



# HALLMARKING GUIDANCE NOTES



## PRACTICAL GUIDANCE IN RELATION TO THE HALLMARKING ACT 1973

INFORMATION FROM THE ASSAY OFFICES OF GREAT BRITAIN

NOVEMBER 2022



London



Edinburgh



Birmingham



Sheffield

Guaranteeing The Quality Of Precious Metals Since 1327

# THE PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDANCE NOTES

The purpose of these notes is to give practical guidance in relation to the Hallmarking Act 1973 and subsequent amendments. No reliance should be placed on the document for a legal interpretation. The UK Assay Offices are happy to answer questions arising from these guidance notes and on any articles or other issues not specifically mentioned.

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# HALLMARKING PRECIOUS METALS

## WHY ARE PRECIOUS METAL ARTICLES HALLMARKED?

**Platinum, gold, palladium and silver are rarely used in their purest form but instead they are normally alloyed with lesser metals in order to achieve a desired strength, durability, colour etc.**

It is not possible to detect by sight or by touch the platinum, gold, palladium or silver content of an item. It is therefore a legal requirement to hallmark all articles consisting of platinum, gold, palladium or silver (subject to certain exemptions) if they are to be described as such.

The main offence under the UK Hallmarking Act 1973 is based on description. It is an offence for any person in the course of trade or business to:

- Describe an un-hallmarked article as being wholly or partly made of platinum, gold, palladium or silver.
- Supply or offer to supply un-hallmarked articles to which such a description is applied.
- The UK's legal requirement for a hallmark applies to anyone in the course of trade or business with UK consumers and applies equally to e-commerce, distance selling, gallery shops, market stalls and physical retail premises.

## WHAT NEEDS TO BE HALLMARKED?

**Any article described as being wholly or partly made of platinum, gold, palladium or silver that is not covered under exempt articles. This applies equally to new articles and pre-owned articles. A description can be verbal, written, or in the form of a manufacturer's fineness marks on a piece of jewellery.**

### Main Exemptions:

Articles below a certain weight are exempt from hallmarking. In the case of articles consisting of precious metal and base metal the below exemption weight is based on the total metal weight, including base metals.

Where an article contains more than one precious metal the applicable minimum weight is that of the most precious metal in the alloy.

- Platinum 0.5 grams
- Gold 1.0 gram
- Palladium 1.0 gram
- Silver 7.78 grams

Any pre-1950 item may now be described and sold as precious metal without a hallmark, **if the seller can prove that it is of minimum fineness and was manufactured before 1950.**

### Other Exempt Articles

A full list of exemptions can be found on pages 16 – 18 of these Guidance Notes.

# WHAT ARE THE PRECIOUS METAL STANDARDS FOR HALLMARKING?

The precious metal fineness standard for UK hallmarking (expressed in parts per thousand) for each precious metal, along with the standard of solder permitted to be used, for each individual fineness, is listed below. The hallmarking standards available under the International Hallmarking Convention (common control mark) are also listed.

Alloy	UK Fineness (ppt)	Permitted Solder (ppt)	Convention Permitted Solder (ppt)
Platinum	999	Minimum PM fineness 999	Minimum PM fineness 800
Platinum	950	Minimum PM fineness 950	
Platinum	900	Minimum PM fineness 900	
Platinum	850	Minimum PM fineness 850	
Gold	999	750	750
Gold	990	750	750
Gold	916.6	750	750
Gold	750	750	750
Gold	750 Filigree or watch case	740	740
Gold	750 White	500	585
Gold	585 Yellow, Red	585	585
Gold	585 White	500	585
Gold	375	375	375
Palladium	999	Minimum PM fineness 700	Minimum PM fineness 700
Palladium	950		
Palladium	500	Minimum PM fineness 500	
Silver	999	650	650
Silver	958	650	650
Silver	925	650	650
Silver	800	650	550

PM is platinum, gold, palladium or silver or a combination of two or more thereof and the fineness may be combined.

# WHAT ARE THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF A HALLMARK?

A HALLMARK IS MADE UP OF 3 COMPULSORY SYMBOLS:



## 1. The Sponsor's or Maker's Mark

This indicates the maker or sponsor of the article. In the UK this mark consists of at least two letters within a surround. No two Sponsor's marks are the same at any one Assay Office.

## 2. Metal and fineness (purity) Mark

Indicates the precious metal content of the article and that it is not less than the fineness of the article indicated. The fineness is indicated by a millesimal number (parts per thousand) and the metal type is indicated by the shape of the surround.

Platinum	Gold	Palladium	Silver
	 9 carat	2009	
	 14 carat		 Sterling
	 18 carat		 Britannia
	 22 carat	2010	
	 24 carat		

## 3. Assay Office Mark

Indicates the particular Assay Office at which the article was tested and marked. There are 4 Assay Offices in the UK – London, Edinburgh, Birmingham and Sheffield.

