

Floristry Technical Handbook

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Overview

The floristry competition encompasses a wide range of skills, standards and ideas. This guide will provide you with a clear path as to what competitors can expect, from the initial registration period, right up to the national finals.

Resources

For information and resources, including how to register, competition rules, and the steps to competing, [visit our website](#).

For information related to careers associated with the floristry skills, we have dedicated a [section of our website for this](#). Here you can get information on the average salaries of a florist, the work environments you can expect to work in and key skills and career opportunities in floristry.

Stages of the competition

Passive Stage:	Photographic stage with a written submission
National Qualifiers:	3 pieces of floristry – one to be bought to the qualifier ready-made and two done at the qualifiers.
National Final:	5 pieces of floristry to be made over two days.
WorldSkills UK International:	Age-eligible competitors who show the highest skills, passion, and drive from the national finals will be given the opportunity to compete to train for the EuroSkills and WorldSkills international competitions.

Competition Specifications

Throughout the competition, tasks will be designed to test competitor's ability to:

- identify plant material and the requirements for conditioning them. Handling tools, materials, and equipment safely and in a manner that minimises wastage, damage and contamination
- the importance of time management and organising workload to ensure that they complete floral designs within the competition timescale

- design a floral display interpreting a brief using dominance, contrasts and combinations of colour effectively to create harmony in design
- understand how to apply principles and elements of floral design to ensure dominance of botanical material feature in the designs
- understand wiring, taping, manipulation, tying techniques to a high technical standard
- incorporate appropriate fixing methods within design to facilitate ease and security of attachment
- how to review and evaluate a design against the specification and make any modifications which are necessary within the terms of the design requirements.

Passive stage – what to expect

This section will outline an example of what you can expect from the passive stage.

Theme - Interpret and design to a customer's brief.

Planning and creating a design to interpret a customer's requirements are essential components of a florists' skill. Use the principles and elements of design to create a wired bridesmaids posy to enhance the dress worn and to a customer's specification and theme.

The task - Make a WIRED posy for an adult bridesmaid to carry at a wedding. The bridesmaid will be wearing the dress pictured below. Only fresh flowers and foliage can be used.

Supply three photographs of the wired posy

- a) top view of bouquet (from above, the entire outline of the posy should be visible)
- b) a profile/side view of bouquet
- c) back view of bouquet.

State on a separate sheet of paper the following information and send in with your photograph.

1. Describe the colour harmony used and why you chose it.
2. Provide a list of flowers and foliage used with variety names.



Please mark the photographs and text clearly with your name, age and college/shop.

Competitors will need to receive at least a 50% mark to be invited to a heat.

National Qualifiers - What to expect

This section will outline an example of what you can expect from the national qualifiers.

The Floristry national qualifiers are held at local colleges and venues around the country.

You will be expected to arrive at 9.00 am for registration and will ½ hour to set up your 1st Task in the competition room. Tutors and supporters will not be allowed into this room during set up or judging. During this time, your toolboxes will be checked.

At 9.30 am there will be a briefing by the competition organiser and an introduction to the Judges. The host college will also give a briefing about the fire procedures, first aid and domestics. You will have been told when your heat is confirmed whether there are cafeteria facilities or whether you need to bring a pack lunch with you.

At 9.45 am we will enter the competition room and you will one hour to familiarise yourself and *condition the fresh materials. You will be invited to substitute any of the fresh materials that you are not happy with at this stage – you will not be able to change any flower once this period is up. You can also split the flower into two buckets for the two tasks that you will be making. You can also soak oasis if required but you cannot tape or shape the oasis into the container.

Sketching: This is an important part of the competition now that you know the materials you are using, this should be done during this period.

***conditioning flowers and/or plant material – does not allow you to wire, tape, cut to size, remove leaves for wiring etc.**

At 11.00 am after a 15 minute comfort break the competition will start for the time specified on the task. You will be told at regular intervals the time left for the task and a 5 minute warning at the end of the task.

Once time is called you MUST step away from your bench, failure to do so could incur penalty points. You will be asked to remove your floristry piece to the competition room and place in your allotted space.

Lunch is normally 1 pm for one hour.

