



THE BRITISH HALLMARKING COUNCIL

GUIDANCE ON HALLMARKING OF MOKUME GANE ARTICLES CONTAINING PRECIOUS METAL(S)

Preamble

Following the introduction of the mixed-metals amendment to the Hallmarking Act in 2007, there has been an element of confusion and inconsistency in the application of hallmarks to articles made of Mokume Gane.

A Guidance note from the Technical Committee on behalf of the British Hallmarking Council is attached.

Approved by the British Hallmarking Council on 19 April 2016

GUIDANCE

Mokume Gane is a traditional Japanese method for laminating various colours of metals together and manipulating them to create patterns that resemble wood patterns. Mokume Gane translates closely to "wood grain metal" or "wood eye metal", describing the way the metal takes on the appearance of natural wood grain.

The traditional components are relatively soft metals and alloys of gold, silver and copper, but modern processes have enabled the inclusion on non-traditional metals such as titanium, platinum, iron, bronze, and brass.

The rules defined here relate **only** to articles that include parts manufactured as Mokume Gane (as defined above). 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 must be subject to the established rules for articles consisting of more than one precious metal or articles consisting of precious metal and base metal.

1. Hallmarking Mokume Gane

- Each precious metal layer must be at least the minimum legal fineness i.e. Gold 375, Silver 800, Platinum 850, Palladium 500 (parts per thousand).
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

1.1 Hallmarking Mokume Gane Consisting of Precious Metal only

Mokume Gane articles consisting of more than one precious metal can be hallmarked, subject to the following condition:

- The full Hallmark (Assay Office and fineness mark) struck will be that of the least precious metal, in order, silver, palladium, gold and platinum normally on the appropriate metal and will be applied to the least precious metal, and a part/minor mark (fineness mark) of the "higher precious" metal(s) will be stamped on these precious metal areas.
- If it is not practicable to position the marks as above, the full hallmark and part/minor marks can be applied across the article.

1.2 Hallmarking Mokume Gane Consisting of Precious Metal and Non-Precious Metal

Mokume Gane articles made of precious metals and base metals 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 clearly to distinguish by colour the precious metal(s) from the non-precious metal(s).
- The word "+METAL" must be applied next to the hallmark in a manner which complies with any Regulation made by The British Hallmarking Council (for example, Mixed Metals).
- The full Hallmark (Assay Office and fineness mark) struck will be that of the least precious metal, in order, silver, palladium, gold and platinum normally on the appropriate metal and will be applied to the least precious metal, a part/minor mark (fineness mark) of the "higher precious" metal(s) will be stamped on these precious metal areas and the word METAL or the name of the metal (e.g brass, copper etc) will be applied to the base metal surfaces.
- If not practicable to position the marks as above, the full hallmark and part/minor marks can be applied across the article.
- The majority of the article by weight must be made from precious metals.

1.3 Hallmarking Articles Containing Mokume Gane and non-Mokume Gane Parts

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.

Geraldine Swanton

Secretary to the British Hallmarking Council

25 April 2016