

THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

# A GUIDE ON HOW TO APPLY

DISTINCTIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS GUIDELINES

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE DISTINCTIONS

The Royal Photographic Society Distinctions are recognised as some of the most prestigious in the world. There are three levels of Distinctions – **Licentiate**, **Associate** and **Fellowship**. Should you be awarded a Distinction, you are only entitled to use the Distinction while you remain a member of the RPS.

### LICENTIATE

There are no restrictions on the subject matter when applying for this level. A Panel of Associate or Fellowship members of the RPS assesses your application.

### ASSOCIATE AND FELLOWSHIP

Submissions are assessed by Panels as detailed below. Assessors are Fellows of the RPS or, in particular circumstances, external advisers may be consulted.

- **Applied Photography:** Photography which has been produced for a specific end purpose.
- **Conceptual and Contemporary Photography:** A visual realization of a stated argument, idea or concept.
- **Film:** The work can be created in any moving image format including film, video, and digital media and can be intended for viewing on small (smart phone, tablet, TV) or large screen formats. Submission can be made online or on DVD, Blu Ray, DCP or other digital source (Film as Film or in installation – digital copy of digital film of installation). Genres can include, Documentary, Drama, Action, Thriller, Horror, Sci-Fi, Comedy, Commercials (CF Kodak Student Commercial awards), Music Video, 'Experimental' or Artist's video – where the work is aimed at gallery or site-specific installation for example.
- **Fine Art Photography:** Photography which communicates a creative vision.
- **Multimedia:** encompasses Audio Visual, Film and Television and interactive multimedia. Multi-platform work should be submitted in this genre.
- **Natural History Photography:** Photography which illustrates an element of the natural world with in an unrestricted, uncultivated and untamed environment.
- **Research, Education and Application of Photography:** as a general rule, applications will be by way of a written paper.
- **Science:** Most applicants involved in scientific subjects apply for one of the Imaging Science Qualifications (ISQ). It is possible however, to apply for a Distinction in scientific and medical imaging, medical photography or other related discipline by the submission of a portfolio of prints, transparencies or digital images.
- **Travel Photography:** Photography which communicates a sense of place, either UK or Overseas.

Individual images may only be submitted at one level of Distinction.

The applicant must own the copyright to, and be the creator of, all the photographic elements in a submission. No third party images may be used in the majority of genres. A limited number of third party images may be used in Multimedia submissions. Third party images can be used in Research, Education and Application of Photography submissions.

It is expected that your submission will have a high technical quality appropriate to the genre in which you are applying. It is accepted that technical quality relevant to one genre may not be appropriate for another. For instance, medical or scientific images may require consistent sharpness, while Natural History may require key points of focus, with backgrounds appropriate to the subject and scale of the subject. Lighting must be used effectively, whether natural or artificial. Submissions should be free from technical faults.

Applicants may make only one submission to a particular Distinctions Panel at any time.

All assessments are carried out anonymously, with the applicants name only being announced after a successful assessment. Details of the deliberations are not made public.

## DISTINCTIONS: THE PROCESS AND FORMATS

### ASSESSMENT DAYS: HOW YOUR WORK IS ASSESSED

Licentiate and Associate assessments are conducted in front of an audience. Fellowship submissions are conducted without an audience.

The day begins with a welcome from the Distinctions Team and a brief introduction from the Chairperson. Each submission is assessed by a Panel consisting of five Assessors and a Chairperson. A Distinctions Committee Member will normally be present. Submissions are assessed anonymously; only the Chairperson and Distinctions staff are aware of the applicant's name. Submissions are assessed against the criteria set out in these Distinctions guidelines.

#### LICENTIATE: PRINT

- The portfolio is displayed as per your hanging plan; in a maximum of three rows. The assessors initially views the portfolio as a whole, followed by a detailed examination of the images.
- The Chairperson will ask for initial vote, Assessors will show either a red or green card. The Chairperson will ask two of Assessors to convey their views and any concerns regarding the submission.
- The Chairperson will ask the remaining Assessors for any further comments. A final vote is taken and the decision is made. If recommended the applicants name will be announced, and if not recommended the assessors will write down the reasons why they cannot recommend the submission, and the Chairperson will explain the reasons why.
- The Panel Chairperson may have a private discussion with the members of the Panel, without an audience being present.
- All unsuccessful applicants will receive a feedback letter giving the reasons why they were not recommended.
- All Panel recommendations are forwarded to the Board of Trustees for final ratification.
- Once approved by the Board of Trustees, you will be notified that your Distinction has been awarded.

