

GUIDELINES FOR ENQUIRERS AND THOSE PREPARING APPLICATIONS FOR THE KFSTA ICON CERTIFICATE COURSE 2025-2028.

Thank you for your interest in applying for the King's Foundation School of Traditional Arts (KFSTA) Icon Certificate programme 2025-2028. Below you will find answers to questions commonly asked by enquirers and applicants.

When

The first class for successful applicants runs in October 2025.

The open date for applications is usually around February of the starting year, so this programme's opening date is likely to be February 2025. As you have expressed interest, you will be emailed when applications are open, by which time the application forms will be available on the KFSTA website.

Applicants will be notified whether or not they have been accepted for the interview stage in April 2025, at which time those to be interviewed will also be offered an interview slot.

Interviews are usually held during one day in the beginning of June, at The King's Foundation School of Traditional Arts, 19-22 Charlotte Road, Shoreditch, London, EC2A 3SG.

Interviewees will be informed whether or not they have been accepted onto the course within a week of the interview.

Portfolio Preparation for Applications

Anyone can apply – no degree is required. We ask applicants to submit good photos of any art they have done – iconographic or otherwise – and fill in a form that gives information such as previous experience, why they want to do the course, and whether they wish to continue developing iconography after the course's end. From the portfolio we are chiefly looking to see the degree of the applicant's native artistic ability, so a variety of works is useful. They need not be icons.

Some people ask what they can do to prepare for the portfolio. It is a good idea to do some egg tempera monochromes of icons on watercolour paper (some examples by previous students are attached). I strongly recommend using as prototypes the works of the contemporary Russian iconographer Father Zenon. They are clear and the forms well modelled. You can access his works through this Dropbox link:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/6i0yezvyifgo8i5/AACJQO_LV5jo0vK_DGxR9aEYa?dl=0

If you have the book "Techniques of Icon and Wall Painting", by the tutor Aidan Hart, you will find a lot of pointers how to paint monochromes, particularly on pages 226-276. <https://aidanharticons.com/category/new-icon-book/>

While preparing for their application, many people find it helpful to attend one or two of the tutor's five-day icon workshops, held in Shropshire:

<https://aidanharticons.com/category/workshops/>

Process

From the applicants we select about twenty people for interviews, and then choose twelve from them. Only one group of twelve is taught for each three-year programme.

Reference

If you are not able to provide an academic reference, you may provide one from a former employer/colleague.

How much time and money?

It is a three-year part-time course, each year having seven sessions, each of three full days (from a Monday to Wednesday), 9.00am to 7.00pm including the evening meal, except Wednesday when we finish at 5.00pm. Students are also given homework studies, which are expected to take at least four hours a week. Only those ready put this time into home studies need apply, since the course is intended for serious students of the sacred and demanding work of icon painting.

The sessions are held from Monday to Wednesday, on or near the last week of the months of October, November, February, March, May, June, and September.

The fee has not been set, but the 2022-2025 programme fee was £2,500 per year, payment being due the beginning of each academic year. As well as tuition, these fees also cover the cost of lunches, refreshments and evening meals for Monday and Tuesday.

Students must be able to self-finance the fees, travel, artists' materials and accommodation costs for the three years. Local accommodation is in the region of £40/night and upwards. Artist material costs average at around £500/year.

What is the Certificate?

All students who complete the course and produce the requisite number of studies and icons receive a "Certificate of Completion" by KFSTA. This is not a university accredited programme, but is a certificate given by the KFSTA to show that the student has completed the requisite studies and attendances of the course. The Certificate of Completion will say:

Icon Painting Certificate

This certificate confirms that the following student.....has successfully completed the three-year Certificate in Icon Painting offered by The Prince's Foundation School of Traditional Arts in accordance with the programme descriptors and criteria set out overleaf....

This course is among the most in-depth icon painting programmes available in the English-speaking world. However, being only 63 days in total, the programme

should be considered a foundation course and not of sufficient duration to train students to full professional standard. Archimandrite Zenon, a leading contemporary iconographer, said that 5,000 hours are required for this!

Language

KFSTA require proficiency in the English language. The interview would show this, as well as your written application.

Scholarships

At present KFSTA have no bursaries and scholarships to offer for the course, but students can of course seek bursaries elsewhere. All applicants must be able to demonstrate that they can self-fund all costs.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aidan Hart', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Aidan Hart

(Director and Chief tutor for the KFSTA Icon Certificate Programme)

APPENDIX

Examples of students' monochrome studies in egg tempera on watercolour paper:



