

# A GUIDE ON HOW TO APPLY

## Distinctions and Qualifications Guidelines



Please consider the environment before printing this document

# What are Distinctions and how do I apply



**LICENTIATE (LRPS)**



**ASSOCIATE (ARPS)**



**FELLOWSHIP (FRPS)**

# 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 Society.

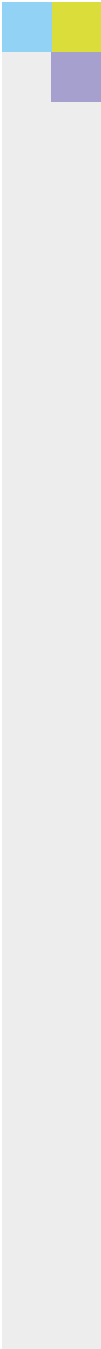
## LICENTIATE

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

## ASSOCIATE AND FELLOWSHIP

Applications are assessed by Panels as detailed below. Panel members are normally Fellows of The Society or, in particular circumstances, external advisers may be consulted.

- **Applied Photography:** Photography which has a specific end purpose or use. This by definition includes all professional photography as well as many other disciplines such as: documentary, portraiture, theatrical, record, architectural, wedding, visual journalism, astronomy and palaeontology.
- **Conceptual and Contemporary Photography:** photography which explores, defines, illustrates or evaluates issues through photographic images.
- **Creative Production Photography:** recognises technical and imaginative skills in the post production of still imagery through digital or analogue processing. Submissions will be from applicants working in graphic and illustrative arts and this is to be encouraged in so far as the application is principally based on photographic imagery.
- **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:** This category will consist of photography produced to fulfil the creative vision of the photographer in expressing and sharing perceptions or emotions.
- **Multimedia:** encompasses Audio Visual, Film and Television and interactive multimedia. Multi platform work should be submitted in this category.
- **Natural History Photography:** includes all branches of natural history, including zoology, botany, and meteorology.
- **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:** Applications have no geographical limitations, and should express the feeling of a time and place, and portray a land, its people or culture.



Individual images may only be submitted at one level of Distinction. In assessing submissions at a higher level, any previous successful application will, when practicable, be reviewed to ensure a development in photographic skills and understanding.

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 categories. A limited number of third party images may be used in Multimedia submissions (see Panel requirements 5e); third party images can be used in Research, Education and Application of Photography submissions; and in Creative Production applications.

It is expected that your submission will have a high technical quality appropriate to the category in which you are applying. It is accepted that technical quality relevant to one category 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 (multiple submissions in the same category at the same time by an individual will not be accepted).

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

### **MODEL RELEASE FORM**

For the majority of portfolio submissions there is no requirement for an applicant to provide a release form where images make use of models. Should the Society wish to show a portfolio publicly, outside of an assessment, or reproduce it online or in the RPS Journal it may require a copy of a model release form. In rare cases, at the Society's sole discretion, and before an submission is accepted it may require an appropriately signed release form(s) covering all individuals who are the subject of the images submitted. If you have any questions please contact: [distinctions@rps.org](mailto:distinctions@rps.org)

The Royal Photographic Society is a photographic society and an educational charity, and whilst other elements can feature, and be an integral part of an application for a Distinction, the assessment will be heavily weighted to the standard of photography within the submission.

## **DISTINCTIONS: THE PROCESS AND FORMATS**

### **ASSESSMENT DAYS: HOW YOUR WORK IS ASSESSED**

Licentiate and Associate assessments are normally conducted in front of an audience, many of whom will have applications being considered during the day. Fellowship submissions are conducted without an audience.

The day begins with a welcome from the Distinctions Department and a brief introduction from the Chairperson. Each submission is assessed by a Panel of experts, normally consisting of five panel members and a Chairperson. A Distinctions Advisory Board moderator 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: PRINTS**

- The portfolio is displayed as per your hanging plan; in a maximum of three rows. The panel initially views the portfolio as a whole, followed by a detailed examination of the images.
- The Chairperson will ask for initial vote, panel members will show either a red or green card. The Chairperson will ask one panel member from the minority to talk about the submission, and then one panel member from the majority.
- The Chairperson will ask the remaining panel members for any further comments. A final vote is taken and the decision is made. If recommended the applicant's 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 Advisory Board and Council for final ratification.
- Once approved by Council, you will be notified that your Distinction has been awarded.