### Assay Office Town Marks



London



Edinburgh



Birmingham



Sheffield

**There is also a range of optional marks that can be applied alongside the Hallmark if requested. These are:**

Traditional Fineness Symbols – optional



Sterling  
Silver



Sterling Silver  
Scotland



Britannia  
Silver



Palladium



Gold



Platinum

### The Date Letter – optional

Until 1999 the date letter was compulsory. This is no longer the case, but it can be applied voluntarily in addition to the compulsory marks. The date letter changes once a year on January 1st.



2021



2022



2023



2024



2025



2026



2027



2028



2029



2030

### The Common Control Mark and Convention Marks (CCM)

The UK has been a signatory to the International Convention on Hallmarks since 1972. This means that UK Assay Offices can strike the Convention Hallmark which will then be recognised by all member countries in the International Convention. Equally, Convention Hallmarks from other member countries are legally recognised in the UK. Articles bearing the Convention Hallmark do not have to be re-hallmarked in the UK.

There are two types of Convention mark.



Platinum



Gold



Palladium



Silver

Type 1 has the fineness incorporated in the design and the shape indicates the metal.

Type 2 displays the scales only and is the same shape on all metals.



Articles displaying the Type 2 mark must have additional marks indicating the metal, e.g., chemical symbol, or shield indicating the nature of the precious metal and the fineness in Arabic numerals.

Articles that have either type of CCM mark also require the sponsor's mark and Assay Office mark.

CCM marks are applied in addition to the national hallmark and allows the article to be sold between countries who are members of the convention without the need for further testing and marking.

Fineness recognised under the Convention are:

**Platinum:** 850, 900, 950, 999

**Gold:** 375, 585, 750, 916, 990, 999

**Palladium:** 500, 950, 999

**Silver:** 800, 925, 958, 999

A Convention Hallmark consists of 4 marks:



Sponsor



Common  
Control Mark

925

Fineness  
(Purity) Mark



Assay  
Office Mark

On smaller articles, when type 1 is applied, the additional fineness mark can be omitted, as it is incorporated in the CCM design.





# APPROVAL OF SPONSORS' MARKS AND USE OF LOGO MARKS

## CAN I USE MY COMPANY LOGO AS A SPONSOR'S MARK?

**Any sponsors' mark can be registered with an Assay Office but the design must be approved by an assay office. The Assay Office will use the following guidance to make an approval.**

- (a) In order to allow accurate searches of the Sponsors' mark register a logo must either contain at least two letters or if a symbol only is used it must be contained with an approved Assay Office standard surround.
- (b) The supplier must provide the assay office with an authorised hard copy of the Registered Trade Mark or other registered design.
- (c) The supplier must provide the assay office with a written undertaking that they have the authority to use the trade mark.
- (d) The assay office is not responsible for validating ownership of the design or its use, or for verifying its registration, although it is expected that common sense and existing knowledge will be applied when approving such designs.
- (e) The design must allow the mark to be clearly distinguished and described.
- (f) Numbers alone will not be approved.
- (g) Designs resembling the character of a current or ancient hallmark will not be approved.
- (h) Any design must be of size that allows it to be made into a punch which can be used for the hallmark and still be legible. It is unlikely that designs of more than 5 characters long could be made into a satisfactory punch.

If the logo cannot be approved as a sponsor's mark, the logo is a decorative addition which is not an integral part of the approved hallmark then there are clear guidelines to be followed.

- (a) must be principally for decorative purposes;
- (b) must not give the impression that it is a present or formerly authorised hallmark.
- (c) must not give or purport to give additional information about that article regarding the standard of the metal, or at which Assay Office or when it was marked.
- (d) must not be described as being part of a hallmark.

For the full guidelines on the use of logo marks, please refer to The British Hallmarking Council's 'Principles and Guidance on Sponsors' Marks, Logo and Town Marks' which can be obtained from any of the UK Assay Offices on request.



# CAN I USE MORE THAN ONE PRECIOUS METAL IN ONE ARTICLE?

## **Articles consisting of more than one precious metal can be hallmarked, subject to the following conditions:**

- The item can only be marked if, in the opinion of the Assay Office, an ordinary person will be able to determine which part is which precious metal. Note: Two standards of the same precious metal, e.g., 375 gold and 750 gold, are not regarded as “Mixed Metals” In this case the hallmark for the lower standard will be applied.
- Each precious metal component must be at least the minimum legal fineness for that metal i.e., Platinum 850, Gold 375, Palladium 500, Silver 800 (Parts per thousand).
- The full Hallmark (Sponsor’s Mark, Assay Office and fineness mark) struck will be that of the least precious metal, in order, silver, palladium, gold and platinum. This will normally be struck on the appropriate metal. If not practicable to do so, marks may be struck on the higher precious metal.
- Where an article includes mixed precious metals, the minor fineness mark only will be stamped on the “higher” precious metals
- Where an article contains more than one precious metal, the applicable minimum weight is that of the higher precious metal in the article compared to the total weight of all precious metals in the article. For example, an article with 0.5g of gold and 3g of silver. The higher precious metal is gold; therefore, the minimum exemption weight is 1g. The total weight is 3.5g which exceeds the minimum exemption weight for gold. Therefore, this article is not exempt.

