

MAH AAC CET Design & Composition

Sample Paper – 7 | 2026

Duration: 90 Minutes | Maximum Marks: 50

Instructions

- This paper contains **1 practical question** modelled on the MAH AAC CET Design & Composition pattern.
- Total marks: **50**. There is **no negative marking**.
- Render the design in **POSTER COLOUR** or **WATERCOLOUR** on a drawing sheet of approximately **14" × 19"**.
- First lightly **mark the axis of symmetry** in pencil; it must not be visible in the final coloured work.
- Geometric instruments (ruler, set square, compass) may be used for the **initial pencil framework only**; the final coloured rendering should show confident freehand quality.
- Write your **seat number and name** clearly on the front of the sheet before beginning work.
- **Mobile phones, calculators, and all electronic gadgets** are strictly prohibited in the examination hall.

Design & Composition Question



Question (50 Marks):

Design a **DECORATIVE PANEL** (approximately 20 cm × 28 cm, portrait orientation) demonstrating **strict bilateral (mirror) symmetry** about a clearly implied vertical central axis. Draw inspiration from traditional Indian inlay craft, mehendi patterns, or Mughal architectural ornamentation. Your panel must include:

- (i) A **dominant central motif** placed exactly on the axis of symmetry — for example, a stylised *lotus* (full-face view with layered petals), a *kalash* (auspicious pot) with mango leaves, or a vertically symmetrical *peacock* shown with a fanned tail;
- (ii) At least **three pairs of secondary motifs**, one pair per tier (large, medium, and small), symmetrically flanking the central motif at different heights — for example, curling leaf sprays, bud forms, or geometric star/medallion shapes;
- (iii) A **symmetrical ornamental border** that encloses the entire panel — the border design may use running vines, interlocked geometric bands, or a row of repeating petal/teardrop units;
- (iv) **Internal pattern fills**: at least two different decorative fills (e.g. fine cross-hatching, small dots, chevron or scale patterns) used consistently within the motifs to add texture and tonal depth.

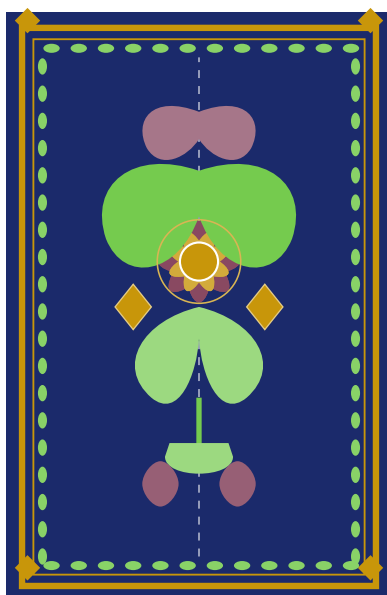
Use a **jewel-toned colour palette** suggestive of Mughal inlay work (*pietra dura*): deep lapis blue, rich burgundy, forest green, and warm gold/ivory. Outline all forms in white, gold, or a very pale tone to define edges clearly against the dark background.

Work on a 14" × 19" sheet in portrait orientation. Poster colours or watercolours are both acceptable.

Suggested Composition Layout (Thumbnail)

The thumbnail below suggests one possible arrangement. Candidates are encouraged to develop their own original composition.





Thumbnail: Bilateral Symmetry Panel — Lotus Central Motif, Jewel Palette

Evaluation Rubric (50 Marks)



Marking Rubric

Criterion	Descriptors	Marks
Symmetry Accuracy	Both halves are convincingly mirror-images; axis is implied clearly without being drawn; any minor freehand variation does not disrupt the bilateral rhythm	12
Central Motif	Dominant central element is well-executed, correctly placed on the axis, and visually strong enough to anchor the entire panel	12
Secondary Motifs & Decorative Fills	At least three paired tiers of secondary motifs; internal fill patterns add texture and tonal depth without becoming visually noisy	10
Border Design	Ornamental border is symmetrical, evenly executed, and complementary to the interior design; corner solutions are clearly resolved	8
Colour Scheme & Technical Execution	Jewel-toned palette is consistent and harmonious; outline edges are clean; no visible pencil underwork; sheet correctly labelled	8
Total		50

Preparation Guidance

- **Setting up symmetry:** lightly fold your sheet in half along the portrait centre to mark the axis, then unfold and work from the centre outward. Complete one full half in pencil, fold again and transfer the outlines to the other half using carbon paper or by tracing against a window.
- **Central motif:** a lotus works well because its petals naturally radiate about a central point. Practise the petal form as a pointed ellipse; alternate two petal sizes to create a layered, lifelike flower. A clear, strong, and recognisable central motif scores full marks for this criterion even if secondary elements are simpler.



- **Paired secondary motifs:** plan their positions before starting — mark the horizontal levels at which each pair will sit, and ensure the left and right elements are at exactly the same height.
- **Decorative fills:** choose fills that can be executed quickly and consistently (fine parallel lines, small dots, a repeated chevron). Practise the fill on rough paper first to confirm it reads well at small scale.
- **Jewel tones:** mix deep colours by layering rather than muddying on the palette. Start with a mid-tone base coat and darken with controlled amounts of black or the complementary colour; build the palest highlights last.
- **Time management:** approximately 15 min for pencil layout (including axis, framework, and both halves), 10 min border, 45 min colouring and fills, 20 min outline details, white/gold highlights, and corrections.