#### **LICENTIATE: IMAGES FOR SCREEN/TRANSPARENCIES**

- The portfolio is displayed on a monitor with a black background. The images are displayed individually for seven seconds each in sequence as you have numbered them, and the whole portfolio is displayed twice.
- Images for Screen only – Thumbnails are then left on the screen while a decision is made. The software used performs no manipulation in putting the image on the screen.
- At the conclusion of the viewing, any panel member can select any of the 10 images for closer inspection.
- The Chairperson will ask for initial vote, panel members will show either a red or green card. The Chairperson will ask one panel member from the minority to talk about the submission, and then one panel member from the majority.
- The Chairperson will ask the remaining panel members for any further comments. A final vote is taken and the decision is made. If recommended the applicant's 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 Advisory Board and Council for final ratification.
- Once approved by Council, you will be notified that your Distinction has been awarded.

#### **LICENTIATE: BOOKS**

- Due to the difficulty in reviewing books, they are assessed without an audience.
- Books are viewed by the Panel members and the assessment procedure is as for Prints, above.

#### **ASSOCIATE: PRINTS**

- The portfolio is displayed as per your hanging plan; in a maximum of three rows and the Statement of Intent is read out. The panel initially views the portfolio as a whole, followed by a detailed examination of the images.
- The Chairperson will ask for initial vote, panel members will show either a red or green card. The Chairperson will ask one panel member from the minority to talk about the submission, and then one panel member from the majority.
- The Chairperson will ask the remaining panel members 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 Advisory Board and Council for final ratification.
- Once approved by Council, you will be notified that your Distinction has been awarded.

#### **ASSOCIATE: IMAGES FOR SCREEN/TRANSPARENCIES**

- The portfolio is displayed on a monitor with a black background and the Statement of Intent is read out. The images are displayed individually for seven seconds each in sequence as you have numbered them, and the whole portfolio is displayed twice.
- Images for Screen only – Thumbnails are then left on the screen while a decision is made. The software used performs no manipulation in putting the image on the screen.
- At the conclusion of the viewing, any panel member can select any of the 15 images for closer inspection.
- The Chairperson will ask for initial vote, panel members will show either a red or green card. The Chairperson will ask one panel member from the minority to talk about the submission, and then one panel member from the majority.
- The Chairperson will ask the remaining panel members 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 Advisory Board and Council for final ratification.
- Once approved by Council, you will be notified that your Distinction has been awarded.

## **ASSOCIATE: BOOKS**

- Due to the difficulty in reviewing books, they are assessed without an audience.
- Books are viewed by the Panel members and the assessment procedure is as for Prints, above.

## **FELLOWSHIP (CATEGORY) – STAGE 1: PRINTS**

- Fellowship applications are assessed in the first instance by the Panel appropriate to the category 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 panel initially views the portfolio as a whole, followed by a detailed examination of the images.
- The Chairperson will ask for initial vote, panel members will show either a red or green card. The Chairperson will ask one panel member from the minority to talk about the submission, and then one panel member from the majority.
- The Chairperson will ask the remaining panel members 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.
  
- For Book submissions please contact [frps@rps.org](mailto:frps@rps.org)

## **FELLOWSHIP BOARD – STAGE 2: PRINTS**

- 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 categories. The Board consists of the most experienced Fellows of The Society, drawn from the general membership.
- The portfolio is displayed as per your hanging plan; in a maximum of three rows and the Statement of Intent is read out.
- The category Chairperson from Stage 1 introduces the portfolio. The DAB moderator who was also present may add comments.
- The assessment procedure then follows that which is detailed for Associate print applications.
- All unsuccessful applicants will receive a feedback letter giving the reasons why they were not recommended.
- A vote is then taken as to whether any resubmission should be considered first in the category which brought forward the submission, or whether it's directly resubmitted to the Fellowship Board.
- No audience is present during the consideration of a fellowship application.

## **NOTIFICATION OF THE SPECIALIST CATEGORY RESULTS**

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

## **PANEL DECISIONS:**

- All portfolios that the Panels or Fellowship Board consider meet the required standard need to be ratified by the Distinctions Advisory Board and The Society's Council, and it is Council which 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 Society's 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 Society 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, normally you will not be able to submit any part of it to another category. If however, the Panel considers it more appropriate to another category, they can recommend transferring it to that category prior to giving their assessment.

**Unsuccessful applications:** Unfortunately, not everyone may be recommended. 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 – LRPS**

A submission that fails due to a minor fault within one image. The panel must be a strong submission and must show merit within the other nine. The other nine images must be of Licentiate standard. The Applicant will be invited by the Chairman to submit via referral.

E.g. LRPS, 1 image has banding and if replaced or reprinted to the same level as the other nine, the panel would be of standard and recommended.

#### **ON THE ASSESSMENT DAY**

All Panel members must be in agreement to the same image. If the Panel indicates more than one image, the Chair must either state the submission is either not recommended or a resubmission, and invites the Applicant to resubmit in accordance to the written feedback given. The name of the Applicant is not announced and kept anonymous. The original submission is not retained.