#### LICENTIATE: IMAGES FOR SCREEN (IFS)

- The images are displayed in the sequence as you have numbered them, and the whole portfolio is displayed twice.
- Thumbnails are then left on the screen while a decision is made.
- The Chairperson will ask for initial vote, Assessors will show either a red or green card. The Chairperson will ask two of Assessors to convey their views and any concerns regarding the submission.
- The Chairperson will ask the remaining Assessors for any further comments. A final vote is taken and the decision is made. If recommended the applicants name will be announced, and if not recommended the panel will write down the reasons why they cannot recommend the submission, and the Chairperson will explain the reasons why.
- The Panel Chairperson may have a private discussion with the members of the Panel, without an audience being present.
- All unsuccessful applicants will receive a feedback letter giving the reasons why they were not recommended.
- All Panel recommendations are forwarded to The Distinctions Committee and The Board of Trustees for final ratification.
- Once approved by the Board of Trustees, you will be notified that your Distinction has been awarded.

#### LICENTIATE: BOOK

- Books are assessed without an audience.
- Books are viewed by the Assessors and the assessment procedure is as for Prints, above.

#### ASSOCIATE: PRINT

- The portfolio is displayed as per your hanging plan; in a maximum of three rows and the Statement of Intent is read out. The assessors initially view the portfolio as a whole, followed by a detailed examination of the images.
- The Chairperson will ask for initial vote, Assessors will show either a red or green card. The Chairperson will ask two of Assessors to convey their views and any concerns regarding the submission.
- The Chairperson will ask the remaining Assessors for any further comments. A final vote is taken and the decision is made. If recommended the applicants name will be announced, and if not recommended the assessors will write down the reasons why they cannot recommend the submission, and the Chairperson will explain the reasons why.
- The Panel Chairperson may have a private discussion with the members of the Panel, without an audience being present.
- All unsuccessful applicants will receive a feedback letter giving the reasons why they were not recommended.
- All Panel recommendations are forwarded to the Distinctions Committee and The Board of Trustees for final ratification.
- Once approved by The Board of Trustees, you will be notified that your Distinction has been awarded.

#### ASSOCIATE: IMAGES FOR SCREEN (IFS)

- The images are displayed in the sequence as you have numbered them, and the whole portfolio is displayed twice, and the Statement of Intent is read out.
- Thumbnails are then left on the screen while a decision is made.
- The Chairperson will ask for initial vote, Assessors will show either a red or green card. The Chairperson will ask two of Assessors to convey their views and any concerns regarding the submission.
- The Chairperson will ask the remaining Assessors for any further comments. A final vote is taken and the decision is made. If recommended the applicants name will be announced, and if not recommended the panel will write down the reasons why they cannot recommend the submission, and the Chairperson will explain the reasons why.
- The Panel Chairperson may have a private discussion with the members of the Panel, without an audience being present.
- All unsuccessful Applicants will receive a feedback letter giving the reasons why they were not recommended.
- All Panel recommendations are forwarded to the Distinctions Committee and The Board of Trustees for final ratification.
- Once approved by The Board of Trustees, you will be notified that your Distinction has been awarded.

#### ASSOCIATE: BOOKS

- Books are assessed without an audience.
- Books are viewed by the Assessors and the assessment procedure is as for Print, above.

## FELLOWSHIP (GENRE) – STAGE 1: PRINT

- Fellowship applications are assessed in the first instance by the Panel appropriate to the genre in which you apply. The portfolio is displayed as per your hanging plan; in a maximum of three rows and the Statement of Intent is read out. The assessors initially views the portfolio as a whole, followed by a detailed examination of the images.
- The Chairperson will ask for initial vote, Assessors will show either a red or green card. The Chairperson will ask two of Assessors to convey their views and any concerns regarding the submission.
- The Chairperson will ask the remaining Assessors for any further comments. A final vote is taken and the decision is made.
- All unsuccessful Applicants will receive a feedback letter giving the reasons why they were not recommended.
- Should the submission meet the requirements, your portfolio is moved to stage 2 of the Fellowship process – consideration by the Fellowship Board. Applicants will be notified by email.
- No audience is present during the consideration of a fellowship application.

