



2: Knowledge & requirements for the *Fechter* grade

Context and goals

Collegium in Armis currently has 4 grades which describe a student's achievements, knowledge and practical skills base within the medieval and Renaissance *Kunst des Fechtens* (*Art of Fencing*) with the longsword. The grades are:

- *Neuling* (Novice)
- *Fechter* (Fencer)
- *Freifechter* (Free Fencer)
- *Vorfechter* (Provost).

All students who join the school and continue training beyond an initial probationary period become a *Neuling* by default. *Fechter* is the first grade with a testing requirement. The *Fechter* grade establishes measurable standards and provides each student a path of structured progression with clear and attainable goals.

Minimum requirements

To be awarded the grade of *Fechter*, a candidate:

- has been attending classes regularly for a minimum of 1 year as a *Neuling*
- Possesses and maintains the necessary equipment in good condition
- Satisfies the knowledge and skill requirements below during an examination.

Knowledge and skills

Key knowledge areas and skills are drawn from the sources known as *Hanko Doebringer*, *Sigmund Ringeck*, *Peter von Danzig*, *Peter Falkner* and *Joachim Meyer*, with additional input from other relevant sources where useful. A candidate testing for this grade must demonstrate all items below to the satisfaction of the examiner/s.

Privileges and responsibilities

Prior to attaining this grade, students only free fence with an instructor. A *Fechter* has earned the right to free fence with other students who also hold the *Fechter* (or a higher) grade (or equivalent in other Historical Fencing schools). A *Fechter* is also expected to assist in coaching novices (*Neulings*) and play a role in running and promoting the school.

Assessing candidates

Each distinct item is assessed as 'competent' (tick) or 'not yet competent' (cross) marks. Candidates require competent assessments for all items to pass the overall examination. Examiners may prompt the candidate for a corrected or extended response (including more information or further demonstration) within reason.

