

Applying to be a CLAS

Fellow

For all matters relating to the assessment of CLAS Fellows,
please contact the CLAS Fellowship Officer:

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What is the level of CLAS Fellowship?

CLAS Fellowship is the highest level within the CLAS Ladder of Progress and a successful candidate may use the letters FCLAS after their name. As a guide, the level of Fellowship is at least that of a high pass (70%+) at the Advanced Level of the CLAS National Diploma of Calligraphy. However, having the National Diploma at this level is not a requirement for application.

How to start the application process

Register your interest by contacting the CLAS Fellowship Officer who will assist and advise you.

You will be required to take your work to two CLAS Fellows who have experience of assessing CLAS Fellowship and/or the CLAS Diploma at Advanced level. They will act as mentors, giving you advice about your work and whether you should proceed with your application.

This should be regarded as professional advice and CLAS Fellows may legitimately charge for their time.

What pieces should you prepare?

The requirement is eight to ten pieces. These should not be more than five years old, in order to reflect how you are currently working. They must be wholly your own work and not completed with the guidance of a tutor in a workshop, or within any calligraphy training scheme.

You will also be required to include preliminary drafts, roughs, ideas and experiments for one of your pieces so that we can see your working process from initial ideas to finished work.

Please refer to the Assessment Criteria at the end of this booklet for guidance about what the assessors will be looking for.

When you feel ready, fill in the application form and send it to the Fellowship Officer, who will help to put you in contact with two appropriate CLAS Fellows who will act as mentors.

Once the mentors have given their opinion that you are ready to be assessed, the Fellowship Officer will organise an assessment.

Assessments usually take place in London or the south east of England.

What to bring with you for assessment

Bring your prepared pieces, and the working roughs for your selected piece. If you cannot bring any original pieces because of size or for any other reason, then bring a large high-quality print.

Please also bring a CD or memory stick with good quality high resolution images of your pieces.

What happens at a CLAS Fellowship Assessment?

The assessment is not a formal exhibition and your work need not be framed. The Fellowship Officer will help to display your work by putting it out on tables. Then the assessors will talk with you briefly about you and your work.

You will then be asked to wait away from the assessment room whilst your pieces are assessed.

The criteria by which you will be marked appear at the end of this booklet.

After the assessment has taken place

You will be called back. When you return, your completed assessment sheet will be on the table next to your work. The assessors' comments are intended to be helpful and constructive.

One of the team will go through the assessment sheet with you and you may ask any questions. All marks and comments are confidential between the assessors and the candidate.

Successful candidates will be asked to write 500 words about themselves and their work to accompany images of the work in the Edge magazine. These images will also appear in the CLAS news, on Facebook and on the CLAS website. New fellows will also be invited to display their work at the next CLAS AGM, when they will be presented with a CLAS Fellowship certificate.

Overseas applications

It is possible for those at a high standard of calligraphy who do not live in the UK to apply for CLAS Fellowship. Please contact the Fellowship Officer for details.

Can an applied letterer become a CLAS Fellow?

Yes, but you will need to take your work to those with the appropriate skills and high level of experience in your form of applied lettering as well as two suitably qualified CLAS Fellows.

For the assessment it is recommended that you bring pieces which show the breadth of your work and ideas. We would like to see plenty of working roughs for one of the eight to ten pieces of work. If it is difficult to bring original pieces, then we shall need to see large good quality prints.

Fellowship Assessment Criteria

The overall method of assessment is to use the work that is submitted as evidence of skill, knowledge, responsiveness and understanding of lettering.

There are five criteria which correspond to the categories on the assessment sheet. These are broken down into separate points as listed below.

Criterion A: Letter-forms

Select and control alphabetic forms and hands in a skilful and appropriate manner

proportion of marks – 37.5%

The work submitted should show understanding and skill in the formation of letters and their combination into words and text. Every piece of work submitted should demonstrate an ability to produce letterforms to a consistently high standard.

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

Criterion B: Design and Layout

Use and control of formal elements of design and layout

proportion of marks – 20%

The pieces submitted should demonstrate skill and competence in using alphabet forms, together with decorative elements where appropriate, to achieve good design.

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

Criterion C: Working Process

initiate and develop works from first ideas to final stages of presentation

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 and working processes into a finished piece.

Criterion D: Skills and Techniques

Select and use materials, processes and techniques in an informed and disciplined way appropriate to the work

proportion of marks – 10%

- i. The work should 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: Creativity

Make sensitive and imaginative responses

proportion of marks – 22.5%

The work should demonstrate your 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 your work 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 sensitivity of interpretation in the quality of response to the meaning which you perceive within the chosen text. There should be originality of design and a freshness of ideas in the use of visual elements.