## FELLOWSHIP (GENRE) – STAGE 1: IMAGES FOR SCREEN (IFS)

- The images are displayed in the sequence as you have numbered them, and the whole portfolio is displayed twice, and the Statement of Intent is read out.
- Thumbnails are then left on the screen while a decision is made.
- The Chairperson will ask for initial vote, Assessors will show either a red or green card. The Chairperson will ask two of Assessors to convey their views and any concerns regarding the submission.
- The Chairperson will ask the remaining Assessors for any further comments. A final vote is taken and the decision is made.
- All unsuccessful Applicants will receive a feedback letter giving the reasons why they were not recommended.
- Should the submission meet the requirements, your portfolio is moved to stage 2 of the Fellowship process – consideration by the Fellowship Board. Applicants will be notified by email.
- No audience is present during the consideration of a Fellowship application.

## FELLOWSHIP (GENRE) – STAGE 1: BOOK

- Books are assessed without an audience.
- Books are viewed by the Assessors and the assessment procedure is as for Print, above.

## FELLOWSHIP BOARD – STAGE 2

- The Fellowship Board is the final arbiter in all applications for Fellowship of The Royal Photographic Society. The purpose of the Fellowship Board is to maintain a consistent standard of distinguished photographic ability across all the genres. The Board consists of the most experienced Fellows of the RPS, drawn from the general membership.
- The Submission is presented as it was for Stage 1, and the Statement of Intent is read out.
- The assessment procedure then follows that which is detailed for Fellowship Stage 1 Submissions.
- All unsuccessful Applicants will receive a feedback letter giving the reasons why they were not recommended.
- No audience is present during the consideration of a fellowship application.

## NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

Applicants for Licentiate and Associate will receive an email within two working days of the assessment, advising them of the outcome of the assessment. Fellowship Applicants will be advised whether they are moving to the Fellowship Board - Stage 2, and the date of that meeting.

## PANEL DECISIONS

- The names of all Applicants whose submissions are recommended for a Distinction need to be checked by the Distinctions Committee and ratified the Board of Trustees. It is the Board of Trustees who finally award the Distinction. This is usually within 14 days of the assessment. Once ratified, you will receive a letter of confirmation and a Certificate under the Seal of The Society; signed by the President. You will also receive a lapel badge and a digital file containing the Distinction emblem which can be used on your personal stationery. You are entitled – and encouraged – to use the letters LRPS/ARPS/FRPS after your name.
- The RPS reserves the right to request the original file, negative or transparency of an image used in a Distinctions application.
- Please note that if a submission for Associate or Fellowship is unsuccessful, you will not be able to submit any part of it to another genre. If, however, the Panel considers it more appropriate for another genre, they can recommend transferring it to that genre prior to giving their assessment.

## UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

Applicants will be notified of the decision within two working days. Within 28 days of the assessment, all applicants who have not been recommended will receive a feedback letter giving the reasons for the decision.

## REFERRAL

A strong submission which nearly fulfils the criteria, but fails due to minor concerns or faults within the agreed number of images of the appropriate level e.g. ARPS, 2 images have printer banding and if reprinted the submission would be of standard.

The Applicant will be invited by the Chairperson to submit via referral.

**LICENTIATE – Up to 1 image**

**ASSOCIATE – up to 3 images**

**FELLOWSHIP – up to 4 images**

## ON THE ASSESSMENT DAY

All Assessors must be in agreement about the same image(s). If the Assessors indicate more than the number stated in the referral procedure, the Chairperson must either state the submission is either a not recommended or a resubmission and invites the Applicant to resubmit in accordance to the feedback given.

The name of the Applicant is not announced and kept anonymous.

The Chairperson/Deputy indicates on the application form the number of each image containing concerns or faults. The reasoning for the referral will be noted on the comment sheets and given to the Distinctions staff in attendance. The Chairperson needs to indicate if the image(s) are to be re-worked/reprinted or replaced.

The referred submission will then be resubmitted at a later assessment date (Completed within 18 months of the original assessment).