At 2 pm – Task 2 for time specified for the task. Same conditions as for Task 2

After you have taken your final piece to the competition room, you will be expected to clear your bench, sweep and tidy your area and help sort leftover flowers for the Host. It normally takes at

least an hour, depending on how many entries there are for the Judges to complete the marking and have the marks verified.

Approximately 4.30 pm – Presentation of Certificates and winners of the heats announced you will then be invited to discuss your pieces with the Judges and get their feedback.

Tutors and supporters will be allowed into the room during this time but **MUST NOT** interfere in the discussion.

Competitors marks are not given at this stage – at the end of all the Heats the competitors with highest marks overall are invited to the final.

National Qualifiers- example tasks 1,2,3

WorldSkillsUK National Competition TASK 1	
Date	
Duration	To be brought ready made
Theme	Proms Party
Kind of work	Pot-et-Fleur for the reception area at a Proms Party.
Description	A pot-et-fleur is a planted design made of compatible foliage plants planted in a complementary container with a limited amount of cut flowers added. Flowering plants should NOT be included, and no cut foliage is permitted. See The Professional Florists Manual for extra description.
Shape	Your choice
Size	Your choice
Technique	Planted.
Material	All material for this design to be supplied by candidate.
Preparation	N/A

Judging	At least two thirds of the finished design must be fresh flower/foilage and/or fresh plant material and be visually dominant. The judges will be looking for high standard of technique and design.
Judging Criteria	Judging criteria as used by the UK Floristry Judges Guild.

WorldSkills/UK National Competition TASK 2	
Date	As advised
Duration	1 1/2 hours
Theme	Proms Party
Kind of work	Wrist Corsage
Description	A wrist corsage to be worn at a proms party.
Technique	
Material	All materials are provided. You are not allowed to use any other materials except those from the official toolbox list. Not all materials have to be used
Preparation	No prior construction may take place.
Display	N/A
Judging	At least two thirds of the finished design must be fresh flower/foilage and/or fresh plant material and be visually dominant. The judges will be looking for a high standard of design and technique skill
Judging Criteria	Judging criteria as used by the UK Floristry Judges Guild.

WorldSkills/UK National Competition TASK 3	
	As advised
Duration	1 hour
Theme	Proms Party
Kind of work	Over the arm hand tied presentation bouquet
Description	An over the arm hand tied presentation bouquet to be given to the Proms Queen. Def: A front facing design that is held in the crook of the arm and is made in an asymmetrical style.
Technique	Hand tied
Size	Free
Material	All materials are provided. You are not allowed to use any other materials except those from the official toolbox list. Not all materials have to be used
Preparation	No prior construction may take place.
Display	N/A
Judging	At least two thirds of the finished design must be fresh flower/foilage and/or fresh plant material and be visually dominant. The judges will be looking for a high standard of design and technique skill
Judging Criteria	Judging criteria as used by the UK Floristry Judges Guild.

National Finals - what to expect

The top eight (8) competitors in the UK will be invited to compete in the UK National Final which is the pinnacle of the UK national competition cycle.

The finals are usually a large scale event, and a chance to show off your skills, meet a bunch of industry professionals and other competitors taking part, as well as bring your family along to see you compete.

At the national final competitors will be conducting 5 tasks over two days with a maximum working time of 2.5 hours per task. Two of the items will be surprise tasks and the schedules will not be given out until the start of each of these competitions. The schedules for the other three tasks will be sent to you when your place at the final is confirmed.

All fresh materials, props and sundries will be supplied throughout the competition.

Additional time will be allocated at the start of the competition for conditioning, familiarisation, and preparation of materials.

Open Judging – the finals, will involve open judging and the judges will walk around observing you during the day. You will be advised during the briefing by the judges of what they are looking for with regard to good management of your tools and workspace.

You will be told at the end of each task where the design needs to be situated for judging if it is to be removed into the Judges room, only competitors may move their competition pieces.

You will be working within your own booth and there will be a lot of noise and people, you are allowed to use your phones/etc with headphones if you feel this will help you to concentrate but you must not have the music so loud you do not hear instructions.