Applicants will be emailed within 24 hours of the assessment and offered a referral. The Feedback email will include the Chairman's comments/reason of why the image was not up to standard and give instructions on how to move forward with their application.

As with all images put forward for any assessment, the applicant is given the opportunity to receive advice & guidance on the replacement image. The applicant will be encouraged to submit three images for advice & guidance if the chair has advised replacing the image. Or will be asked to reprint the image. The image will be sent to a Panel member that attended the original assessment. In the case of the LRPS referrals, these will only be sent to Panel members, as it's the Chair who makes the final decision. (This will all be administrated via email).

The applicant will receive feedback from the Panel member, and make a decision on which image they wish to use as replacement. All advice and guidance will be emailed and copies of this will be attached to the application form as evidence.



The final image; prints\* will be sent to the Chair of the original assessment date. Images for Screen will be viewed by the Chair at the next available assessment. The Chair will decide if the image is up to standard and fits cohesively within the panel.

\*(Prints) Two identical copies of the final print must be received at The RPS HQ, Bath. One will be sent to the Chair to be reviewed (not returned). The other will remain in the office and returned to the applicant on recommendation.

### **REFERRAL – ARPS & FRPS**

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

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

**ARPS – up to 3 images**

**FRPS – up to 4 images**

### **ON THE ASSESSMENT DAY**

All Panel members must be in agreement about the same image/s. If the Panel indicates more than the number stated in the referral procedure, the Chair 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 Chair/Deputy indicates on the application form the number of each image containing fault(s). The reasoning for the referral will be noted on the comment sheets and given to the Distinctions staff in attendance. The Chair needs to indicate if the images 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 panel: The new submission will be assessed against the appropriate level and category's criteria. If the Panel members 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 images need to fulfil the feedback given by the Chair from the previous application and must be of the standard. Replacement images need to fit the original panel and 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 submitted referral application 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 Chair or Panel member that attended the original assessment.

The applicant will receive feedback from the Chair/Panel member, and make a decision which images to use as replacement/s. All advice and guidance will be emailed and copies of this will be attached to the application form as evidence.

The Distinctions staff will replace the images and make ready the portfolio for the agreed assessment date. The referred images will be placed alongside the panel for the Panel members to view. The Staff will indicate the replacement images by placing a card next to the print(s). (Images for Screen replacement images will be indicated with Referral included within the file name, e.g. 08 referral).

All email communications between Chair, Panel Advisor, Distinctions Staff and Applicant will be printed and attached to the application form.

#### **RE-SUBMISSION – (LRPS, ARPS, FRPS & FELLOWSHIP BOARD)**

A submission which has more than a minor fault or consistent faults e.g. banding, colour cast issues 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 Panel members will indicate on their comment sheets if they feel that the submission would be appropriate for a resubmission. The majority of the Panel members must be in agreement and for the same reason(s). The Chair will in all cases make the final decision. The Chair will announce that the submission is not recommended, but the applicant will be invited by the Chair to make a resubmission taking into account the written feedback given within 28 days. The reason is the submission shows strong potential within some of 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 portfolio will be assessed against the appropriate category and level criteria. 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 portfolio on the submitted resubmission application 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 resubmission. 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 Chair, Panel Advisor, Distinctions Staff and Applicant will printed and attached to the application form.

# **DISTINCTIONS: THE PRACTICALITIES**

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

### **YOUR APPLICATION: THE FORM**

- You must complete an application form.
- You may submit more than one application to different categories, but a separate fee and form must be submitted for each one.
- Do not send the application form with your work, unless you are applying with Images for Screen, in which case they can be sent together.

### **YOUR APPLICATION: THE SUBMISSION**

- Make sure your prints are in the correct order, and on the back of each print, you have put your name and the number in the order of display.
- If sending prints, send two copies of your hanging plan and Statement of Intent where applicable OR if sending digital images, make sure your digital files are correctly numbered in the sequence in which they should be displayed.
- Your name must not be shown on the front of prints, or in the digital file name, or on the front of your book submission, unless a commercially produced publication. Failure to adhere to this requirement may result in the disqualification of the application.
- If you are sending your work, make sure that:
  1. It is securely packed. Please do not use any dirty materials to pack your portfolio i.e. towels or used blankets.
  2. It is clearly labelled with your name, email address, category and date of assessment.
  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.