On assessment of the referred submission: The new submission will be assessed against the appropriate level and genre's criteria & requirements. If the Assessors are not from the original panel, they must take into account what their colleagues have stated. The remaining original images are accepted to be of standard and it is only the replacements that are to be assessed.

The new image(s) need to fulfil the feedback given by the Chairperson from the previous application and must be of the standard. The replacement image(s) need to fit the original panel and for ARPS & FRPS, also coincide with the statement of intent.

The applicant can change the arrangement of the hanging or sequence plan to suit new image(s). This must be written on the referral form and indicated on the new hanging or sequence plan.

With all referrals the applicant will have to state what they have done to amend the portfolio on the *Referral Details Form*.

As with all images put forward for any assessment, the applicant is given the opportunity to receive advice & guidance on the replacement image(s). The images will be sent either to the Chairperson or an assessor that attended the original assessment.

The applicant will receive feedback from the Chairperson/assessor and make a decision which image(s) to use. All advice and guidance will be emailed and copies of this will be attached to the *Referral Details Form*.

The Distinctions staff will replace the image(s) and make ready the portfolio for the agreed assessment date. The referred image(s) will be placed to one side for the Assessors to view. The Staff will indicate the replacement image(s) by placing a card next to the print(s). (Images for Screen replacement images will be indicated with "New" included within the file name, e.g. 08 New).

All email communications between Chairperson, Assessor, Distinctions Staff and Applicant will be printed and attached to the *Referral Details Form*.

#### RESUBMISSION – (LICENTIATE, ASSOCIATE, FELLOWSHIP & FELLOWSHIP BOARD)

A submission which has more than a minor fault or consistent faults e.g. printer banding, colour cast concerns throughout the panel or does not relate to the Statement of intent. The number of images must be greater than that of a referral.

On the assessment day; the Assessors will indicate on their comment sheets if they feel that the submission would be appropriate for a resubmission. The majority of the Assessors must be in agreement and for the same reason(s). The Chairperson will in all cases make the final decision. The Chairperson will announce that the submission is not recommended, but the applicant will be invited by the Chairperson to make a resubmission taking into account the written feedback given within 28 days. The reason is the submission shows strong potential within the images or concept and should be encouraged to resubmit. The name of the Applicant is not announced and kept anonymous.

Resubmissions will be assessed in front of an audience. The new submission will be assessed against the appropriate genre and level criteria and requirements. The new images need to answer the feedback given and must be of standard. Replacement images need to fit the original panel and statement.

The Applicant can change the layout of their hanging or sequence plan to suit new images. With all resubmissions the applicant will have to state what they have done to amend the submission on *Resubmission Details Form*.

Please note; an Applicant can be offered a Referral on the occasion that an unsuccessful resubmission falls into the Referral procedure/criteria.

For reference the original hanging plan and feedback must be presented with the submission. The Statement of Intent may be changed. But we advise that only minimal changes should be made, i.e. to reflect the change in images. A new hanging /sequence plan must be submitted, indicating the new images.

All email communications between Chairperson, Assessor(s), Distinctions Staff and Applicant will be printed and attached to the *Resubmission Details Form*.

## DISTINCTIONS: THE PRACTICALITIES

THIS SECTION SETS OUT THE PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF APPLYING FOR A DISTINCTION

### YOUR APPLICATION: THE BOOKING FORM

- You must submit a Booking Form, available from [www.rps.org/distinctions](http://www.rps.org/distinctions)
- You may apply for more than one genre, but each once will require a separate Booking Form and payment.
- Upon receiving the completed form, your booking will be processed, and a confirmation email will be sent.
- A Submission Details Form will be attached to the confirmation email and will need to be included with your submission

### THE SUBMISSION

#### PRINTS

- Make sure your prints are packed away in the numeric order. On the back of each print you must include your name and the print number.
- You must include two copies of your hanging plan, statement of intent (ARPS & FRPS only) and Submission Details Form.
- Your name must not be shown on the front of any of the prints. Failure to adhere to this requirement may result in the disqualification.
- When you are sending your work please make sure that:
  1. It is securely packed. Please do not use any materials to pack your portfolio that may contaminate or damage i.e. towels or used blankets.
  2. It is clearly labelled with your name, email address, genre and date of assessment. (a Portfolio label is supplied with the Submission Details Form).
  3. The parcel must arrive 14 days prior to the assessment date. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that it arrives on time.
- You will receive an email confirmation when your submission has been received.

