



# National Diploma in Calligraphy

Helpful hints for ADVANCED Diploma essays Module A

***THE ESSAY 'In A4 or A3 format and in no more than approximately 3,000 of your own words, use photocopies, illustrations and photographs to give a critical analysis of one historical scribe/letterer or illuminator and one contemporary lettering practitioner'.***

This means approximately 1.500 words for each account, and it may be best to structure it clearly into paragraphs each with a clear focus and points to make.

The important thing to note for both accounts is the term 'CRITICAL ANALYSIS', you need to describe and discuss the work in detail, with your own views about various aspects of the work. This does not call for a qualitative consideration, as presumably you would select to write about someone whose work you admire, but rather calls for your own well-considered observations of what is going on in the work.

For the contemporary practitioner, if they are still alive, you may consider contacting them for information about their work. If you include direct comments ensure they are in quotation marks. Be aware, if you do, that they may wish to see the final version so be sure to write sensitively.

Write an introduction setting the scene with historical context, dates, location and brief general overview of the work you will be discussing.

In the following paragraphs, it may be helpful to follow the evolution of the chosen person's work through a timeline of their life. Aspects to include, as appropriate would be influences/precursors, aims in the work/ processes /tools/materials, design, letterforms, significant individual pieces of work, contribution/influence on others.

Feed in illustrations at appropriate locations in the account.

Avoid repetition of information from one paragraph to another.

Provide a list of sources for your information – websites, books, catalogues etc.

***LETTERFORM ANALYSIS “Make a study also of letter-forms used in selected historical manuscripts”...***

As with the Foundation and Intermediate Diplomas, this part expects the same analytical approach to historical scripts as before, related to the hands you generally use in your work. If you have entered previous levels in the past, you may be able to re-use some of that work (be guided by any assessment remarks and improve any if necessary). As a guide, you should analyse a minimum of 6 different scripts.

***TRADITIONAL SKILLS “and of traditional tools and materials such as powdered pigments, gesso, gold, and include your own experiments and developments, which are then applied in Module D and can be used in other Modules if appropriate”***

Here you can display your skills in all those traditional techniques ; show trials, failures, successes – they need only be small samples, so keep anything you experimented with in working towards a project.

Annotate the samples with your own brief comments re why it did/ didn't work etc.

If you excel in heraldry or illumination, this is your chance to show it, but if your style is more minimalist and contemporary, then show how traditional skills can be translated for today's use. Note it says '*such as*' - so powdered pigments are not essential, just an example.

Good luck, and enjoy the journey!