

## DISTINCTIONS AND AWARDS HANDOUT

### RPS Distinctions

<http://www.rps.org/distinctions>

**LRPS** requires 10 images that show variety in approach and techniques but not necessarily in subject matter. Demanding but achievable for most dedicated photographers.

To get started you can get advice from NDPS club members familiar with the distinctions and the f1.4 group. Build up your panel and attend advisory days before making your submission. In our opinion it is best to go for a panel of prints rather than submitting DPs or a book. The RPS now has a 4K projector displaying images at 4096x2048 this demands the highest quality but also you may not be able to view your images on screen at this resolution before submitting so may not be aware of artefacts the assessors would see. The layout of the panel is important, balance colours and tones, have the end images looking in rather than looking out, a good start image top left will be the first one seen by the assessors, have a strong stop image bottom right. Look to create patterns within the layout e.g., a triangle of similar images, colours, or tones. OK to mix colour and mono but match them up in pairs, difficult to have a single mono image unless it is a central image in a line of 3 or 5. Prints can be different sizes as long as they are matched and not just a random set of different sizes. Keep, preferably the upper edge, all at the same level in the mount. Quality is of the utmost importance; the assessors will be looking for good basic techniques. Images showing burnt out highlights, blocked in shadows, images that have been over sharpened or show halos are all likely to be rejected, print banding or bronzing will also cause problems. If possible, print your own images or work with a friend to get the print quality using a calibrated monitor and printer. Commercial printers rarely give the exact colours or quality that you require. You need to be a member of the RPS to use the award.

### ARPS

Requires a body of work/project of 15 images of a high standard and a written Statement of Intent. The RPS updated the criteria at the end of 2020 so the new genres are shown below but it is important to look at the latest information and further guidance on the RPS website.

- 1) **Applied and Portraiture Photography:** Photography which has been produced for an intended purpose.
- 2) **Contemporary Photography:** Photography that communicates a visual realisation of a stated argument, idea, or concept.
- 3) **Documentary Photography:** Photography which communicates a clear narrative through visual literacy.
- 4) **Film:** The work can be created in any moving image format including film, video, and digital media.
- 5) **Landscape Photography:** Photography that illustrates and interprets earth's habitats, from the remotest wilderness to urban environs
- 6) **Natural History Photography:** Photography which illustrates an element of natural world within an unrestricted, uncultivated, and untamed environment.

- 7) **Travel Photography:** Photography which communicates a sense of place.
- 8) **Visual Art Photography:** Photography which communicates a creative vision.

## **FRPS**

The highest level of Distinction. Requires a body of work/project of 20/21 images of a distinguished photographic and creative standard and Statement of Intent.

See the RPS website for all the detailed requirements for each distinction, there are also galleries showing successful panels and videos discussing panels with the authors and assessors. Go to an advisory day as an observer you will learn a lot and see some good work and hear it critiqued. There is a Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/rpsdistinctions> specifically for those seeking distinctions. Since Covid struck the RPS have moved 1to1 advisory online and in 2021 the actual assessments will also be available to attend online.

## **PAGB - Photographic Alliance of Great Britain**

<http://www.thepagb.org.uk/awards/apm-awards/>

The Photographic Alliance of Great Britain is the organisation overseeing club photography at the national and international level. As a member of NDPS you are a member of the East Anglian Federation <http://www.eaf.org.uk/> and therefore part of the PAGB and entitled to apply for their Awards of Photographic Merit through the EAF.

- \* Credit (CPAGB) – Blue badge and certificate  
Standard: Good Club Photography 10 prints or PDI, acceptance score 200
- \* Distinction (DPAGB) – Red badge and certificate  
Standard: Open Exhibition Photography 15 prints or PDI, acceptance score 300
- \* Master (MPAGB) – Yellow badge and certificate  
Standard: Highest Standard of UK Amateur Photography 20 prints or PDI, acceptance score 450

Images are not shown as a panel but in random order with other photographers this means there is no set theme, and the entrant can supply a mix of their best images. The judges only have a few seconds to decide if the image is of an acceptable level and are encouraged to vote Yes by scoring 4 or No with a 2, a near miss can score 3 or if they think it meets the next level up give a score of 5. Advisory days and workshops are available, check the EAF website for these events. Awards are kept for life and are the lowest cost to apply for. Also, the PAGB and EAF newsletters have updates on the awards and dates for assessments.