## Anomalies

**Where small components are used, the above may not be possible. In these circumstances the following rules apply:**

- If it is not practical to stamp the fineness marks on the “higher” precious metals, they may be stamped on the lower precious metals.
- If this is not practical then the fineness marks can be stamped on another precious metal part.
- If neither of these options are practical, the full hallmark (Sponsor’s Mark, Assay Office mark and least precious metal fineness mark) will be applied on the least precious metal part and all other marks omitted.
- When a platinum article has small component parts consisting of gold (not white) and the gold parts are of a fineness of 750 parts per thousand or higher, then the article may be hallmarked with a platinum full mark and the appropriate gold fineness mark. This will not apply if the gold components are 585 or 375ppt. The gold fineness mark can be applied anywhere on the article. The gold parts must not exceed 50% of the total article weight.



# CAN I USE NON-PRECIOUS METALS IN COMBINATION WITH PRECIOUS METALS?

## **Articles made of precious metals and other materials can be hallmarked, subject to the following conditions:**

A mixed precious metal and base metal article, or an article of mixed precious metal and other materials, can only be hallmarked if any precious metal component is at least the minimum legal fineness for that metal i.e. Platinum 850 (parts per thousand), Gold 375 (parts per thousand), Palladium 500, (parts per thousand), Silver 800 (parts per thousand).

### **If an article includes base metal parts then:**

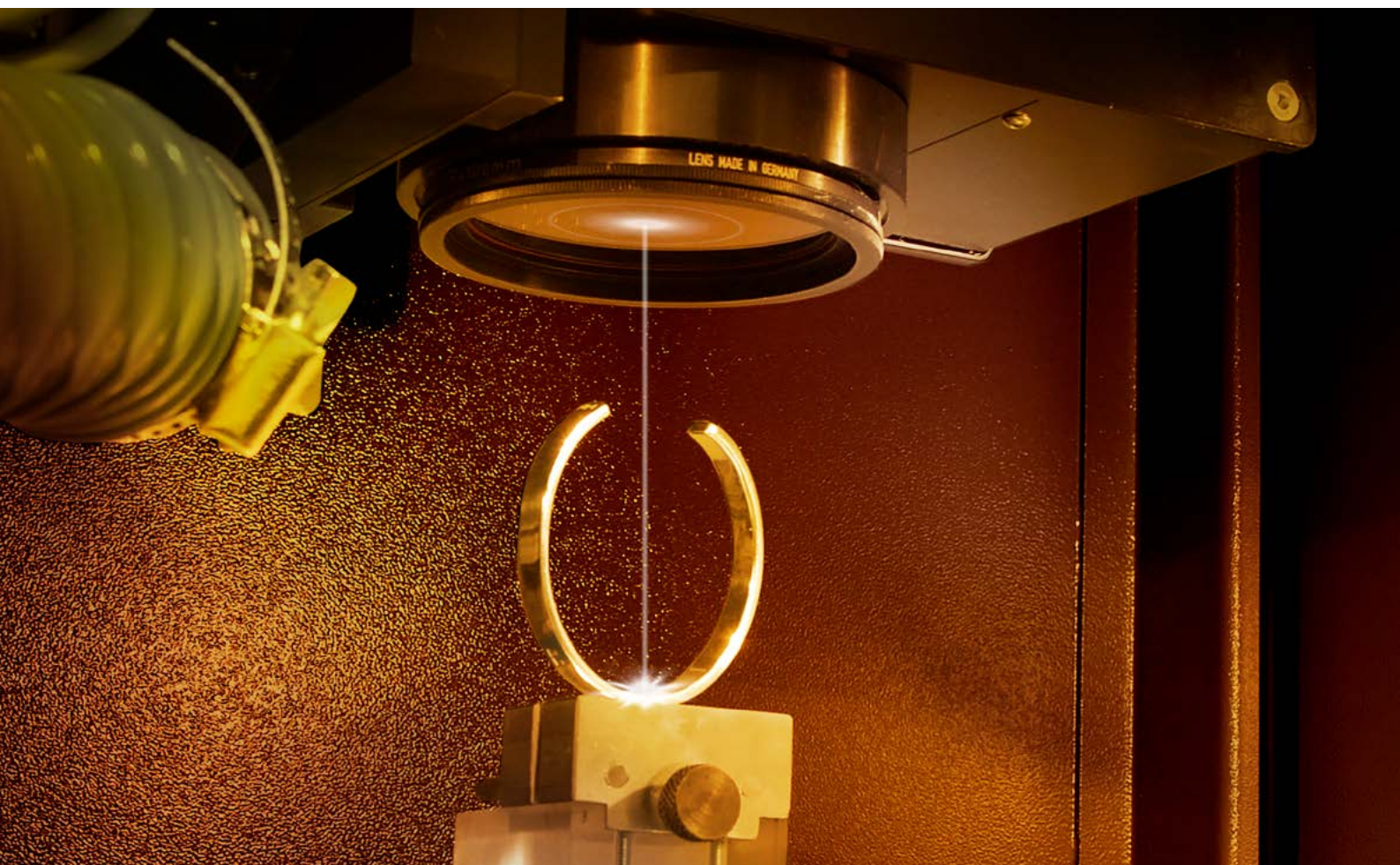
- Those base metal parts must be clearly distinguishable from precious metal parts by colour and/or texture and must be clearly visible by their extent.
- The word + METAL must be applied next to the Hallmark on the precious metal part.
- Whenever practical the word METAL or the name of the metal should also be struck on the base metal part/s (brass, stainless steel, titanium etc.), in a manner which complies with any Regulation made by The British Hallmarking Council.
- The Hallmark can only be applied to the precious metal component. Sufficient space must also be available adjacent to the Hallmark for the addition of the "+METAL" mark.
- For an article with more than one precious metal and a base metal the Mixed Precious Metal rules apply.