### **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 stick the evidence label provided on the front of your parcel. Ensure you have clearly written your email address on this label, and you will be notified by email when we receive your portfolio.
- The Society 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; let us know if you do not wish them to be returned. If prints or digital files are not to be returned, The Society may retain them for educational purposes, otherwise they will be destroyed.
- If you have requested 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 can bring your prints on the day of the assessment between 9am and 9.45am.
- You may leave your submission at Reception at The Society's Headquarters between 9am and 5pm, Mon to Fri.
- If you wish to collect your submission on the day of the assessment, you should state this on your application 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 go to our website.
- Distinctions are only awarded to members of The Society. 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 application 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 application form for details.
- CDs will not be returned and will be destroyed.
- Personal collection – see above.
- All reasonable care will be taken with your submission, but The Society will not be responsible for any loss or damage whilst in its care or in transit. The Society insures for £75. By submitting your application, you agree to these terms.

## **RETENTION OF PORTFOLIOS**

- The Society reserves the right to retain successful submissions for six months beyond the date of assessment to promote The Society and its Distinctions. There will be no commercial use. 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 application 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.

## **REVIEW PROCEDURE AND DISPUTES**

The decision of the assessment panel is final. However, if a candidate feels that there is any question as to whether the assessment process has been correctly adhered to, they can ask The Society to review their application. All such requests must normally 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 Chair of the Distinctions Advisory Board will initially assess the case, and decide if the complaint merits further review. If that is the case, the Distinctions Advisory Board will appoint a moderator to investigate and report to the Distinctions Advisory Board for a decision. In such cases, the decision of the Distinctions Advisory Board will be final.

## WHERE TO GET ADVICE ON YOUR PORTFOLIO

There are a number of ways in which you can obtain guidance from The Society in working towards applying for one of The Society's Distinctions.

- The website has examples of successful applications.
- Attend a Licentiate and Associate Distinctions Advisory Day – organised throughout the UK and Europe, with web advisory sessions for overseas members. These are led by Panel members who show successful submissions, and comment on potential submissions you bring with you on the day. (see below).
- Attend an Assessment Panel – open to members and non-members who want to watch, whether or not your submission is being assessed. Dates, locations and where to obtain e-tickets are published in The Society's Journal and on the website.
- The Distinctions Department may be able to offer one to one advice with a Panel member. In such circumstances, at an assessment, the Panel member who gives advice will declare their involvement. This may preclude the Panel member from voting or commenting when a portfolio is being assessed. If you consult a number of Panel members, you may jeopardise the assessment of your portfolio.
- You are recommended only to obtain advice from a current Panel member who will be aware of the current processes and standards.
- 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).

### DISTINCTIONS ADVISORY DAYS

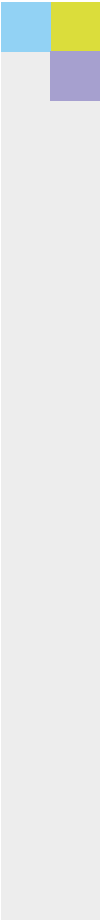
Distinctions Advisory days are educational events and provide an opportunity for members and non-members working towards The Society's Distinctions at Licentiate and Associate level to receive informed advice from members of the appropriate Distinctions Panel. You will see successful submissions and 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 categories.

- The applicant should bring a working portfolio, plus a minimum of 5 spares and maximum of 10.
- 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 a panel member 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 panel member 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 panel member present does not sit on the appropriate panel but has been given written advice by a panel member, which will be read out.

- The panel member 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 Panel members who may view your portfolio differently. Individual Panel members can only give advice and cannot guarantee success.

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- A limited number of separate Fellowship Advisory days are held at venues throughout the UK. Only members working towards a Fellowship application 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)

### **DISTINCTIONS DAY**

- These days are a great opportunity for those who wish to view successful panels up close, and develop their understanding of the Distinctions and its processes.
- This is your opportunity to ask questions and find out more about Distinctions.
- We will explain what the Panel members are looking for and what you need to do and what to avoid.
- On the day we show a number of successful portfolios from all levels and categories.

### **CELEBRATION OF DISTINCTIONS**

- A day where the RPS shows the most recent successful portfolios from all three levels and all categories and formats, including the Fellowship of the year.
- When possible we ask successful applicants to talk about their Portfolios.
- On the day we show a number of successful portfolios from all levels and categories.
- We can also present your certificate at this event, for more details contact [distinctions@rps.org](mailto:distinctions@rps.org)

# What are the requirements for a ARPS Distinction



**LICENTIATE (LRPS)**



**ASSOCIATE (ARPS)**



**FELLOWSHIP (FRPS)**

## ASSOCIATE OF THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

The Distinction 'Associate of The Royal Photographic Society' is the second level of The Society's Distinctions and is a significant step up from the Licentiate. Associates are entitled to use the letters ARPS after their name.

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

Application for Associate is open to everyone. However, Distinctions can only be awarded to members of The Society, and non-member applicants must join The Society 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 retain the Distinction as long as you are a full member of The Society. It is strongly recommended that applicants should hold Licentiate of The Society, although it is not mandatory.

