

Partnership in Training:

British Artist Blacksmiths Association with Herefordshire College of Technology

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BABA Training and Apprenticeship Steering Group



Design & Forgework Skills

Good news on training!

As you will be aware, over the last two years your Council has been working towards replacing the old NETS course and creating a new multi-pathway qualification to serve a new apprenticeship scheme. The good news is we now have a new qualification - **BTEC level 3 Diploma in Design and Forgework Skills (DFS)**. This will replace the old NETS course. Your feedback from the consultation survey you took part in last year for BABA has helped formulate the elements that make up the new course, with the emphasis being on the design process and developing traditional forgework skills. A high proportion of the forgework training will be delivered by Paul Allen.

The course will deliver ten weeks of training over two years and will accommodate 10 –12 students. It will be open to all smiths who are able to have the use of a forge during the course and who will ideally be employed or self-employed in the craft or a related industry. Age range for applicants is 16 years upwards. Selection for the course will be by interview.

This is an accredited course and attracts mainstream funding from the Skills Funding Agency, but in the current financial climate it does not cover the total running costs. The remaining cost has to be covered by the student/employer. Students between 16 -18 are fully-funded, so their course would be free. For those over 18 years old the costs are as follows:

Total fees for the 10 week course over two years, including materials, tuition & exam fee, are £1150 (£ 575 per annum), or £115 for each week of training. To put this in perspective, it is around £11 per week spread across each whole year, or £3 per hour for each hour of tuition on the course.

Accommodation (as with the old NETS course) is funded by the student/employer. The course is open to all, but for those who live outside England, different funding arrangements will apply. Herefordshire College of Technology admissions office will be able to advise you. Admissions: telephone 0800 0321986 option 1

For viability we need 10 applicants on the course and we are intending to run the course from early this year. Hereford will be registering inquiries and taking applications from 2nd January 2012. Course dates will also be available from 2nd January. If you are thinking of investing in training it would make good sense to take advantage of this course now. As from September 2012, due to the current financial climate, funding arrangements nationally for students over 18 years will be changing and this will probably result in higher course fees.

Please note: Students that have enrolled on the course prior to 31st July 2012 will be unaffected by funding changes that take place after September 2012. Alongside this course, and attached to one of the training weeks, BABA will be running a Masterclass forge-in event. Further information will follow in the magazine. For course information and registration of interest, please contact admissions at Herefordshire College of Technology. Admissions: telephone 0800 032 1986, option 1.

With regard to creating a formalised apprenticeship training scheme which will lead to a recognised qualification, work on this is now in progress with the aim of completion by the end of 2012.

With the work we are doing we are aiming to serve the craft as a whole, so your comments and input are essential and always welcome.

On a final note we would like to thank Rebecca Rhodes from the Skills Funding Agency for her active contribution to the progress we have made.