### **If an article does not include base metal parts, but other materials, then:**

- The other materials must be clearly distinguishable from any precious metal part.
- The other materials part must not be plated to resemble any precious metal.
- The extent of each part must be clearly visible.
- The precious metal part must be of a thickness of not less than 100 micrometres.
- A mixed material article containing only a single precious metal will be hallmarked on the precious metal part only, as if it was a separate article.

**If an item has base metal parts required to fulfil a technical function, then:**

- Such parts can only be justified if the particular precious metal from which an article is constructed cannot be made to perform a required technical function.
- Permission must be pre-agreed with the Assay Office
- Smaller base metal parts such as springs in clasps can be ignored.
- Larger base metal parts that are fully concealed e.g. continuous steel springs or wire inside bangles or necklaces will be marked with + SPRING adjacent to the Hallmark.
- Fully concealed base metal spring cores or wires should be no heavier than is required to fulfil the technical function. They must not exceed 50% of the total article weight.
- If larger base metal parts performing a technical function are visible by their extent they will be treated as a mixed precious metal and base metal article and marked +METAL





# HALLMARKING GOLD PLATED SILVER ARTICLES

## CAN I HALLMARK GOLD PLATED SILVER ARTICLES?

Gold plated silver articles will be hallmarked as silver.

Gold plated articles are not covered by the 'mixed metals' amendment to the Hallmarking Act (2007).

Other than the silver hallmark, or a 925 stamp on underweight articles, no other standalone gold fineness marks are permitted on gold plated silver articles, because they are potentially confusing and misleading to consumers.

A gold fineness description is allowed if the article is described as silver and immediately followed by the words 'gold plated'. For example an article with a silver hallmark (or 925 stamp on the underweight articles) can be described as '925 & 18ct gold plated'.

## CAN I HALLMARK GOLD PLATED BASE METAL ARTICLES?

Gold plated base metals items cannot be hallmarked, this includes 'bonded gold' on base metal, 'rolled gold' on base metal and 'plated gold' on base metal.