Your submission can be one of the following:

- 15 prints (if prints are mounted, more than one image per mount is permitted but they only count as one of the 15 prints).
- 15 JPEG images for screen.
- A book containing a minimum of 30 key images (a minimum of two copies must be supplied).
- 15 transparencies (any format is acceptable, but please advise the Distinctions department before submission to allow appropriate viewing).
- Submissions cannot be a mix of the above.
- Your application will be accompanied by a Statement of Intent, outlining in a maximum of 150 words\*, the purpose, objective or intent of the work.
- A word count must be included below the statement. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in disqualification and loss of your application fee.

\*Some categories have requirements as to additional written information required. For details of these, see the information on specific categories.

**Multimedia** and **Science** applications have their own specific requirements for applicants, listed in detail under their own category.

**Research, Education and Application of Photography** applications will normally be a written paper. Applications relating to this, and to **Imaging Science Qualifications**, are considered in the pages for the appropriate category. (5h) or (6b)

To be awarded Associate membership of The Society, you will need to show evidence of creative ability and a high technical standard appropriate to your application, together with a comprehensive knowledge and ability in your discipline. It is essential that a range of skills are demonstrated within your application.



All applications at Associate level will be assessed against the following criteria as well as those criteria specific to the category in which you choose to submit (detailed under their own headings):

- The submission should clearly meet the objectives outlined in your statement of intent.
- Photographic style should be consistent, illustrating mood and emotion as appropriate, although with some categories this will be represented by technical excellence (e.g. Medical, Forensic, Scientific).
- The submission should show clear evidence of the photographer's input and originality in approach.
- A high standard of presentation is expected.
- Images should be appropriately mounted, and free from marks, blemishes and artefacts.
- A high level of understanding of composition, lighting and viewpoints must be demonstrated, with a visual balance (sequence) and style appropriate to the subject.
- Personal engagement with the subject should be evident where appropriate.
- Images contained in a successful Licentiate application cannot be included in an application for Associate application.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ASSOCIATE APPLICATION WITH PRINTS**

### **MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS**

- The application must be a submission of 15 prints.
- Framed images are not permitted.
- Your submission can be displayed in a maximum of three rows.
- 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 the application fee).
- Two copies of the portfolio must be printed in sequence on A4 paper, with your full name and date of assessment on the front. Please use a small font (e.g. 10).
- Your application will be accompanied by a Statement of Intent, outlining in a maximum of 150 words\*, the purpose, objective or intent of the work.
- A word count must be included below the statement. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in disqualification and loss of your application fee.

### **ADVISORY**

- It is normal for prints to be mounted in matte mounts. Unmounted prints can be accepted but applicants should stiffen their images with thin card to ensure they are presented to a high standard.
- More than one image may be displayed in one print or mount but will only count as one of the 15 prints.
- The size of images including mounts submitted is not restricted but the following points are worth considering;
  - There is a maximum of three display rails.
  - The maximum height between the display rails is 23" (585mm).
  - The maximum length of the display area is 15ft (4.6m).
  - Image sizes are normally between 10"x8" (254mm x 204mm) and 20"x16" (508mm x 408mm).
  - If you are considering submitting images greater than the height between display rails, you must contact the Distinctions department before submitting your portfolio.
- 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 a consistent and harmonious presentation.

- Print submissions 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, Fenton House, 122 Wells Road, Bath, BA2 3AH**, or brought in person on the day if you are attending the assessment.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ASSOCIATE APPLICATION WITH IMAGES FOR SCREEN (IFS)**

### **MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS**

- The application must be a portfolio of 15 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 3840 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 15.
- 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 portfolio must be printed in sequence on A4 paper, with your full name and date of assessment on the front. Please use a small font (e.g. 10).
- Your application will be accompanied by a Statement of Intent, outlining in a maximum of 150 words\*, the purpose, objective or intent of the work.
- A word count must be included below the statement. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in disqualification and loss of your application fee.

### **ADVISORY**

- Give consideration to the sequence of your portfolio images, they will be viewed in the numeric order (01 to 15) 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 must be sent on a USB stick/CD/DVD by post to **Mr Ben Fox ARPS, The Distinctions Department, The Royal Photographic Society, Fenton House, 122 Wells Road, Bath, BA2 3AH**. The Distinctions department will confirm by email the receipt of your submission.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ASSOCIATE APPLICATION WITH TRANSPARENCIES**

### **MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS**

- The application must be a portfolio of 15 transparencies.
- Transparencies should be 35mm or 6cm x 6cm for projection. Larger transparencies will be viewed on a light box. Your application must all be of the same format.
- Each transparency should be marked with your name and a number to indicate the viewing order.  
Place a spot on the bottom left corner of the mount as viewed on a light box.
- Your images will be displayed in the order you number.