#### IMAGES FOR SCREEN

- Please ensure your digital files are correctly numbered in the sequence in which they should be displayed i.e. 01.jpg, 02.jpg etc.
- You must include two copies of your sequence plan, statement of intent (ARPS & FRPS only) and Submission Details Form.
- Your name must not be visible in any digital image and must not be included in the file name.
- When you're ready to send your images, please post them to us on a USB stick or CD/DVD or alternatively email them to the appropriate email address; [lmps@rps.org](mailto:lmps@rps.org), [arps@rps.org](mailto:arps@rps.org) or [frps@rps.org](mailto:frps@rps.org)
- Your digital files must arrive 14 days prior to the assessment date. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that they arrives on time.
- You will receive an email confirmation when your submission has been received.

#### BOOK

- You must include the Submission Details Form and two copies of your statement of intent (ARPS & FRPS only)
- Your name must not be shown on the front of your book submission, unless it is a commercially produced publication.
- When you are sending your Books please make sure that:
  4. It is securely packed.
  5. It is clearly labelled with your name, email address, genre and date of assessment. (a Portfolio label is supplied with the Submission Details Form).
  6. The parcel must arrive 14 days prior to the assessment date. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that it arrives on time.
- You will receive an email confirmation when your submission has been received.

## OVERSEAS PARCELS

- Import duties, taxes, and charges are the applicants responsibility.
  - Please check with your country's customs office to determine what these additional costs will be prior to sending your portfolio.
  - For more details please visit [www.hmrc.gov.uk/customs/post/customs-procedures](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/customs/post/customs-procedures)
- Please attach the portfolio label provided on the front of your parcel. You will be notified by email when we receive your portfolio.
- The RPS will not take responsibility for paying import fees and will not accept parcels requiring additional payments.
- Note – it may cost more to have your prints returned than to reprint them; Please state if you do not wish them to be returned. If prints or digital files are not to be returned, the RPS may retain them for educational purposes, otherwise they will be destroyed.
- If you have requested for your portfolio to be returned, please ensure we have valid credit card details, as payment will be taken on receipt of the courier invoice.

## PERSONAL DELIVERY AND COLLECTION

- You may deliver your submission to us at RPS House, Bristol, during the following opening times:
  - Thursday 10am – 6pm
  - Friday 11am – 7pm
  - Saturday 10am – 5pm
  - Sunday 10am – 5pm
- If you wish to collect your submission on the day of the assessment, you should state this on your *Booking Form*, and it will be available at lunch time or the end of the day.
- To collect your submission at a later date – during office hours – please contact the Distinctions Department.

## FEES AND PAYMENT

- For current fees, please visit our website and booking forms.
- Distinctions are only awarded to members of the RPS. If you are a member, you must ensure your current subscription is paid. If you are not a member, you must complete the Non-Member section on the *Booking Form*, and include the membership subscription. This will only be processed if you are successful.
- If you have requested your portfolio to be returned, please ensure we have valid credit card details.

## RETURNING YOUR PORTFOLIO

- Please see the *Booking Form* for details.
- USB sticks, CD/DVDs will not be returned and will be securely shredded/formatted.
- Personal collection – please see above.
- All reasonable care will be taken with your submission, but the RPS will not be responsible for any loss or damage whilst in its care or in transit. By submitting your *Booking Form*, you agree to these terms.

## RETENTION OF PORTFOLIOS

- The RPS reserves the right to retain successful submissions beyond the date of assessment to promote The RPS and its Distinctions. By submitting your application, you agree to these terms. You will be notified if your submission is to be retained.

## CANCELLATIONS/DEFERRALS

After submitting your *Booking Form*, if for any reason you are unable to send your submission or need to make other changes, please e-mail the relevant level [lrps@rps.org](mailto:lrps@rps.org) or [arps@rps.org](mailto:arps@rps.org) or [frps@rps.org](mailto:frps@rps.org).