Wednesday is familiarisation and you are asked to attend at 3pm at the NEC for approximately 1 hour to make sure you know where you will be competing, you can bring your toolboxes and leave them in the competitor's room ready for the competition on Thursday.

Dress – you will be provided with two polo shirts and I would ask that you wear smart jeans or trousers (black preferred) but comfortable. Shoes should be closed in and again comfortable.

Accommodation – is provided including all meals during your stay and you are likely to be asked to share a room with another competitor.

The competition finishes on Friday evening and Saturday is a fun day where we talk to the public about what we have been making, possibly we will have team competition which again will be for fun however, you will have time to have a walk around the show. Competition results are on Saturday evening at the Medal Ceremony.

National Finals – examples tasks 1,2,3,4 & 5

General Theme - A Christmas Wedding

Task 1	
Duration	2 hours
Kind of work	Floral decoration on an archway
Description	Decorate the square archway for a Christmas Wedding.
Shape	Your choice
Size	Use the square archway provided
Technique	Your choice
Material	All materials are provided. You are not allowed to use any other materials except those from the official toolbox list. Not all materials have to be used.
Preparation	Not applicable
Working area	The design will be made and displayed in the booth. Only the competitor may move the design inside the stand/booth within the time limit of the task.
Judging	The design will be judged in the stand /booth The judges will be looking for high standard of Design and technical skill.

General Theme - A Christmas Wedding

Task 2	
Duration	2 hours
Kind of work	Decorate a table candelabra
Description	A table candelabra for a round table seating 10 people at a Christmas Wedding
Technique	Your choice
Shape	Use the candelabra provided
Size	Your choice
Material	All materials are provided. You are not allowed to use any other materials except those from the official toolbox list. Not all materials have to be used
Preparation	Not applicable
Working Area	The design will be made in the booth.
Judging	The design will be judged in the stand /booth At least two thirds of the finished design must be fresh flower/foilage and/or fresh plant material. The judges will be looking for a high standard of design and technique skill.

General Theme - A Christmas Wedding

Task 3	
Duration	2 ½ hours
Kind of work	Wired Bridal design
Description	A wired bridal design to be carried by a bride at a Christmas wedding. Picture of gown worn supplied.
Technique	Wired, No gluing NOT Hand tied
Shape	Your choice
Size	Your choice
Material	All materials are provided. You are not allowed to use any other materials except those from the official toolbox list. Not all materials have to be used. To be displayed in the holder provided
Preparation	Not applicable
Working area	The judges will handle the bridal design. Only the competitor may move the design to the judging area if applicable.
Judging	At least two thirds of the finished design must be fresh flower/foilage and/or fresh plant material. The judges will be looking for a high standard of design and technique skill.

General Theme - A Christmas Wedding

Task 4 – Surprise	
Duration	¼ hour familiarisation 1 hour to make
Kind of work	A hand tied bouquet
Description	A hand tied bouquet to be given to the mother of the bride at a Christmas wedding reception.
Technique	Hand tied
Shape	Your choice
Size	Your choice
Material	All materials are provided. You are not allowed to use any other materials except those from the official toolbox list. Not all materials have to be used. To be displayed in the container provided
Preparation	Not applicable
Working area	The judges will handle the design. Only the competitor may move the design to the judging area if applicable.
Judging	The design will be judged in the stand /booth At least two thirds of the finished design must be fresh flower/foilage and/or fresh plant material. The judges will be looking for a high standard of design and technique skill.

General Theme - A Christmas Wedding

Task 5 – Surprise	
Duration	15 minutes familiarisation 2 hours to make
Kind of work	Wedding cake and table decoration.
Description	Decorate the three-tier cake and cake table for a Christmas wedding.
Technique	Use the three-tier cake dummy and table provided.
Shape	Your choice
Size	Not applicable
Material	All materials are provided. You are not allowed to use any other materials except those from the official toolbox list. Not all materials have to be used.
Preparation	Not applicable
Working area	The judges will handle the design. Only the competitor may move the design to the judging area if applicable.
Judging	At least two thirds of the finished design must be fresh flower/foilage and/or fresh plant material. The judges will be looking for a high standard of design and technique skill.