## **BPE - British Photographic Exhibitions**

<http://www.britishphotographicexhibitions.org.uk/>

There are 17 associated exhibitions in the UK run by different photography clubs. 3 judges score each entry out of 5 in a matter of seconds, the acceptance level is usually 12 and each acceptance counts as 1 point. You pay for each entry typically £1.50 per photo but there is no additional charge to claim the awards. There are often several thousand entries to each exhibition. To encourage entries BPE make the following awards.

- \* BPE1 Crown Award - 25 points
- \* BPE2 Crown Award - 50 points
- \* BPE3 Crown Award - 100 points

- \* BPE4 Crown Award - 200 points
- \* BPE5 Crown Award - 300 points

Those who achieve the top crown award rating BPE5\* are then invited to aggregate acceptances and awards in the member exhibitions and upon reaching the accepted aggregate to apply, without charge, for Associateship ABPE and Fellowship FBPE. The judges are also able to award ribbons or medals to the top images at each exhibition. Each exhibition will have slightly different rules and classes so check carefully.

Most have open colour, mono, and Nature some will have scapes, and altered reality classes. Usually, 3 or 4 entries per class with 12 or 16 as maximum number of entries. You can only enter the same images once in each exhibition, so you have to keep generating new work each year. Included in the entry fee for each exhibition is either a printed catalogue or a CD of accepted work, and these are also shown on the website. You have to accept that judges have their different views, and it is not unknown for an image to get a gold award in one exhibition and not even be accepted in the next.

<p><b>Clay Cross National Projected Image Exhibition</b>          Digital Projection 5  <a href="http://www.claycrossps.co.uk">www.claycrossps.co.uk</a>          Queries <a href="mailto:susiew.dpqgb@btinternet.com">susiew.dpqgb@btinternet.com</a> 01623 411407</p>	<p><b>January</b></p>
<p><b>Southport National Open Exhibition of Photography</b>          Prints 3 / Digital Projection 3  <a href="http://www.southportphotographic.co.uk">www.southportphotographic.co.uk</a>  <a href="mailto:exhibition@southportphotographic.co.uk">exhibition@southportphotographic.co.uk</a></p>	<p><b>January</b></p>
<p><b>Vale of Evesham National Photographic Exhibition</b>          Digital Projection 4  <a href="http://www.eveshamphoto.net">www.eveshamphoto.net</a>  <a href="mailto:exhibition@eveshamcameraclub.co.uk">exhibition@eveshamcameraclub.co.uk</a>          Queries 01386 556746</p>	<p><b>February</b></p>
<p><b>Basingstoke Camera Club Exhibition</b>          Digital Projection 6  <a href="mailto:exhib@basingstokecameraclub.co.uk">exhib@basingstokecameraclub.co.uk</a>  <a href="http://www.basingstokecameraclub.co.uk">www.basingstokecameraclub.co.uk</a></p>	<p><b>March</b></p>
<p><b>South Birmingham Open Digital Exhibition</b>          Digital Projection 4          Queries: <a href="mailto:grahamproffitt@blueyonder.co.uk">grahamproffitt@blueyonder.co.uk</a>  <a href="http://www.southbirminghamphotographicsociety.co.uk/exhibition/">www.southbirminghamphotographicsociety.co.uk/exhibition/</a></p>	<p><b>March</b></p>