- Any cancellations or change requests must be made via e-mail. If you cancel/defer within 14 days of your assessment date you will be fully charged for the assessment. We are unable to offer a refund or deferral.
- You can request once only to cancel/defer 15 days or more prior to your assessment, without any charge, but all future requests will incur a £25 administration charge.
- The RPS is unable to refund any cancellation or offer a transfer to another event if the attendee does not notify the Distinctions Department by e-mail 14 days prior to the event start date. email [distinctions@rps.org](mailto:distinctions@rps.org)
- The RPS reserves the right to cancel any event 7 days prior to its start date, or less than 24 hours due to adverse weather conditions or extraordinary circumstances beyond its control. All attendees are advised to check hotel and travel cancellation/refund policies, as the RPS is unable to offer compensation for any loss.

## REVIEW PROCEDURE AND DISPUTES

The decision of the assessment panel is final. However, if an applicant feels that there is any question as to whether the assessment process has been correctly adhered to, they can ask the RPS to review their application. All such requests must be made in writing within four weeks of receipt of the feedback letter, outlining fully the substance of the applicant's case. In such cases, the Chairperson of the Distinctions Committee will initially review the case and decide if the complaint merits further action. If that is the case, the Distinctions Committee will appoint a moderator to investigate and report to the Distinctions Committee for a decision. In such cases, the decision of the Distinctions Committee will be final.

## WHERE TO GET ADVICE ON YOUR SUBMISSION

There are a number of ways in which you can obtain official guidance when working towards applying for a Distinction.

- The website has examples of successful applications ([www.rps.org/distinctions](http://www.rps.org/distinctions))
- Attend a Licentiate, Associate or Fellowship Advisory Day.
  - These are organised throughout the UK, with web advisory sessions for overseas members. These are led by Assessors who show successful submissions, and comment on potential submissions brought on the day. (see below).
- Attend an Assessment.
  - These are open to all who want to watch, whether or not your submission is being assessed. Dates and locations of assessments are available online. Spectator tickets can be booked online once an assessment is fully booked. Alternatively, please contact the Distinctions Department to register your interest in attending as a spectator.
- Online Advice.
  - You can upload your images to our website if you require specific Distinctions advice prior to making a submission at [www.rps.org/advice](http://www.rps.org/advice).
- Advice on which Genre your submission best suits can be obtained by emailing [ben@rps.org](mailto:ben@rps.org)
- You are recommended only to obtain advice from a current Assessor who will be aware of the current criteria and requirements.

## ADVISORY DAYS

Distinctions Advisory days are educational events and provide an opportunity for anyone working towards a Distinction to receive informed advice from Assessors of the appropriate Distinctions Panel. You will see successful submissions and have the opportunity to receive comments on your own work, and to hear comments on work by others attending throughout the day. Many attend initially as observers to begin to understand what is required, and the differences between the different Genres and Levels.

- The applicant should bring a working submission, plus a maximum of 5 spare images.
- Prints should be mounted but not framed, and to the actual size that the applicant intends to submit.
- The advice given will depend on the portfolio seen on the day and the advice from an assessor is guidance only. It is the responsibility of the applicant to make the final decision on which images to put forward for assessment
- Applicants can attend LRPS/ARPS advisory days, and can either obtain *Content & Technical* advice or *Written & Technical* advice.
  - Content & Technical advice** – this is when the assessor present is a member of the appropriate panel. You will be given content and technical advice face to face, and a copy of the summary of advice form.
  - Written and Technical advice** – This is when the assessor present does not sit on the appropriate panel but has been given written advice by an assessor, which will be read out.
- In both instances, the assessor present on the day will also give you technical advice on your prints and a copy of the summary of advice form.
- At the assessment there will be four or five Assessors who may view your portfolio differently. Individual Assessors can only give advice and cannot guarantee success.
- A limited number of separate Fellowship Advisory days are held at venues throughout the UK. Only members working towards a Fellowship submission may attend, and no audience will be present. You may only attend two Fellowship Advisory Days with any given application.
- Distinctions Advisory Days organised by Overseas Chapters may consider Licentiate, Associate and Fellowship applications in all categories.

[www.rps.org/distinctions/advisory-days](http://www.rps.org/distinctions/advisory-days)

## CELEBRATION OF PHOTOGRAPHY

This day is a great opportunity for all who wish to view successful bodies of work close up. Develop your understanding of photography and our Distinctions. The Distinctions Team will present a range of submissions from all genres.