- Two copies of the portfolio must be printed in sequence on A4 paper, with your full name and date of assessment on the front. Please use a small font (e.g. 10).
- Your application will be accompanied by a Statement of Intent, outlining in a maximum of 150 words\*, the purpose, objective or intent of the work.
- A word count must be included below the statement. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in disqualification and loss of your application fee.

#### **ADVISORY**

- Give consideration to the sequence of your portfolio images, they will be viewed in the order you number your images. The sequence of the images is part of the assessment criteria.

Your submission must be forwarded to The Distinctions Department by post to **The Distinctions Department, The Royal Photographic Society, Fenton House, 122 Wells Road, Bath, BA2 3AH.**

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ASSOCIATE APPLICATION WITH BOOKS**

### **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 30 key images.
- Each key image must occupy a significant area of the page.
- All key images must be to Associate 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.
- Your application will be accompanied by a Statement of Intent, outlining in a maximum of 150 words\*, the purpose, objective or intent of the work.
- A word count must be included below the statement. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in disqualification and loss of your application fee.

#### **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 books must be forwarded to **The Distinctions Department, The Royal Photographic Society, Fenton House, 122 Wells Road, Bath, BA2 3AH.**

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

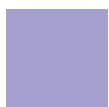
# What are the requirements for the individual categories



**LICENTIATE (LRPS)**



**ASSOCIATE (ARPS)**



**FELLOWSHIP (FRPS)**

## APPLIED PHOTOGRAPHY

Applied photography can be defined as photography which has a specific end purpose or use. This by definition includes all professional photography as well as many other disciplines such as; documentary, portraiture, theatrical, record, architectural, wedding, visual journalism, astronomy and palaeontology.

All applications for the Associate and Fellowship Distinctions of The Society will be assessed against the criteria set out in the Associate and Fellowship outline document. The following criteria are in addition to, not instead of, those criteria.

- An applicant may include more than one discipline in their submission but each must be relevant to this category. The submission however must still retain a cohesive and balanced appearance.
- An application must demonstrate a range of photographic ability even if the chosen discipline is of a narrow nature.
- The Statement of Intent must clearly set out the purpose and intended end use of your photography. Do not include technical data or problems surmounted. If work has been published then copies of the publication can be submitted as supporting evidence.
- Your submission should demonstrate that you have applied imaginative and visual skill to your photography where applicable.

Assessment of your application will include whether it meets the criteria set out in your Statement of Intent, and whether the technical quality is appropriate to the purpose of the photography.

# CONCEPTUAL AND CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY

The Conceptual and Contemporary category considers applications which explore, define, illustrate or evaluate issues through photographic images.

All applications for the Associate and Fellowship Distinctions of The Society will be assessed against the criteria set out in the Associate and Fellowship outline document. The following criteria are in addition to, not instead of, those criteria.

- Your submission will be about what you want your images to say on a topic, rather than what that topic actually is.
- Submissions will be in the form of a body of work based on a theme, project or concept that really interests or concerns you. Typical themes are those that explore issues of self, society, environment, art and culture.
- Applications in the Conceptual and Contemporary category can be by way of an exhibition or installation where photography is the prominent component. If an applicant wishes their work to be assessed in situ this can be arranged through the Distinctions department. There are likely to be additional costs involved and the applicant will be expected to cover these. Alternative approaches to a submission will be considered by The Society, providing the evidence submitted is consistent with the quality required for other categories. Applicants wishing to submit in this way should contact the Distinctions Manager in the first instance with details of their proposed submission.
- The Conceptual and Contemporary category wishes to encompass all photographic art forms and is open to alternative submissions. Where your submission is of an alternative format, please contact the Distinctions Manager to arrange this.
- The Conceptual and Contemporary category allows the applicant to extend their Statement of Intent to a **maximum** of 300 words. A word count must be included below the statement.
- The assessment will include the strength of the idea, the appropriateness of expression and how well the images articulate the message. Portfolios will have intellectual content, be visually engaging and provide evidence of personal practice and commitment.

The assessment of your application will consider how the images relate to the Statement of Intent in both content and meaning. The assessors will consider the images and their arrangement in the totality of the photographic artwork submitted. Assessment will include the interpretation and meaning of the submission as well as the quality and appropriateness of the photographic technique. Successful submissions will be required to show technical quality that is fit for purpose as it applies to all Associate and Fellowship categories.

## CREATIVE PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHY

The Creative Production category is intended to recognise technical and imaginative skills in the post-production of still imagery through digital or analogue processing. Submissions will be from applicants working in graphic and illustrative arts and this is to be encouraged in so far as the application is principally based on photographic imagery.

