should submit their appeal in writing to the Guild Awards Manager within 4 weeks of the date of assessment, together with the full set of flies and the assessor's report. The Guild Awards Manager will arrange a second independent assessment.

For any appeal, the candidate should submit the full set of flies required for the award in question, together with a copy of the original assessment sheet.

In each case, there is no further right of appeal when the process for each level has been exhausted and the results will be binding.

The relevant flies will be returned to the candidate after the appeals process is concluded, if the candidate requests this and provides a suitable self-addressed and adequately stamped envelope.

Any flies retained by the Guild Awards Manager will become the property of the Guild after six months.

For candidates not in a branch (or in a branch that is not participating in the Guild Awards scheme)

Bronze level awards:

The candidate should make the appeal in writing to their assessor within 4 weeks of the date of assessment. The assessor will send the full set of flies and their report promptly to the Guild Awards Manager, who will arrange an independent assessment.

Silver and Gold level awards:

Any appeal should be submitted directly to the Guild Awards Manager within 4 weeks of the date of assessment, together with the full set of flies and the assessor's report. The Guild Awards Manager will arrange a second independent assessment.

For any appeal, the candidate should submit the full set of flies required for the award in question, together with a copy of the original assessment sheet.

In each case, there is no further right of appeal when the process for each level has been exhausted and the results will be binding.

The relevant flies will be returned to the candidate after the appeals process is concluded, if the candidate requests this and provides a suitable self-addressed and adequately stamped envelope.

Any flies retained by the Guild Awards Manager will become the property of the Guild after six months.