

Applying to be a CLAS

Fellow

CLAS

What is CLAS Fellowship?

CLAS Fellowship is the highest craft level for members within the CLAS Ladder of Progress; it is a great achievement, and successful applicants may use the letters FCLAS after their names. As a guide, the level of Fellowship is at least that of a high pass (70%+) at the CLAS National Diploma of Calligraphy Advanced Level. It should be pointed out, however, that having the National Diploma at this level is not a requirement for application.

How do I start the process?

First make sure that your work is of the right standard.

Then contact the CLAS Fellowship Applications Officer to register your interest. S/he will give you guidance on what to do.

After this, discuss your work with CLAS Honoured Fellows who have had experience of assessing for CLAS Fellowship and have assessed work at Advanced level for the National Diploma. They will be able to give you an indication of whether you need to delay application, or whether it is a good idea to go ahead. We want to avoid any disappointment and work hard to ensure that those who apply are of the right standard.

What do I do if I do not have the National Diploma Advanced level at 70%+?

You need to take your work to a CLAS Honoured Fellow (HFCLAS) who has assessed work at Advanced level for the National Diploma.

This must be done at least three months before a possible assessment date to allow for pieces to be re-worked if necessary. The CLAS Honoured Fellow who has assessed work at Advanced level for the National Diploma will then send their comments on the candidate's work to the CLAS Fellowship Applications Officer no more than one month after the date of this meeting. This meeting for advice should be regarded as a professional session, and

the CLAS Honoured Fellow may rightly charge the accepted rate for their time.

Please note that CLAS Fellowship Assessors give of their time freely during the assessment process.

What pieces should I prepare?

First, the pieces should be ones that you have completed within the last five years and thus represent how you are currently working.

We would like to see some pieces that are your own work and not completed with the guidance of a tutor, or within any calligraphy training scheme.

The requirement is to have between six and ten pieces.

Choose only your best pieces, as anything not up to standard will reduce your mark.

There is no given requirement for what should be included, but you may consider at least one piece which shows that you can handle a variety of weights of lettering on one panel, another showing working with colour, perhaps a manuscript book, possibly work which includes traditional skills including the use of vellum, raised gold and perhaps heraldry, experimental pieces, and so on.

We also ask you to include preliminary drafts for one piece so that we can see your working process from initial ideas to finished artwork. Select this carefully. If you choose a rather traditional or simple piece it does not give a lot of scope in showing your experimentation with layout, design, weights of lettering and so on.

We must stress, however, that we do not have a check list of types of work. We want to have CLAS Fellows who reflect the whole range of lettering

and the lettering arts, so show us what you can do.

And the next stage is...?

Seek out advice from an appropriate CLAS Honoured Fellow who has experience of assessing work for the National Diploma at Advanced level. The CLAS Fellowship Applications Officer will advise you on this.

Then fill in the form as appropriate enclosed with this booklet. Your lettering experience may be different from the suggested list, so write in what you think will best show what you have achieved.

What happens then?

The CLAS Fellowship Applications Officer will get a team together to assess your work. This may take time.

Assessments take place in London or the south east of England as and when they are needed. Unlike the CLAS National Diploma of Calligraphy, there is no set date for putting your work forward for CLAS Fellowship. You apply when you feel ready.

What do I need to bring with me for assessment?

Bring along your prepared pieces, and the working roughs for your selected piece. You may also need to bring photographs if you cannot bring along all your original pieces.

***Please also bring with you a CD with high quality images of your pieces, which, if you are successful, we can then use in the Edge and on the CLAS website.

There is information as a pdf on how to photograph your work on the CLAS website:

<http://www.clas.co.uk/living-letters.html>

What happens at a CLAS Fellowship Assessment?

The assessment is not a formal exhibition; you will not be expected to display your work in any way other than putting it out on tables. Your work should be presented so that it looks its best – possibly pieces should be mounted, but not necessarily framed.

We like to talk with you briefly about the work you are presenting and what you have done. This is an informal occasion, and not an inquisition nor something for which you should think about preparing a set speech. At some point we shall ask you to wait away from the assessment room. This is so that we can assess your pieces in detail. We try to arrange for someone to keep you company for a cup of tea or coffee either in another room or away from the assessment centre if there is not a convenient room close by.

All CLAS assessment is criterion-referenced. These criteria are on pages 6–8 in this booklet.

And once the assessment has taken place...?

We will call you back as soon as possible so that you are not kept in suspense. When you return your completed assessment sheet will be available on the table by your work. One of the team will be on hand to go through it with you so that you may ask any questions.

The assessors' comments are written to help you in your future calligraphic career and are intended to be helpful and constructive.

The actual assessment sheet completed on the day is not given to you, but is typed out so that it is much neater and then sent to you a few days later for you to keep.

The mark and comments are confidential between those who are assessing on the day and the candidate. The important point about the assessment

process is not the mark but that, it is hoped, CLAS has a new Fellow.

Afterwards, if you are successful...?