- Applicants will be expected to provide a Statement of Intent for each final image, outlining in a maximum of 150 words, the purpose, objective or intent of the work. A word count should be included below the statement. **\*\*Failure to comply with this requirement may result in disqualification and loss of your application fee.**
- An application will be assessed principally on the process to the final images.
- Each stage of the production of each image should be fully set out. For this purpose mixed media is permissible.
- The application will demonstrate an extensive range of skills rather than one technique repeated.
- It is not required that the applicant is the author of the photography used. The applicant must ensure that all matters of copyright are adhered to and any relevant permissions are obtained.\*\*
- Submissions may be prints or Images for screen (ARPS only).
- In this category, high technical skills are expected appropriate to the purpose specified in the detailed Statement of Intent.
- It follows that an application in this category may be a collection of images rather than a cohesive body of work.

Assessment of your application will include whether it meets the criteria set out in your statement of intent, and whether the techniques used are appropriate and suitably controlled.

**\*\*If your application is based solely on your own photographic images, a submission in the Creative Digital category will be more appropriate.**

# FILM

The RPS distinctions in film recognise achievement in film production from key competencies at Licentiate level, advanced conceptual and technical skills at Associate level and at Fellowship level excellence in, and equating to, the highest industry, professional and artistic standards.

The distinctions will support and encourage the development and production of high quality, innovative and challenging moving image production, from concept through cinematography, postproduction and presentation.

The distinction will be aimed at global film making, across diverse cultural traditional and contemporary practices.

## LICENTIATE

Will normally be awarded for a significant (or entire) contribution to a portfolio of short films. There is no specific running time for work at this level, however a guideline range for a narrative film would normally be from a 90 seconds to 5 minutes.

Any genre will be considered: documentary, drama, action, comedy, Sci-Fi, music video, as well as cinematographically orientated animation (stop frame for example) and the artist video and gallery installation form.

At this level of filmmaking the emphasis and assessment criteria will include the demonstration of basic competencies in combining vision, sound and story/concept:

- Camera skills
- Exposure
- Angle
- Story telling
- Sound
- Editing

Direct entry equivalent will be BTEC level 3, A level.

## ASSOCIATE

The ARPS will be awarded for the achievement of high quality film making demonstrated in the film forms intended for cinema, TV, online, or gallery audiences and contexts.

The award will made for high concept cinematography, innovation, command of the medium, coherence of story, (and/or innovation in the story telling approach) camera movement, framing and composition. The achievement can be the works as a whole – where entirely created by the auteur (as in the very short film form or artists video) or for a recognisable contribution to a film or moving image piece – primarily this will be a recognition of cinematography – as well as cinematographically orientated animation (stop frame for example).

The award will be based on the submission of a portfolio of normally of 4 films including any scripts, treatments and storyboards. The duration of these films can be from 90 seconds to 20 minutes for cinematic contexts and as appropriate in experimental and installation work.



Direct application – Equivalent to a recognisable and considerable contribution to an undergraduate film at the upper second (2.1) degree classification.

## **FELLOWSHIP**

The fellowship will be awarded for filmic work of the highest order.

It will recognise excellence in film making and cinematography judged on the basis the convergence of distinctive stylistic, creative and technical control – innovation, lens selection, viewpoint, camera movement, lighting, framing and composition.

The achievement can be based on the works as a whole – where entirely created by the auteur (as in the short film form or artists video) or for a recognisable contribution to films or moving image pieces (primarily this will be a recognition of cinematography) as well as cinematographically orientated animation (stop frame for example).

The award will be based a submission of a portfolio of normally of 6 films including any scripts, treatments and storyboards. The duration of these films can be from 90 seconds to 20 minutes for cinematic contexts and as appropriate in experimental and installation work.

Direct application – Equivalent to recognisable and considerable contribution to films achieving awards and critical acclaim in international level festivals and/or gallery contexts.

## FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY

Submissions in this category will consist of photography produced to fulfil the creative vision of the photographer in expressing and sharing perceptions or emotions.

All applications for the Associate and Fellowship Distinctions of The Society will be assessed against the criteria set out in the Associate and Fellowship outline document. The following criteria are in addition to, not instead of, those criteria.

- Images can be produced either solely in the camera, or may be subsequently creatively altered by the photographer.
- Each image in the submission may be based on one or more original photographic images.
- The applicant must own the copyright to, and be the creator of, all the photographic elements in the images submitted. The Society reserves the right to view the original files.
- There is no restriction on the subject matter or techniques used. However, your portfolio should present a cohesive visual statement on your chosen subject or subjects, communicating a clear personal vision or style, and sharing a sense of design, emotion, mood or meaning which encourages the viewer to look beyond the subject.
- Submissions may be based on a single or a small number of themes or techniques, although this is not essential.
- Assessment of your application will include whether it meets the criteria set out in your statement of intent, and whether the techniques used are appropriate and suitably controlled.