# MOKUME GANE ARTICLES CONTAINING PRECIOUS METAL(S)

## WHAT IS MOKUME GANE?

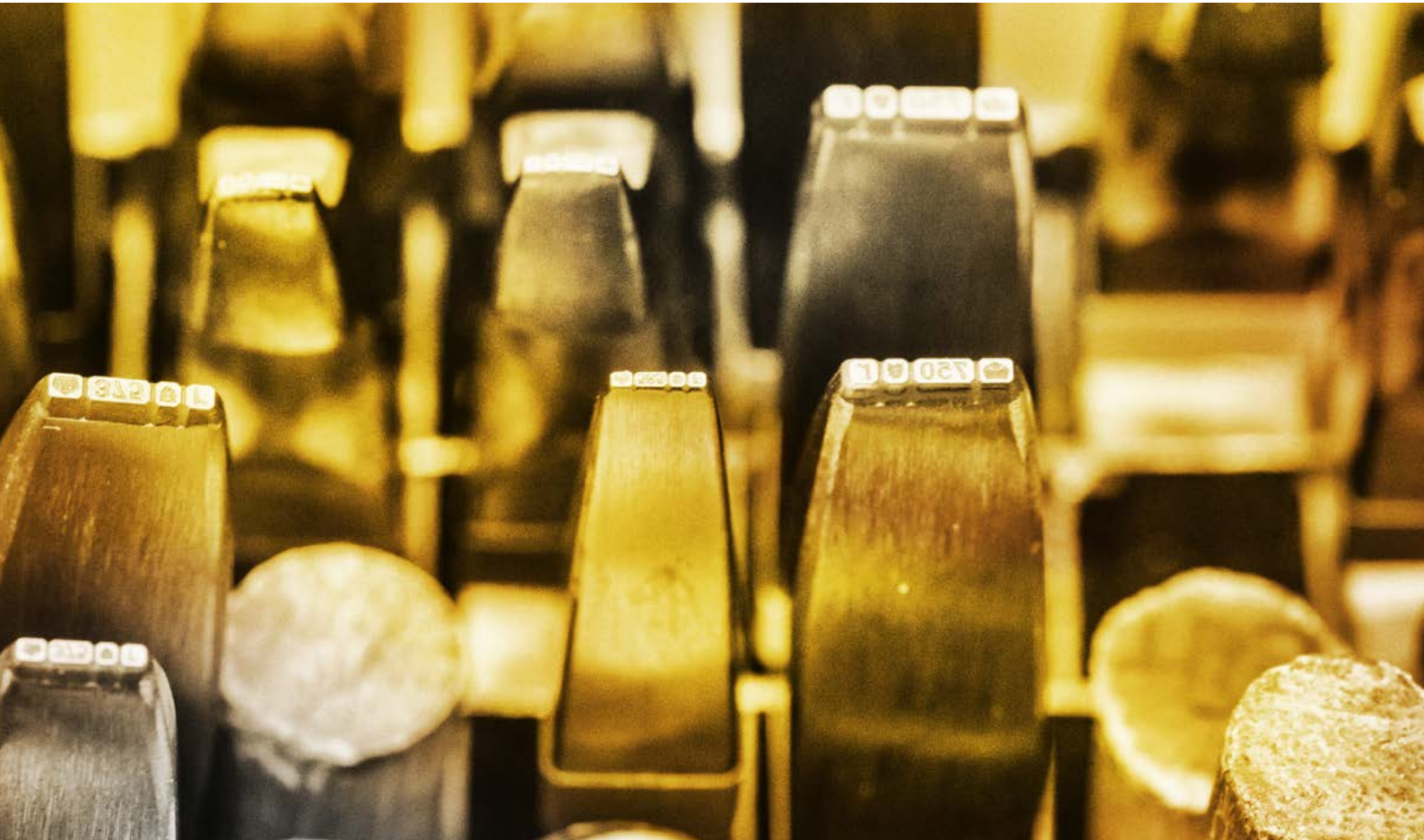
Mokume Gane is a traditional Japanese method for laminating various colours of metals together and manipulating them to create patterns that resemble wood patterns. The rules defined here relate only to articles that include parts manufactured as Mokume Gane (as defined here).

Articles that include small or thin parts of precious metal and or base metal constructed in other ways that cannot be defined as Mokume Gane are not to be evaluated using these guidelines and normal mixed metal hallmarking rules will apply to those precious metal parts and/or non-precious metal parts.

## HALLMARKING MOKUME GANE

- Each precious metal layer must be at least the minimum legal fineness i.e. silver 800, palladium 500, gold 375, platinum 850 (parts per thousand).
- Mokume Gane articles consisting of more than one fineness of a precious metal will be hallmarked at the lowest fineness found for that precious metal.
- The item can only be marked if, in the opinion of the Assay Office, an ordinary person will be able to clearly distinguish by colour the precious metal(s) from the non-precious metal(s).
- The Assay Office must be able to test the precious metal(s), otherwise the articles will be rejected for hallmarking (or accepted as a revised submitted standard), in accordance with normal Assay Office procedures.
- For an article consisting of only Mokume Gane parts, more than 50% of the article by weight must be made from precious metals.
- Sufficient space must be available for the respective hallmark as defined below, otherwise the articles will be rejected for hallmarking (or accepted as a revised submitted standard), in accordance with normal Assay Office procedures.
- The appropriate full hallmark and other marks, and their locations, will be selected in the same way as for articles consisting of more than one precious metals or non-precious metals and precious metals, as explained earlier in this guidance.

- The item can only be marked if, in the opinion of the Assay Office, the article satisfies all other conditions for articles consisting of more than one precious metals or non-precious metals and precious metals, as explained elsewhere in this guidance.
- If the article includes parts that are not Mokume Gane then normal mixed metal hallmarking rules will apply to those precious metal parts and/or non-precious metal parts. The majority of the Mokume Gane part of the article must be made from precious metals. The Mokume Gane parts will be considered as precious metal parts.





# EXEMPT ARTICLES

**The following gives a full list of articles exempt from compulsory hallmarking under part II of schedule 1 of the 1973 Hallmarking Act. As amended by the Hallmarking (Exempted Articles) (Amendment) Order 1975 and the Hallmarking (Exempted Articles) Orders 1982 and 1986.**

## Exempted Articles

1. An article which is intended for dispatch to a destination outside the United Kingdom.
2. An article which is outside the United Kingdom, or which is in course of consignment from outside the United Kingdom to an Assay Office in the United Kingdom.
3. Any coin which is, or was formerly at any time, current coin of the United Kingdom or any other territory.
4. Any article which has been used, or is intended to be used, for medical, dental, veterinary, scientific or industrial purposes.
5. Any battered article fit only to be remanufactured.
6. Any article of gold or silver thread.
7. Any raw material (including any bar, plate, sheet, foil, rod, wire, strip or tube) or bullion.
8. Any manufactured article which is not substantially complete, and which is intended for further manufacture.
9. Any article which is wholly or mainly of platinum, and which was manufactured before 1st January 1975.
10. Any article which is wholly or mainly of palladium, and which was manufactured before 1st January 2010.