Timetable for the National Finals

Please note: the timetable may look very different to what's been outlined below at this year's final. The following is intended to provide an insight into previous year's timetables and provide an overarching insight into what you can expect for a final.

THURSDAY

9.00 am – 9.15 am	Report to Floristry Stand for Briefing	¼ hour
9.15 am – 10.45 am	Sort and Condition flowers and plant material	1 ½ hours
10.45 am – 11.00 am	Break	15 minutes
11.00 am – 1 pm	Task 1 Floor standing arrangement	2 hours
1 pm – 2pm	Lunch	1 hour
2 pm – 4.30 pm	Task 2 - Headdress	2 ½ hours
4.30pm – 4.45 pm	Break	15 minutes
4.45 pm – 5.15 pm	Clean and Tidy Booth, sort flowers to be returned to Fridge	½ hour

FRIDAY

9.00 am – 9.15 am	Report to Floristry Stand for Briefing	¼ hour
9.15 am – 9.45 am	Sort and Condition flowers and plant material	½ hour
9.45 am – 10.00 am	Break	15 minutes
10:00 am – 12.30 pm	Task 3 Bridal Design	2 ½ hours
12.30 pm – 1 pm	Clear and tidy area	½ hour
1 pm – 2 pm	Lunch	1 hour
2pm – 3.45 pm	Task 4 Surprise item	1 ¾ hours
3.45 pm – 4.00 pm	Break	15 minutes
4.15 pm – 5.30 pm	Task 5 Surprise item	1 ¼ hours
5.30 pm – 5.45 pm	Clean & tidy booth, sort flowers to be returned to fridge	15 minutes

SATURDAY

9.30 am – 9.45 am	Briefing	15 minutes
9.45 am – 10.00 am	Break	15 minutes

10.00 am – 1.00 pm	Saturday feature	3 hours
1 pm – 2 pm	Lunch	1 hour
2 pm – 4 pm	Rota of duty on stand	2 hours

A guide to marking schemes

The Marking scheme throughout the competition is designed to fairly compare every competitor's work. It is usually split between four main criteria and then is split as per description. Please see below for an example of what the marking scheme for each stage could look like.

Criterion	Aspect ID	Description	Max Mark
1. Idea	A1	Creativity of design	5
	A2	Choice of materials suitable for this task	5
	A3	Interpretation of schedule	10
Total for Idea			20
2. Colour	B1	Proportion/dominance of colour used	5
	B2	Colour building (contrast/harmony/value of colours)	5
	B3	Placement of colours/expression of idea in colours	5
Total for Colour			15
3. Composition	C1	Shape/Form/Proportion/visual balance	10
	C2	Movement/Rhythm/Line/Space	10
	C3	Texture/Harmony/Dominance/Contrast	10
Total for Composition			30
4. Technique (Workmanship)	D1	Condition of materials. Guarantee of durability	10
	D2	Care of materials (objective sheet)	5
	D3	Stability of work/actual physical balance	5
	D4	Suitability of technique and method of construction	5
	D5	Finish and workmanship	10
Total for technique			35
Total marks			100

Training

Self-directed training

All competitors will need to practice if they wish to do well in the competition. You can start practicing with the pre-competition activity found later on in the handbook. As well, practicing with the task sheets for the items you are making for the passives and qualifiers. You will need to research and practice prior to the qualifiers and finals to make sure that on the day, even though you do not know the flowers or sundries you are working with you have some ideas in your head to start sketching and preparing yourself to make your floral designs.

Why is a sketch of the design is important?

- sketching is a powerful process to use to discover the best idea
- it may take several sketches to find the best design
- sketching is about capturing the essence of the design
- sketching helps to define the shape and structure of the design
- sketching helps to record and develop an idea
- sketching helps concentrate on functionality
- sketching helps with visualisation
- sketching helps to explore design concepts
- sketching helps you focus and concentrate
- sketching helps develop hand to eye coordination
- sketching helps to communicate ideas to clients.

Pre-Competition activity

Activity – Wired shoulder corsage – 1 ½ hour test

This pre-competition activity is designed to help you practice your skill and creativity within floristry and for you to gain experience in competition activity leading into the World Skills UK National competitions.