Our aim is to educate members of the public, Promote the highest standards of photography, and Encourage public appreciation of photography and there is no better way of doing this than attending our Celebration of photography events.

This is your opportunity to ask questions and find out more about the RPS Distinctions, and how we can help to improve your own photography.

We will explain what our assessors are looking for and what you need to do and what to avoid. Find out how you can become one of the many thousands that have gained a Distinctions with the RPS.

Learn and be inspired by others - Successful applicants will talk about their experiences and present their submissions.

THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

# REQUIREMENTS FOR THE LICENTIATE DISTINCTION

DISTINCTIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS GUIDELINES

DP004  
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## LICENTIATE OF THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

The Distinction '**Licentiate of The Royal Photographic Society**' is the first level of the RPS's Distinctions. Licentiate members of The RPS are entitled to use the letters LRPS after their name. The standard is high, but achievable for most dedicated photographers.

On being awarded your Licentiate, you will receive a certificate under the Seal of The Society, and lapel badge.

Application for Licentiate is open to everyone. However, Distinctions can only be awarded to members of the RPS; non-member applicants must join the RPS in order to receive the Distinction, (there is a non-member section on the application form that must be completed). You are only entitled to use the Distinction as long as you are a member of the RPS.

Your submission can be one of the following:

- 10 Prints (if prints are mounted, then more than one image per mount is permitted, but only counts as one of the ten).
- 10 JPEG Images for Screen.
- A Book containing a minimum of 20 key images (a minimum of two copies must be supplied).
- A **Multimedia** application. This includes the various elements of audiovisual, moving image and multimedia.

Applications cannot be a mix of the above.

**Research, Education and Application of Photography** applications will normally be a written paper. Information relating to this, and to **Imaging Science Qualifications**, are available within *Requirements for individual genres* document.

To be awarded Licentiate of the RPS, you will need to show variety in approach and technique but not necessarily in subject matter, evidence of creative ability and a high technical standard appropriate to your submission, together with a comprehensive knowledge and ability in your discipline.

It is essential that a range of photographic skills are demonstrated within your submission.

## LICENTIATE CRITERIA

Applications at Licentiate level will be assessed against the following criteria:

### CAMERA WORK AND TECHNICAL QUALITY

- Correct point of focus with appropriate **depth of field**. You should be able to demonstrate that you know how to control these elements of camera craft through your choice of shutter speed and aperture when appropriate for the subject matter.
- Suitable **sharpness** for the subject matter. Camera shake, over enlargement of images or a low resolution file may result in poor technical quality.
- Correct **exposure** with appropriate control of **highlight/shadow** detail and **tonal range**.
- Correct colour **rendition/management** for the image.
- An absence of **processing faults or digital defects**.

### VISUAL AWARENESS

- You need to show a good understanding of **how to use** light in photography. The correct choice of source and direction, time of day (if natural) and intensity of light can greatly enhance an image. Correct use of light can create a mood or atmosphere and add impact to an image.
- **Composition and design** brings all the visual elements together. Effective composition directs the viewers' attention and prompts them to look where the creator intended.
- Correct choice of **viewpoint** and awareness of inappropriate **backgrounds and distractions**.
- Appropriate use of **colour/monochrome** medium.

- Appropriate use of **manipulation or post-production techniques**. It is not a requirement to include manipulated images but if you choose to do so it should add value to the image and any post-production work must be technically appropriate.

#### COMMUNICATION

- Show clarity of intent with the image and where appropriate a **point of interest**.
- Demonstrate evidence of **imagination and creativity** to convey a mood, message or idea.
- Show **understanding and empathy with the subject matter**.
- The ability to capture the **decisive moment** when appropriate.