## Articles Exempt if of Minimum Fineness

11. Any article which;
  - (a) Is wholly or mainly of gold or of silver or of gold and silver assaying in all its gold parts not less than 375 parts per thousand and in all its silver parts not less than 800 parts per thousand; and
  - (b) Was manufactured before the year 1950 and has not since the beginning of the year 1950 been the subject of any alteration which would be an improper alteration if the article had previously borne approved hallmarks.

12. Any musical instrument, where the description is applied to the mouthpiece and the mouthpiece is of minimum fineness.
13. Subject to the provisions of this paragraph, any article containing only one precious metal, being a metal of minimum fineness and of a weight less than that specified in the following table:

<b>Silver</b>	7.78 grams
<b>Palladium</b>	1 gram
<b>Gold</b>	1 gram
<b>Platinum</b>	0.5 grams

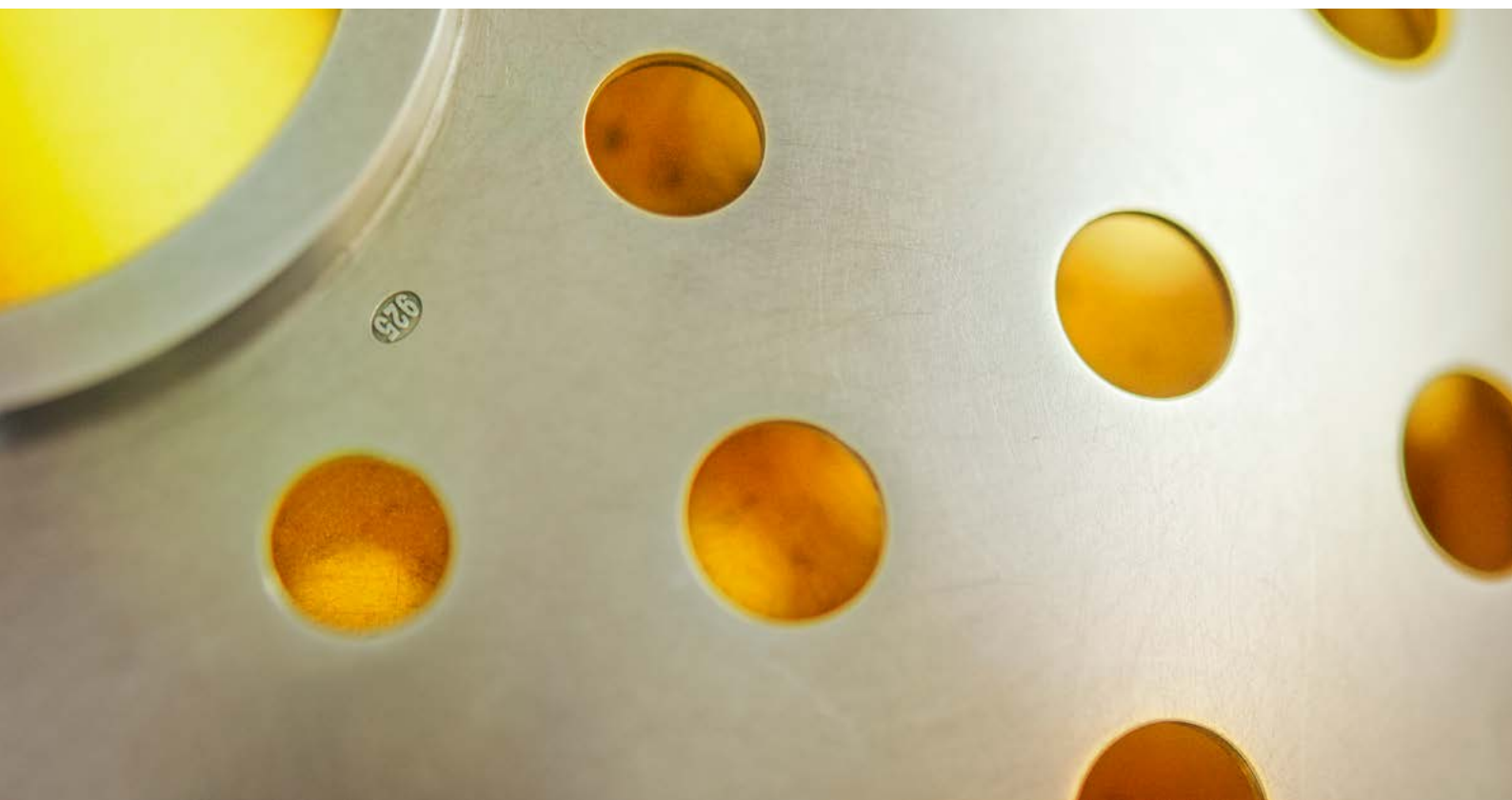
**NB** In the case of articles consisting of precious metal and base metal the above exemption weight is based on the total **metal** weight, including base metals.