<p><b>Robin Hood Open Digital Exhibition</b> Digital Projection 6 <a href="http://www.robinhoodexhibition.co.uk">www.robinhoodexhibition.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:info@robinhoodexhibition.co.uk">info@robinhoodexhibition.co.uk</a></p>	<p><b>April</b></p>
<p><b>Neath &amp; District PS Salon</b> Digital Projection 4 <a href="http://www.neathphotographicsociety.org">http://www.neathphotographicsociety.org</a> Queries <a href="mailto:colin.kelly3@ntlworld.com">colin.kelly3@ntlworld.com</a></p>	<p><b>April</b></p>
<p><b>Rushden Open Photography Exhibition</b> Digital Projection 5 <a href="mailto:info@rushdenopen.co.uk">info@rushdenopen.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.rushdenopen.co.uk">www.rushdenopen.co.uk</a></p>	<p><b>April</b></p>
<p><b>Midland Monochrome</b> Prints 4 <a href="https://www.midland-mono.co.uk">https://www.midland-mono.co.uk</a></p>	<p><b>May</b></p>
<p><b>Winchester National Exhibition</b> Digital Projection 5 <a href="http://www.winphotosoc.uk">www.winphotosoc.uk</a> <a href="mailto:winchesternational@winphotosoc.uk">winchesternational@winphotosoc.uk</a> Queries: 07796 442847</p>	<p><b>June</b></p>
<p><b>Beyond Group</b> Digital Projection 4 <a href="http://www.beyondgroup.org.uk">http://www.beyondgroup.org.uk</a></p>	<p><b>July</b></p>
<p><b>Dingwall National Projected Image Exhibition</b> Digital Projection 4 <a href="http://www.dingwallcameraclub.com">www.dingwallcameraclub.com</a></p>	<p><b>September</b></p>
<p><b>Shrewsbury Open Photography Exhibition</b> Digital Projection 4 <a href="http://www.photocompentries.net/?org=ShropshirePS">http://www.photocompentries.net/?org=ShropshirePS</a> (online entries link) <a href="mailto:sope@shropshire-photographic.org.uk">sope@shropshire-photographic.org.uk</a></p>	<p><b>September</b></p>

<p><b>Guernsey Salon of Photography</b>  Digital Projection 4  <a href="http://www.guernseysalon.co.uk">www.guernseysalon.co.uk</a></p>	<b>October</b>
<p><b>Frome Wessex Salon of Photography</b>  Digital Projection 6  <a href="http://www.fromewessexcameraclub.com/salon.html">www.fromewessexcameraclub.com/salon.html</a>  <a href="mailto:fsopmail@gmail.com">fsopmail@gmail.com</a></p>	<b>October</b>
<p><b>Bebington Salon of Photography</b>  Digital Projection 4  <a href="http://www.bebingtonps.org.uk">www.bebingtonps.org.uk</a></p>	<b>November</b>
<p><b>Solihull Open Exhibition of British Photography (Covid-19 No exhibition Dec2020 entry)</b>  Prints 3 / Digital Projection 4  <a href="http://www.solihullphotographicsociety.co.uk">www.solihullphotographicsociety.co.uk</a>  Jim Hiscox Tel: 0121 708 0249</p>	<b>December</b>

Make sure you keep an accurate record of your entries and acceptances.

It is recommended that even if you are not interested in entering the exhibitions you go to some of the exhibition websites and look at the galleries of successful images from previous years to see the type of pictures and the standard of photography that does well. Hopefully this will inspire you to try a few different things, not everything will be to your taste, but you should find something that appeals to you. There is a facebook page 'BPE acceptances and awards' with a lively discussion after the results come out and members share their successful images.

**FIAP** *Federation Internationale de L'Art Photographique*

<http://www.thepagb.org.uk/fiap/fiap-distinctions/> for guidance (a **must read** before you start)  
<https://www.myfiap.net/patronages> this is the list of exhibitions

International exhibitions are entered individually, and each acceptance can count towards an award. When the required acceptances are achieved you apply through PAGB and they make one national submission per year to FIAP, so you need to be aware of the overall timetable.

- \* AFIAP (Artist FIAP)
  - a) At least 40 Acceptances with at least 15 different photographs.
  - b) This success must have come from at least 15 different salons with FIAP Patronage, and those salons must be spread over at least 8 different countries.
  - c) At least 4 of your 15 photographs must each have gained at least ONE acceptance as a PRINT as well as any PDI. Though this was relaxed in 2020 due to Covid.

\* **EFIAP (Excellence FIAP)**

To apply for EFIAP you must be the holder of the AFIAP Distinction. You cannot receive your EFIAP award until at least 12 months after the date of your AFIAP certificate. You will be required to have gained

a) At least 250 Acceptances (including those gained at AFIAP) with a total of at least 50 different photographs.

b) This success must have come from at least 30 different salons with FIAP Patronage, and those salons must be spread over at least 20 different countries.

c) At least 12 of your 50 photographs must each have gained at least ONE acceptance as a PRINT as well as any PDI

e) To have at least two different photographs that have each received at least one award. These awards must have been gained in different salons from different countries.

