Guide for the Course Organiser of a
CLAS Certificate of Skills Course

What is a CLAS Certificate of Skills Course (CoS)?

CLAS Certificates of Skills (previously known as Certificates of Competence) have been devised by the Calligraphy and Lettering Arts Society to give CLAS members and others the opportunity to focus on a particular aspect of calligraphy and the lettering arts over a number of months. Topics may include related alphabet styles or skills and techniques associated with the craft.

Courses take place as four linked days of tuition over a period of six to twelve months, with plenty of homework to do in between. Please note that these should not be perceived as "separate workshops": Attendance on all four days and submission of work are essential to gain the relevant certificate.

Courses can be held at any location in the country and require a named person as Course Organiser who will take on the local organisation of venue, contact and recruitment.

CLAS will initially act as coordinator between tutors and Course Organisers and provide any advice and support that may be needed during the Course set-up.

How a Certificate of Skills Course works

Over the four days or two weekends a CLAS Fellow or a CLAS Accredited Tutor will teach the specific calligraphic scripts or associated skills and techniques. In general, those who teach the course are also those who initiated and devised the course and therefore are closely linked with its ideals and success.

At the end of each session, the tutor will discuss with the group the work to be covered before the next session. This may be perfecting a calligraphic hand, producing a piece of work, developing skills and techniques or experimenting with the ideas that have been covered.

During and at the end of the course, specific pieces of work will be set by the tutor to fulfil the Certificate entry requirements; these are submitted together with a folder of written notes and experiments.

The final submission is usually 3 months from the very last course session. It is sent to the Assessor, who is usually the tutor plus another qualified person. Details of the entry requirements and the criteria against which the work will be assessed are provided for the participants at the beginning of the course and are explained by the tutor in the first session.

The pass mark for assessment is 55% (75% for the Teaching Calligraphy Certificate of Skills) . Those who achieve this will be presented with the CLAS Certificate of Skills certificate and will be asked to showcase their work at the CLAS AGM.

What a Course Organiser needs to do

Having contacted the CoS Administrator, the next tasks for the Course Organiser are as follows:

1. The Course Organiser needs to recruit sufficient people within the locality who will apply for the course to make it viable. Recruitment could be by personal contacts, and/or contacting local calligraphy groups. Local groups usually have regular meetings and workshops and a newsletter, and the proposed course could be announced at meetings and workshops, and a short paragraph could be included in the newsletter if the printing schedule fits. If appropriate, the Course Organiser should contact The Editor to include information about the CoS course in the Edge (editor@clas.co.uk). For publishing on our Facebook page please contact the Chair.

Given the amount of content in each course it is paramount that each students receives sufficient individual attention from the Tutor, i.e. the Tutor needs to have time to see everyone properly to enable each one in the group to have the best possible tuition. For this reason CLAS has set a maximum of 12 students per course.

2. Identify a suitable venue for the course to be held. This could be the usual venue used by a local calligraphy group, or a local school, or village hall. Accommodation and equipment should be sufficient for the purposes of the CLAS Course proposed, and should meet health and safety requirements.

The Course Organiser must ensure personally that the environment is safe for effective teaching to take place, and that the physical resources such as furniture, space for each participant, water supply, lavatories, supporting audio visual equipment if required, etc. are suitable. It is also the job of the Course Organiser to provide refreshments for workshops. All CLAS tutors are covered by Public Liability Insurance, however the Course Organiser should ensure that the venue has a current Health and Safety Certificate.

3. The Organiser liaises with the relevant tutor to arrange a selection of suitable dates. Ideally the sessions should be spread over one academic year, for example:

Session 1   in September or October
Session 2   in November or December
Session 3   in February or March
Session 4   in May or June

Dates need to avoid any major calligraphy event and also avoid any meetings or workshops arranged by nearby local groups.

4. Once the Course Organiser has agreed the dates with the venue and the tutors, the Organiser needs to pass on all the information to the CoS Administrator, who will keep a record and keep a check on dates clashes etc.

5. If accommodation is required for the tutors, the Course Organiser needs to locate and organise this. Tutors usually stay with one of the participants on the CoS Course in order to keep the overall costs of the course down but check with the tutors first if they are happy with this solution!

6. The Course Organiser should also have a mobile phone and e-mail address such that those on the course can make contact if necessary.

Working out the Course budget

The Course Organiser is in charge of the budget which will vary depending on the venue and the tutors' travelling distance. The cost to each student will then depend on the number of participating students. Below is a typical breakdown of a budget for a 4-day CoS Course.

Example of a budget calculation

Venue hire	4 sessions	Variable cost	£70 x 4	£280
Tutor fee	4 sessions	Set fee	£200 x 4	£800
Tutor assessment fee	1 day	Set fee	£200 x 1	£200
Tutor travel expenses	4 sessions	Variable cost	£70 x 4	£280
Tutors' accommodation	4 sessions	Variable cost	(if required)	
Refreshments (tea, coffee etc)	4 sessions	Variable cost	£20 x 1	£20
CLAS Course franchise fee	One-off	Set fee	£75 x 1	£75
			Total	**£1655**

This means that in this instance if there were 10 students the fee per person would be £165.50, whilst if there were 12 students the cost to each student would be £138. In the event of any surplus income this can be kept by the local group as profit.

If the Course Organiser is a member of a local group, all administration should be taken on by the Local Group's Treasurer to facilitate the cash flow. If however the Course Organiser is not a member of a local group or the local group does not want to act as CoS Course Treasurer, then contact the CLAS Treasurer treasurer@clas.co.uk to arrange how payments can be done via the CLAS accounts.

What to prepare and check for each session

The CoS Course preparation is much the same as a Local Group's regular workshop preparation. Here are the main points:

1. Liaise with Tutor beforehand for any special requirements on the day, audio-visual needs, etc. Also check how the Tutor wants the room set up, i.e. rows as in classroom style, in a square etc.

2. Make sure the contact mobile phone is switched on so that those who have difficulty finding the venue or encounter a problem can call in.

3. Prepare the room, arrange tables and chairs if necessary, welcome participants as they arrive. Tutors will need a chair and one table for teaching, and two large tables in addition for displaying work.

4. Ensure tea, coffee, milk, biscuits supplies are available.

5. Welcome group members, show kitchen, lavatories, fire exit etc if necessary.

6. Act as contact for the group to alert the Tutor to any problems/difficulties/misunderstandings, seek clarification of tasks set between input days if necessary, etc.

7. When the course has ended, arrange and send any feedback to the CoS Administrator.

Last but not least….

Don't forget that the CLAS CoS Administrator is here to help and support you. For any further information and questions **please contact Tina Warren: ladder@clas.co.uk .**