14. Any article, except an article made of chain work, which is wholly of one or more precious metals of minimum fineness and which is so small or thin that it cannot be hallmarked
15. Any article which is of minimum fineness and which is imported temporarily (whether as a trade sample, or as intended for exhibition or otherwise) and for the time being remains under the control of the Commissioners of Customs and Excise.
16. Before 1975, many precious metal articles (e.g. rings, whatever their weight, other than wedding rings) were exempted from hallmarking. Platinum was not hallmarked at all. Any article covered by these exemptions, if (a) of minimum fineness (Gold 375 parts per thousand and Silver 800 Parts per thousand) and (b) proved to have been manufactured before 1975, may still be described and sold as precious metal.
- 16a. The following articles of gold, if manufactured before 1st January 1975, and (except in the case of articles mentioned in sub-paragraph (d) below) of minimum fineness-
  - (a) Rings, except wedding rings, pencil cases, lockets, watch chains and thimbles.
  - (b) Articles consisting entirely of filigree work.
  - (c) Articles so heavily engraved or set with stones that it is impossible to mark them without damage.
  - (d) Jewellers works, that is the actual setting only in which stones or other jewels are set and jointed sleeper earrings.

16b. The following articles of silver, if manufactured before 1st January 1975 and (except in the case of articles mentioned in paragraph (e) below) of minimum fineness –

- (a) Locketts, watch chains and stamped medals.
- (b) Mounts the weight of which is less than 15.55 grams.
- (c) Articles consisting entirely of filigree work.
- (d) Silver articles the weight of which is less than 7.78 grams.
- (e) Jewellers works, that is the actual setting only in which stones or other jewels are set.

17. However, even articles which should have been hallmarked when they were made, but bear no hallmark, are now treated as exempt if they were manufactured before a specific date. Since 1999, the date has been 1920, but the amended legislation alters this date to 1950. Therefore, any pre-1950 item may now be described and sold as precious metal, if the seller can prove that it is of minimum fineness and was manufactured before 1950.



# OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## Adhesives & Solder

Adhesives and solder can be used as long as it is not excessive, nor used for strengthening, weighting or filling. Adhesives may be used in place of solder.

## Filled Hollow Articles

Hollow articles may be filled with non-metallic substances. Such articles must be marked 'FILLED' before hallmarking.

## Submitting part assembled items

The Assay Offices are required by the Hallmarking Act 1973 to see all the component parts that will be used to make the final complete article before the hallmark is applied. The customer must ensure all components are present at the point of submission.

## Plated Articles

Hallmarked articles may also be plated as follows:

Article made of:	Plating Permitted
Platinum	Gold, platinum, rhodium
Gold	Gold, platinum, rhodium
Palladium	Palladium, gold, platinum, rhodium
Silver	Silver, palladium, gold, platinum, ruthenium , rhodium

- If the plating is applied after hallmarking, the plating or coating must not exceed 2 micrometres on any part of the article.
- If precious metal articles are plated with the same precious metal, for example gold plated with gold, the standard of fineness of the plating must not be less than the standard of fineness of the article itself.
- Any precious metal used for plating must never be less than the minimum UK standard of fineness.
- The use of base metal for plating on precious metal articles is not permitted, Whether as an interlayer or as a surface treatment. This includes the use of nickel, copper and alloys such as Miralloy etc. If detected, the article/s will be rejected by the Assay Offices. This practice tends to be more evident on articles manufactured outside the UK. Importers are encouraged to specify the requirements of the Hallmarking Act to the supplier before orders are placed.

### Making alterations to a new hallmarked article

- It is an offence for any person to make an addition, alteration or repair to a **NEW** article bearing approved hallmarks, except in accordance with the written consent of an assay office.
- If an article is submitted for hallmarking disassembled it should be assembled using only the metal parts that were submitted with it.
- If after hallmarking the component which bears the hallmark is combined with different parts which have not undergone assay with the hallmarked component this will constitute an offence under Schedule 5(1) of the Hallmarking Act.

### Making an alteration to a pre-owned hallmarked article (articles that are not new)

It is possible to make an alteration to a hallmarked article that is **NOT** new, subject to the following conditions:

- The altered article must be of the same character and purpose as the original (e.g. a spoon must not become a fork.)
- The addition must be of the same standard as the article to which it is being added.
- The weight of the addition must be no heavier than 0.5 grams in platinum, 1 gram in gold, 1 gram in palladium and 5 grams in silver.
- The addition must not be greater than 50% of the article's total weight.
- Any other alteration must be re-submitted to an Assay Office.



