

Royal School of Needlework

Whitework: Broderie Anglaise and Richelieu - Diploma

Academic year 2025/26

Broderie Anglaise and Richelieu are traditional whitework embroidery techniques which include forms of cutwork. Broderie Anglaise is characterised by the use of multiple eyelets of varying types and sizes combined with surface stitching such as Satin, Padded Satin and Trailing. Richelieu designs have cut away shapes outlined in Buttonhole Stitch with Buttonhole, Whipped and / or Woven Bars worked across them. Picots can added to the bars as an embellishment.

Aim

To design and work a piece of whitework which combines elements of Broderie Anglaise and Richelieu, demonstrating advanced technical skill and varied stitch selection appropriate to the design. Additional skill is involved in combining the different techniques into a single design.

Materials and equipment

There is no starter kit for this module. Zula linen, coton a broder, stranded cotton and needles can be purchased from the RSN.

Fabric: Zula linen, which is a densely woven fine white fabric, is the preferred choice. Cotton batiste and cotton lawn may also be used.

Threads: Coton a broder sizes 16, 20, 25 and 30. Stranded cotton. Keep to one brand of these threads to maintain consistency of tone throughout, either DMC 5200 or Anchor No 1.

Needles: Embroidery 10 and 12. Others as necessary.

Reasonable adjustments

If there is a reason you may have difficulty completing the module e.g. visual impairment, allergy to some materials, please discuss this with the tutor and the C and D team before starting. Adjustments are possible.

Essential requirements

Design area

- Finished design no larger than 18 x 18 cm (7 x 7 inches) or equivalent.

Stitches

Broderie Anglaise must include at least two of each of the following:

- Small round eyelets worked with a stiletto – up to 5mm
- Larger cut eyelets e.g. circles, teardrops – up to 1cm

- Shaded eyelets – outer and inner shape are the same, the eyelet is worked off centre
- Shaped eyelets – outer and inner shapes are different

There is a downloadable leaflet illustrating the different types of eyelets.

- At least two areas of Padded Satin
- At least two areas of Trailing, one of which should be tapered. Total length of trailing to be at least 10cm.

Richelieu must include the following:

- Buttonhole edges to open areas
- Whipped bars
- Woven bars
- Buttonhole bars
- Picots

Finishing

- The finished work may be mounted on card and backed with a suitable fabric or made into a lavender bag. Discuss the lavender bag option with the tutor. There is a downloadable leaflet on Making a Lavender Bag.

Other surface stitches for outlines and accents may also be used e.g. Stem, French Knots and Bullions. Optional elements will not be assessed.

Getting started – before class

It is not necessary to arrive at the first class with a finalised design, but you should come with some ideas. For examples of work by other C and D students look at the C and D gallery on the website. <https://royal-needlework.org.uk/courses/certificate-diploma/canddgallery/>. Also try the techniques pages <https://royal-needlework.org.uk/courses/embroidery-techniques/>

Getting started – in class

Preparatory work

Preparation prior to stitching is an important part of the learning process. Your tutor will give guidance on how to prepare the following:

- A line drawing. The drawing will be photocopied several times and used to create:
- A stitch plan to ensure the mandatory elements are included and are well distributed.
- A tonal shaded drawing – shades of one colour, light to dark, can be used to represent the tones in the design
- An order of work
- The line drawing will be traced on to tissue and used to transfer the design to the fabric.

Initial plans can be amended as the embroidery progresses. If you choose to have your work formally assessed, you should submit the preparatory work listed above together with your source material. All this paperwork will form part of the assessment.

Things to think about when planning the embroidery

- Stylised images make good subjects, as do monograms and abstract designs.
- Consider the overall design when placing the individual techniques to create a pleasing image that is balanced and well thought out.
- To accommodate the technical requirements of the brief the design will need a balance of cut away and solid stitched areas.
- As they will need to be supported with stitch think about the size of the open areas. Avoid anything too large.

Intellectual property

The final design must be original to you. Use of your own visual media (photographs, drawings) is encouraged. Referencing and interpreting other visual media is acceptable. Copying is not. The intellectual property of others must be respected.

Additional information

Additional information can be downloaded from the website.

- Resources - Websites, Books, Suppliers for C&D
- Making a Lavender Bag
- Eyelets