It is recommended to read all the instructions on the PAGB website very carefully, they appear complex so follow them carefully. You need to register to get a unique number before you submit any entries and need to purchase a Life Card from FIAP (cost £80) before applying for an award and there is a further fee to apply for each award. You need to keep very careful and detailed records of all entries and acceptances and follow the rules.

The advantage with FIAP over BPE is that there are many more international exhibitions so your same images can be entered many times however you are up against photographers from all over the world. As with BPE there is a Facebook page 'FIAP PSA and GPU Acceptances and Awards'

### **Irish Photographic Federation**

<https://irishphoto.ie/about/> similar to PAGB so they represent Irish photography clubs but they offer Licentiate LIPF, Associateship AIPF and Fellowship FIPF, distinctions that are also open to overseas photographers

### **The Societies of Photographers**

<https://thesocieties.net/>

Mainly aimed at Pro or semi pro photographers but also the serious enthusiast. Eight different societies such as SWPP Society of Wedding and Portrait Photographers. Offer training and qualifications as Licentiate e.g. LSWPP, Associateship and Fellowship.

### **Photographic Society of America PSA**

<https://psa-photo.org/index.php?about-psa-overview>

PSA has a method for recognizing the photographic achievement of those Exhibition entrants whose images are accepted for inclusion in PSA-recognized International Exhibitions of Photography. Entrants keep track of their acceptances and apply for PSA Star Ratings certificates. These certificates are then combined and used to apply for Recognition of Photographic Achievement (ROPA) distinctions: Qualified (QPSA), Proficiency (PPSA), Excellence (EPSA), Master (MPSA), Master Level 2 (MPSA2), Grand Master (GMPSA), Grand Master Bronze (GMPSA/B), Grand Master Silver (GMPSA/S), Grand Master Gold (GMPSA/G), Grand Master Platinum (GMPSA/P). PSA also grants distinctions through its Portfolio program. Portfolio distinctions are given for a body of work that reflects a photographer's personal style and photographic interest. Distinctions are: BPSA (first level), SPSA (second level) and GPSA (third level). If you enter FIAP salons many of them are also recognised by the PSA.

At Club level both PAGB and FIAP have interclub competitions, For PAGB these start at regional level through the East Anglian Federation then the winning clubs are invited to represent the EAF in inter federation competitions

FIAP have an annual World Cup for clubs that individual clubs can enter.

The RPS have a series of competitions and most of the special interest groups hold their own annual exhibitions. The PAGB has a separate annual exhibition for digital and Prints that you can enter through the club.

**General Tips** that are also applicable to most competitions

Remember the judges were not there when you took the photo so do not have the same emotional attachment to it.

Judges see over 1000 photos in a single session and have around 3 seconds to give a score so images must have IMPACT, a photo that takes time to read will not do well

Good composition is important but don't be afraid to break the rules, e.g. place images centrally, have a model looking out of the picture instead of direct to camera

One part of the picture should be dominant, you can use leading lines to emphasise that  
Don't rely on a title as they are often not read out.

Best not to put very similar images in the same competition as they could compete against each other.

Check your image as a thumbnail to ensure it is still recognisable as when judges view the high scoring images to select the award winners, they often only see a group of thumbnail image.

Do not over sharpen or whiten the eyes too much or over saturate (except for American comps where they love oversaturation).

Keep good records of your entries and results, READ THE RULES for the competition then read them again and follow them.

Do not be disappointed by rejections but use them to spur you on, look at the images that did well and learn from them.

Go to photography and Art exhibitions. Study the old masters and how they used composition

Go to talks by other photographers, the EAF and RPS arrange many excellent events.

Always be on the lookout for inspiration and keep a notebook of ideas.

Above all enjoy yourself and enjoy creating great images.

**Acknowledgement** - The Society is grateful to Dave Balcombe ARPS, CPAGB, BPE1\* who has personal experience of the above processes and has prepared this guidance on behalf of all other NDPS members