We ask you to write approximately 500 words about you and your work to accompany photographs of your pieces to go in the Edge magazine as our new CLAS Fellow.

We will also arrange for you to display your pieces at the next CLAS AGM, when the specially designed CLAS Fellows' certificate, with *Fellow* logo by Mary Noble HFCLAS, and your name written by Gaynor Goffe HFCLAS is presented by the chair of CLAS.

Can I become a CLAS Fellow if I am a CLAS member but work as an applied letterer?

Yes of course, but we would ask that your work is looked at by those with the appropriate skills and high level of craft experience. You need to take your work to a suitably qualified HFCLAS. This must be done at least three months before a possible assessment date to allow for pieces to be re-worked if necessary. The CLAS Honoured Fellow will then send their comments on the candidate's work to the CLAS Fellowship Applications Officer no more than one month after the date of this meeting. This meeting for advice should be regarded as a professional session, and the CLAS Honoured Fellow may rightly charge the accepted rate for their time.

For the assessment it is recommended that you bring along pieces which show the breadth of your work and ideas. It may be difficult to bring original pieces if your work is mainly to commission. In this instance we shall need to see good quality large photographs, and plenty of working roughs, as well as a minimum of five original works.

Please let us know on the form if you work in applied lettering, such that we can ensure that we have people on the team who can best assess your work.

NB: There is no charge for CLAS Fellowship assessment as the assessment team give their time freely.

Overseas applications

It is possible for CLAS members at a very high standard of calligraphy who do not live in the UK to apply for CLAS Fellowship. *Please contact the Fellowship Applications Officer for details before you do anything.*

Fellowship Assessment Guidelines

These are the criteria which will be used when your pieces for Fellowship level of CLAS are considered.

The overall method of assessment is to use the work which you submit as evidence of your skill, knowledge, responsiveness and understanding of lettering.

There are five main criteria which will be assessed. For ease of understanding these broad categories are broken down into separate points which are listed below. These correspond to the categories on the Assessment Sheet which you will be sent when you make an enquiry, and which you will receive, completed, after the assessment procedure.

Criterion A – SELECT AND CONTROL ALPHABETIC FORMS AND HANDS IN A SKILFUL AND APPROPRIATE MANNER

Proportion of marks – 37.5%

The work submitted should show a consistently high level of understanding and skill in the formation of letters and their combination into words and text. Every piece of work submitted should demonstrate your ability to produce letter-forms

to a consistently high standard.

- i** The letter-forms should be well-constructed, as shown by pen or tool angle, beginnings and endings of strokes, ascenders and descenders and so on. They should be well-proportioned and of appropriate weight in relation to their size. The family characteristics within each alphabet used and between related majuscules and minuscules should be consistent.
- ii** Letters should be combined into words, lines, sentences and possibly pages, showing writing rhythm.
- iii** A variety of alphabet styles should be shown with differing weights and contrasting textures.
- iv** There should also be evenness of spacing and texture, except where variation is introduced to meet the needs of design.

Criterion B – USE AND CONTROL THE FORMAL ELEMENTS OF DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Proportion of marks – 20%

The pieces submitted should collectively demonstrate a high level of skill and competence in the choice of elements of design with successful layouts.

- i** There should be appropriate use of colour, texture, tone, gold and/or other metals.
- ii** There should be an appropriate relationship between text area and the design as a whole including margins and decorative elements if these have been used.

Criterion C – EXPLORATION AND INVESTIGATION

Proportion of marks – 10%

- i** Developmental work should be submitted which collectively shows

imaginative exploration of the possibilities offered by the chosen media and subject matter.

ii There should be effective selection and development of rough designs/working processes into a finished piece.

Criterion D – SELECT AND USE MATERIALS, PROCESSES AND TECHNIQUES IN AN INFORMED AND DISCIPLINED WAY APPROPRIATE TO THE WORK UNDERTAKEN

Proportion of marks – 10%

i Work should collectively demonstrate the selection and appropriate use of materials as the basis of calligraphic and/or other appropriate techniques.

ii There should be informed and disciplined use of tools to develop ideas and themes.

Criterion E – MAKE SENSITIVE AND IMAGINATIVE RESPONSES TO THE WORK UNDERTAKEN

Proportion of marks – 22.5%

The work should demonstrate ability to perceive and respond to the connection between meaning on the one hand and design components on the other. In addition, a significant proportion of the work presented should display a strong sense of originality in both conception and execution.

i The perception and selection of subjects should lend themselves to imaginative rendering and exploration of different ways of presentation. There should be sensitiveness of interpretation in the quality of response to the meaning which is perceived within the chosen text. There should be originality of design and a freshness of ideas in the use of visual elements.

For all matters relating to the assessment of CLAS Fellows, please contact the CLAS Fellowship Application Officer:
Clare Whittaker, 104 Aldcliffe Road, Lancaster, Lancashire LA1 5BE
tel: 01524 64809 e-mail: fellows@clas.co.uk

Artwork by Mary Noble, HFCLAS

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