- we would like you to design a shoulder corsage to be worn at a service of remembrance
- the corsage must be wired – no gluing
- size – free.

Tips on technique and construction

The same assembly technique is used for a shoulder corsage as a normal corsage. The exception is that the return end above a single, neat slim binding point curves over the shoulder and down the back. The slender stem is also curved to travel over the shoulder beneath the return end of the corsage.

At least 2/3rds of the finished corsage must be fresh flowers/foilage or plant material.

- flower material should be perfect with no blemishes, dead flowers or wilting leaves etc. Inspect everything for damage before using and ensure all flowers and foliage are conditioned well before use
- use durable flowers and foliage that will not wilt rapidly. I.e hydrangea is not suitable as it wilts rapidly
- do not use dyed materials or anything that will damage or stain clothing
- wiring and taping should be meticulously neat using the finest wires possible to hold the stem and flower in place
- all materials should radiate from one binding point and the binding point should not travel
- reducing and cutting out some of the wires will give a less bulky stem. The slender stem should not be too short
- avoid a bulky heavy binding point by only using a small amount of binding wire. Tape down the corsage stem to cover the binding point and stem. There should be no exposed wires and the end of the stem must be sealed neatly with tape
- the design should be light and easy to wear whilst balancing on the shoulder
- a little recessed material will hide the binding point in the centre of the shoulder corsage
- ensure the shoulder corsage has a profile so that it looks good from every angle
- keep the flower materials fairly low on the top of the shoulder as tall flowers will impinge movement of the face or neck
- use the principles and elements of design when constructing the shoulder corsage to ensure clarity of design and overall harmony
- **always** try the corsage on and view in a mirror to ensure it balances and looks perfect before giving to a customer or presenting to a judge in competition
- finish the back of the corsage with a reversed leave for a neat finish

- the shoulder corsage must always be presented with a method of fixing ie: pin or magnet.

Judges Top Tips

General tips for competing











- study the competition brief carefully, the competition schedules are straightforward instructions that competitors must follow to achieve success
- use time wisely, pace yourself so that a completed task is finished perfectly on time
- dissect the judges marking scheme. Consider how the marks are allocated and where the most marks can be gained
- don't over complicate, keep it simple and try to make something you have already practised
- practise, practise, practise, the key to success is being prepared.

Floristry tips for competing


- do not over accessorise. Use the flowers and plant materials to interpret the theme
- keep in mind that the finished design must be at least 2/3rd fresh flower/foilage and or fresh plant material
- only use top quality flowers and foliage. Using dead flowers will result in the loss of valuable points
- check each flower and leaf for blemishes, remove any petals that are damage or leaves with imperfections
- use your knowledge by incorporating the principles and elements of good design and perfect finish in your work
- sketch the design you want to make first and keep a clear picture of the design in you stick to the plan and don't change designs half way through the competition.

Floristry Toolbox

Below is an outline of the tools that can be within each competitor's toolbox.

		Toolbox
		Floristry knives
		Scissors
		Tweezers
		Pliers
		Shears or clippers
		Wire Tighteners
		Small watering can or plastic jug
		Sewing needles and threads
		Tape measure

	Test tube water filler
	Bradawl (holemaker)
	Selection of wires. Non decorative
	Stapler
	Cold glues
	Tapes including sellotape, pot tape, parafilm, stemtex.
	Tying materials, string, polyblast twine
	Bindwire
	Steel dressmaking pins (non decorative)
	Floral Fix Adhesive Tack.
	Pen and paper
	Mossing pins
	Corsage magnets

	Brush (s)
	Clamps
	Cotton buds/Cotton sticks
	Earphones/earplugs
	Stem stripper
	Glove stem stripper
	Leaf wipes (NOT aerosols) Tissues
	SMALL hammer
	Pegs - or similar clamping tools NOT TO BE DECORATIVE
	Kenzan/ Fakirbed/ Pinholder(s)
	Gloves, masks and PPE (personal protective equipment)
	Ruler

	Spray mister
	Screwdriver (if needed)
	Small shovel
	Saw (if needed)
	Small Mirror

