



Calligraphy & Lettering Arts Society

CLAS SPECIALIST SKILLS AWARDS
A Guide for the Course Organiser

What is a CLAS Specialist Skills Award?

The Specialist Skills Awards (SSA) have been devised by CLAS to give calligraphers the opportunity to focus on a particular aspect of calligraphy or the lettering arts over a number of months.

These courses are not suitable for complete beginners in calligraphy.

Topics include alphabet styles together with skills and techniques associated with the craft of calligraphy. The Specialist Skills Award course consists of 24 linked hours of tuition (36 hours for the Teaching Calligraphy SSA) which are delivered over a period of about twelve months with homework to do in between. Please note that the sessions should not be thought of as separate workshops; attendance on all four/six days and submission of work for assessment is essential to gain the relevant Award.

CLAS Accredited tutors and / or CLAS Fellows devise and teach these courses & are therefore closely linked with the aims and objectives of their course.

The SSA can be offered in a variety of formats, either wholly in-person and at any location in the country, or wholly on-line or a hybrid of both in-person and on-line. Whatever the method of delivery, ideally each course requires a named person to act as Course Organiser and CLAS liaison, who will take on the responsibility for recruitment, contacting the CLAS SSA administrator and local organisation of a venue if any of the course is to be in person.

The CLAS SSA administrator can provide any advice and support that may be needed during the course set-up. Applications for SSA courses are welcomed from, not only Regional Groups, but also from individual CLAS members who may not be a member of a local group. In this instance the SSA administrator can advise on the best plan of action.

What a Course Organiser needs to do.

Having contacted the Specialist Skills Awards Administrator, (ladder@clas.co.uk), the next tasks for the Course Organiser are as follows:

1. The Course Organiser should recruit sufficient people to the course to make it viable. Experience has shown that, depending on the cost of the venue, and how far this is away from where the tutor lives, 10 to 12 people will usually be about right.

CLAS has set a maximum of 12 students per in-person course.

If you cannot recruit sufficient students to make the course economically viable, there is now the opportunity to either have the course completely on-line or as a mixture of both presentations. Please contact the SSA Administrator for advice if you are considering one of these alternative formats.

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 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 – tea, coffee, milk, biscuits, etc. All CLAS tutors are covered by Public Liability Insurance. 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	between September and December
Session 2	between January and March
Session 3	in April or May
Session 4	in June or July

Dates should 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, they must pass on all the information to the SSA Administrator, in order for CLAS to be compliant with the requirements of the Charity Commission.

5. If accommodation is required for the tutors, the Course Organiser must locate and organise this. Tutors can stay with one of the participants on the course to keep the overall costs down, but check with the tutors first that 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' travel expenses. 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 course.

Example of a budget calculation

Venue hire	4 sessions	variable cost		£X
Tutor fee	4 sessions	set fee	£350 x 4	£1400
Tutor assessment fee	1 day	set fee	£350 x 1	£350
Tutor travel expenses	2 sessions	variable cost		£Y
Tutors' accommodation	4 sessions	variable cost	(if required)	£Z
CLAS Course franchise fee	One-off	set fee	£85 x 1	£75
			TOTAL	£1835 +X+Y+Z

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.

The CLAS franchise fee is required one month before the course starts.

If the Course Organiser is not a member of a local group or the local group does not want to act as Course Treasury simply inform the SSA Administrator and an alternative can be arranged via the CLAS Treasurer.

What to prepare and check for each session

Course preparation is much the same as a local group's regular workshop preparation. Here are the main points:

1. Liaise with the tutors beforehand for any special requirements on the day e.g. audio-visual needs, etc. Check how the tutor wants the room set up, e.g. classroom style or in a square etc.
2. Make sure the contact mobile phone is switched on so that those who have difficulty in 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 table & chair for teaching, and two large tables in addition for displaying work.
4. Ensure tea, coffee, milk, biscuits supplies are available.
5. Welcome students, show them the kitchen, lavatories, fire exit etc.
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 SSA Administrator.