#### OVERALL IMPRESSION

- A balanced and cohesive set of images. How the images work together and are presented for assessment is important.
- An appropriate choice of materials. Selection of an appropriate paper surface and mount board for the image when submitting prints.
- **A variety of approach**. It is essential to show a variety of photographic **skills and techniques**. **Repetition** of similar images must be avoided.
- The **selection, editing and final presentation** of the images on display must show clear evidence that thought has been given to the layout or sequencing of the submission.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR A LICENTIATE PRINT SUBMISSION

### MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- The application must be a portfolio of 10 prints.
- Framed images are not permitted.
- Your portfolio can be displayed in one, two or three rows but not more.
- Under no circumstances can the applicant's name be displayed on the front of the prints.  
(Failure to comply with this requirement will result in immediate disqualification and loss of application fee).
- Two copies of the Hanging Plan must be provided on A4 paper (un-mounted) with your full name and date of assessment on the front. Please use a small font (e.g. 10). Hanging Templates for optional use can be found at [www.rps.org/distinctions/hanging-plans](http://www.rps.org/distinctions/hanging-plans)

### ADVISORY

- It is normal for prints to be mounted. Unmounted prints can be accepted but applicants should stiffen their images with thin card to ensure their images are presented to a high standard.
- More than one image can be displayed in one print or mount but will only count as one of the 10 prints.
- The size of images including mounts submitted is not restricted but the following points are worth considering;
- There are three display rails.
- The maximum height between the display rails is 23" (585mm).
- The maximum length of the display area is 21ft (6.4m).
- Image sizes are normally between 10"x8" (254mm x 204mm) and 20"x16" (508mm x 408mm).
- When considering the image size, remember the consistency of quality throughout your portfolio is more important than size alone.
- When choosing your mount medium consider that neutral colours are normally the best choice and be consistent throughout the portfolio.
- Print portfolios can be mixed medium; colour, monochrome, toned, digital and chemical process can all be included.
- Commercially produced images are acceptable but the applicant is responsible for the quality of the submitted work.

Your submission must be sent to **The Distinctions Department, The Royal Photographic Society, RPS House, 337 Paintworks, Bath Road, Arnos Vale, Bristol, BS4 3AR** at least 14 days prior to your assessment date.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR A LICENTIATE IMAGES FOR SCREEN (IFS) SUBMISSION

### MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- The application must be a portfolio of 10 digital images.
- The image data must be in RGB mode (even for monochrome images) and in the sRGB colour space, NOT CMYK.
- The current display dimensions are either 4096 pixels wide (landscape) or 2160 pixels high (portrait). The image data must not exceed these dimensions in either direction.
- Image files must be saved in standard baseline JPEG format: saving at the highest quality is recommended. Images must be named with two digits only: 01, 02, 03, through to 10.
- The applicant's name must not be included in the file name or displayed with the image. (Failure to comply with this requirement will result in disqualification and loss of the application fee).
- Two copies of the Sequence Plan must be provided on A4 paper (un-mounted) with your full name and date of assessment on the front. Please use a small font (e.g. 10).

### ADVISORY

- Give consideration to the sequence of your portfolio images, they will be viewed in the numeric order (01 to 10) which you have titled your files. The sequence of the images is part of the assessment criteria.
- Ensure that the equipment used to create your portfolio is calibrated correctly.

Your submission may be sent on a USB stick/CD/DVD to **The Distinctions Department, The Royal Photographic Society, RPS House, 337 Paintworks, Bath Road, Arnos Vale, Bristol, BS4 3AR**, or by email to [lrps@rps.org](mailto:lrps@rps.org) at least 14 days prior to your assessment date.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR A LICENTIATE BOOK SUBMISSION

### MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- The applicant must submit a minimum of two copies of the book.
- The minimum page size of the book is 10"x8" (255mm x 204mm).
- The book will contain a minimum of 20 key images.
- Each key image must occupy a significant area of the page.
- All key images must be to Licentiate standard.
- Where there is joint authorship in any aspect of the production of the book, the applicant must state clearly who was responsible for which elements.

### ADVISORY

- Books are assessed without an audience.
- Give consideration to the sequence and layout of your images, the sequence of the images is part of the assessment criteria.
- The applicant is responsible for the technical quality of the images, commercial self published books may not be printed to the required standard.
- It is preferable that no name should appear on or in, the book. If a name appears, it will not be an anonymous assessment.

Your submission must be sent to **The Distinctions Department, The Royal Photographic Society, RPS House, 337 Paintworks, Bath Road, Arnos Vale, Bristol, BS4 3AR** at least 14 days prior to your assessment date.

Contact details [lrps@rps.org](mailto:lrps@rps.org)