1.	Possess & maintain suitable equipment for practice	Result
1.1	Synthetic longsword - e.g. Rawlings Xtreme or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	3 weapon fencing mask - inspected & adjusted to fit properly	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3	Fencing coaches jacket - or a similar padded plastron, jack, gambeson, gilet or doublet	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4	Protective gloves & forearm protection	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.5	Candidate's equipment is inspected for cleanliness, safety & suitability for practice	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Demonstrate a commitment to health & safety	Result
2.1	Candidate exhibits an awareness of hazards at all times	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2	Candidate exhibits care & respect for their own safety & the safety of their fellows at all times	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Explain the history & significance of <i>Johannes Liechtenauer's</i> tradition	Result
3.1	Name & date 4 major authors/sources for <i>Liechtenauer's</i> art across the tradition's full time span	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2	Describe some of the changes in the art as it evolved over time between early & late sources	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.	Explain the 3 divisions of <i>Johannes Liechtenauer's</i> art	Result
4.1	<i>Blossfechten</i> 'unarmoured fencing'	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2	<i>Harnischfechten</i> 'armoured fencing'	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.3	<i>Rossfechten</i> 'mounted fencing'	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Identify the 4 divisions of the blade	Result
5.1	<i>Stärke</i> 'strong'	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<i>Schwech</i> 'weak'	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	<i>Langen Schneide</i> 'long edge'	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.4	<i>Kurzen Schneide</i> 'short edge'	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Identify the 5 components of the sword	Result
6.1	<i>Knopf</i> 'pommel'	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.2	<i>Ort</i> 'point'	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.3	<i>Kreutz</i> 'crossguard'	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.4	<i>Heft</i> 'haft'	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.5	<i>Klinge</i> 'blade'	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Demonstrate the 3 types of footwork (<i>Drei Schritten</i>) & how to use them	Result
7.1	<i>Einfachen schritt</i> 'simple step' passes, cross steps, crossover advances	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.2	<i>Triangel schritt</i> 'triangle step' single or double steps to the side	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.3	<i>Gestohlen / gebrocken schritt</i> 'stolen / broken step' changed, shortened or aborted steps	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4	Perform a continuous sequence of passing, stolen & triangle steps with balance and fluidity	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Demonstrate 4 main (<i>Vier Leger</i>) & 4 secondary postures & hangings (<i>Hängen</i>)	Result
8.1	<i>Ochs</i> 'ox' the extended form is also the <i>Oberhängen</i> 'upper hanger'	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.2	<i>Pflug</i> 'plow' the extended form is also the <i>Unterhängen</i> 'lower hanger'	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.3	<i>Vom tag</i> 'day' on the shoulder and over the head	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.4	<i>Alber</i> 'fool'	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.5	<i>Schrankhut</i> 'barrier position'	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.6	<i>Langen ort</i> 'long point'	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.7	<i>Nebenhut / Wechsel</i> 'near position' or 'changer'	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.8	<i>Hangen ort</i> 'hanging point'	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.9	Move efficiently & smoothly between all the postures with footwork	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Demonstrate the upper & lower hews & the half & full hews	Result
9.1	<i>Oberhau</i> 'upper hew' any hew with a trajectory from above	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2	<i>Unterhau</i> 'lower hew' any hew with a trajectory from below	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.3	Half hews travel to the centre via 2 postures e.g. <i>Vom tag</i> > <i>Langen ort</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.4	Full hews travel through the centre via 3 postures e.g. <i>Vom tag</i> > <i>Langen ort</i> > <i>Alber</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Demonstrate the 3 wondrous (<i>Drei Wunder</i>)	Result
10.1	<i>Hau</i> 'hew' into the target percussively with the edge	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.2	<i>Schnitte</i> 'slice' by pressing, pushing or pulling with pressure against the target	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.3	<i>Stich</i> 'stab' the target with the <i>Ort</i> or 'point'	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Explain the 4 openings (Vier Blossen)			Result
11.1	<i>Vier Blossen</i>	‘four openings’ divided at the waist & down the middle of the opponent’s body	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.2		Hew fluidly to the 4 openings following set 1 of Meyer’s 4 openings drill	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Explain the 3 phases of combat			Result
12.1	<i>Zufechten</i>	‘onset’ or entry to combat	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.2	<i>Krieg</i>	‘war’ or close handwork	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.3	<i>Abzug</i>	‘withdrawal’ out of danger	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.4		Enter with effective <i>Zufechten</i> , perform set 1 of Meyer’s 4 openings drill (against an opponent) accompanied by triangle steps & then <i>Abzug</i> fluidly away well out of distance	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Demonstrate the 5 hidden hews (Verbogenhau) & 4 oppositions (Vier Versetzen)			Result
13.1	<i>Zornhau</i>	‘wrath hew’ demonstrate the <i>Zornort</i> or ‘wrath point’	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.2	<i>Krumphau</i>	‘crooked hew’ demonstrate how it opposes <i>Ochs</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.3	<i>Zwerchhau</i>	‘thwart hew’ demonstrate how it opposes <i>Vom tag</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.4	<i>Schielhau</i>	‘squinting hew’ demonstrate how it opposes <i>Pflug</i> as well as <i>Langen ort</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.5	<i>Scheitelhau</i>	‘scalp hew’ demonstrate how it opposes <i>Alber</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.6		Enter with <i>Zufechten</i> , perform each master hew against an opponent then <i>Abzug</i> smoothly away	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.7		Perform each of the <i>Versetzen</i> to attack an opponent adopting each posture in turn	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Demonstrate the basic longsword parat (solo form) with footwork & fluidity			Result
14.1		Perform the full ‘basic longsword parat’ with a steel blunt, from memory and with appropriate footwork, balance and fluidity. See the link below for a video example. <i>Youtube link:</i> http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=owcre_q-RKU	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Demonstrate composure & skill in free fencing bouts			Result
15.1		Fence in 3 free fencing bouts against qualified challengers. Demonstrate control of the weapon, recognizable postures & strikes, effective footwork, balance & the incorporation of all 3 phases of the fight (<i>Zufechten</i> , <i>Krieg</i> , <i>Abzug</i>). Modified <i>Belgian Longsword Rules</i> (BLR) apply to each bout as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cuts & thrusts (‘hits’) with 2-handed sword technique only – no hand to hand, kicks or grappling ▪ Candidate remains in the middle for each bout, & faces each challenger in turn ▪ Each bout is played until one fencer or the other attains 3 points from 3 separate exchanges ▪ To score points a hit must land on an ‘in target’ area without an ‘<i>After Blow</i>’ negating the point ▪ One immediate <i>After Blow</i> (<i>Naerschlag</i>) can be struck by a fencer who has just been hit ▪ To count, the <i>After Blow</i> must be immediate, land ‘in target’ & take no more than one step ▪ A successful <i>After Blow</i> negates the point that was just scored by the original hit ▪ ‘In target’ is the head & upper body area above the waist line and arms above the wrists ▪ Hits to ‘out of target’ areas (hands & below the waist) do not count toward points or <i>After Blows</i> ▪ A successful hit to any ‘in target’ areas earns 1 point ▪ In case of an apparent ‘simultaneous’ double hit (i.e. “both dead”), both fencers lose 1 point. 	<input type="checkbox"/>