## CHANGE OF USE

The practice of recycling unwanted hallmarked articles into items with a different use has been popular over recent years. Most of the examples use cutlery, forks, spoons, etc, to make pendants, rings and bracelets and the original mark is still present. This is permitted, providing:

- After the change has been made, the articles are submitted to an Assay Office before they are sold.
- The articles can be submitted to any of the 4 assay offices, even if the original mark was not applied by them and even if the existing hallmark was applied by an Assay Office that has closed.
- The assay office will inspect the article to ensure the hallmark is still valid and issue a certificate for each item. The item will have the certificate number applied to it. The end consumer shall be supplied with the certificate as proof that the article is in accordance with the current requirements.
- Any article that does not display a hallmark or the hallmark cannot be easily read after the change, will need to be submitted as a new ware for testing and hallmarking. All current requirements of the Hallmarking Act will apply.
- Change of use does not apply to articles where the use has not significantly changed. e.g. a tankard has the addition of a spout to make it a jug. Nor does it apply to new wares manufactured using melted down, previously hallmarked metal.

# GUIDANCE ON DESCRIBING PRECIOUS METALS

**The purpose of this section is to provide practical guidance on the way in which product should be described at point of sale.**

Subject to the provisions of the 1973 Hallmarking Act, any person who, in the course of a trade or business—

- (a) applies to an unhallmarked article a description indicating that it is wholly or partly made of platinum, gold, palladium or silver or
- (b) supplies, or offers to supply, an unhallmarked article to which such a description is applied, shall be guilty of an offence.

## Gold Plated Base Metal Articles

- The terms ‘bonded gold’, ‘rolled gold’ and ‘gold plated’ are allowed to refer to either gold plated silver articles or gold plated base metal articles
- For ‘bonded gold’, the bonded gold layer must be of fineness of at least 375 parts per thousand and of a fineness recognised in the UK. This means that bonded gold of 10k can only be described as 9 carat in the UK.

## Gold Plated Silver Articles

- When the word ‘gold or a specific gold fineness description is used to describe a gold plated silver article, the article must be described as silver and the word ‘gold’ must be directly followed by ‘plated’ e.g. ‘18ct gold plated silver ring.’
- Other terms like ‘vermeil’ may be used in addition but the phrase ‘gold plated’ and the word ‘silver’ must appear within the description e.g. ‘18ct gold plated vermeil silver ring’.
- The term ‘silver gilt’ may be used to describe a gold plated silver article, providing a gold fineness is not applied as part of the description e.g. ‘silver gilt ring’.
- The gold plated layer must be of a fineness of at least 375 parts per thousand and should not exceed 2 microns in thickness.

Examples of misleading descriptions for gold plated silver articles, that are not allowed include:

- 22ct gold clad ring
- 22ct gold vermeil ring

**A full list of the British Hallmarking Council’s guidance on describing precious metals can be obtained on request from any UK Assay Office.**



# USE OF THE WORDS 'PLATINUM', 'GOLD', 'PALLADIUM' AND 'SILVER' WHEN USED TO DESCRIBE BASE METAL JEWELLERY AND WATCHES

The following guidance refers to instances when the words 'platinum', 'gold', 'palladium' and 'silver' are used as adjectives to describe the colour of a product and are not intended to imply that the product is wholly or partly made of platinum, gold, palladium or silver.

- If an article contains no precious metals or is below the minimum fineness and the words 'platinum', 'gold', 'palladium' and 'silver' are used as an adjective to describe colour then the description must make this clear.
- By way of an example, if a base-metal watch, containing no gold is described as a 'gold watch' in order to describe its colour, this would constitute an offence under schedule 1 of the Hallmarking Act.
- Suggested examples of how the watch should be described include 'yellow metal watch', 'gold tone watch', 'gold coloured watch', which are not misleading to the consumer. These descriptions are offered by way of examples only and are not an exhaustive list.



# CONTACT DETAILS FOR UK ASSAY OFFICES



## **The Goldsmiths' Company Assay Office**

Goldsmiths' Hall  
Gutter Lane  
London  
EC2V 8AQ  
[www.assayofficelondon.co.uk](http://www.assayofficelondon.co.uk)



## **Edinburgh Assay Office**

24 Broughton Street  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3RH  
Tel: 0131 556 1144  
[www.edinburghassayoffice.co.uk](http://www.edinburghassayoffice.co.uk)



## **Birmingham Assay Office**

1 Moreton Street  
Birmingham  
B1 3AX  
Tel: 0121 236 6951  
[www.theassayoffice.co.uk](http://www.theassayoffice.co.uk)



## **Sheffield Assay Office**

Guardians' Hall  
Beulah Road  
Hillsborough  
Sheffield  
S6 2AN  
Tel: 0114 231 2121  
[www.assayoffice.co.uk](http://www.assayoffice.co.uk)

Guaranteeing The Quality Of Precious Metals Since 1327