Assessment of your application will include whether it meets the criteria set out in your statement of intent, and whether the techniques used are appropriate and suitably controlled.

# MULTIMEDIA

The Multimedia category recognises media content in a combination which can include still images, video, audio, graphics and text, and the integration of two or more of these in an application. It encompasses audiovisual, moving image and multimedia applications.

All applications for the Licentiate, Associate and Fellowship Distinctions of The Society will be assessed against the general criteria set out in the appropriate outline documents. The following criteria are in addition to, not instead of, those criteria.

- In Multimedia applications for all levels of Distinction, the submission must meet the required standard in the following:
  - Photography
  - Production – including editing and storyline
  - Sound quality
- A commentary is not necessary, as long as the theme or narrative is clear. Any script and music should complement the photography.
- Joint applications are not acceptable.
- Where a submission includes collaborative work, the extent of any collaboration should be outlined, and will be part of the assessment process.
- Under no circumstances can the applicant's name be displayed. (Failure to comply with this requirement will result in immediate disqualification and loss of application fee)

## DURATION

- The durations below are guidelines only and apply to the total length of the submission, not to individual sequences. We do not specify exact times; variations, either shorter or longer, may be accepted after consultation with the Distinctions Department
  - Licentiate: between 8 and 12 minutes
  - Associate: between 12 and 18 minutes
  - Fellowship: between 18 and 25 minutes
- Credit will be given for variety of technique. It may require more than one sequence within the overall duration to demonstrate sufficient variety.

## ASSESSMENT

In considering the application, the Panel will consider three aspects equally.


These are:
 

- Photography
- Sound
- Concept, production and editing

The application will be required to meet the standards in all aspects

## THIRD PARTY IMAGES

Photography must consist of no more than 30% third party images – this applies to each element of a submission.



Third party images will be accepted where they are deemed necessary to support a theme, to suggest a new interpretation of previous work or to creatively rework content to bring a different value to original photography. Full attribution and copyright consent must be provided for all third party images and music.



### **LICENTIATE**

To be awarded Licentiate of The Society, you will need to show variety in approach and technique with evidence of creative ability and a high technical standard in all aspects of your application. It is essential that a range of skills are demonstrated within your application.



### **ASSOCIATE**

To be awarded Associate of The Society, you will need to show evidence of creative ability and high technical standards in image quality, sound recording, mixing and editing, combined with a strong theme or narrative, together with a comprehensive knowledge and ability in your discipline.

- It is essential that a range of skills are demonstrated within your application.
- A high level of understanding of composition, lighting and viewpoints must be demonstrated, with a visual progression and style appropriate to the subject.
- Personal engagement with the subject should be evident where appropriate.
- Your application should be accompanied by two copies of a Statement of Intent, outlining in no more than 150 words, the purpose, objective or intent of the work. This should indicate the target audience and concisely put the work into a meaningful context. A word count must be included below the statement.



### **FELLOWSHIP**

To be awarded Fellowship of The Society, you will need to show outstanding ability and/or originality and creativity, combined with excellence in all technical areas.

- The combined product will be at a significantly higher level than the individual components.
- A wide range of skills are demonstrated within your application.
- Personal engagement with the subject should be evident where appropriate.
- Your application should be accompanied by two copies of a Statement of Intent, outlining in no more than 150 words, the purpose, objective or intent of the work. This should indicate the target audience and concisely put the work into a meaningful context. A word count must be included below the statement.

# NATURAL HISTORY PHOTOGRAPHY

The Natural History category recognises all branches of natural history, including zoology, botany and meteorology.

All applications for the Associate and Fellowship Distinctions of The Society will be assessed against the criteria set out in the Associate and Fellowship outline document. The following criteria are in addition to, not instead of, those criteria.

Digital manipulation by software such as Photoshop is allowed provided the Natural History integrity (authenticity) is not affected, removal of minor distractions or blemishes are allowed. After the assessment applicants may be contacted to verify the authenticity of the original image file.

- Your submission should show clear evidence of a genuine knowledge and understanding of your subject.
- The images should accurately depict the subject.
- Each image in your submission must be correctly identified and listed in addition to your statement of intent.
- The listing should be in order of presentation and include both common and scientific names where appropriate.
- The welfare of the subject must come before photography and any action by the photographer or third party that puts the welfare of the subject at risk is unacceptable.
- In general, subjects should be free and unrestricted, in a natural or adopted habitat. Captive specimens or species are generally not acceptable. It is recognised that this will not be the case in all disciplines and should your portfolio contain images taken under controlled conditions you are required to contact the Distinctions department via e-mail [distinctions@rps.org](mailto:distinctions@rps.org)

The use of a limited number of images captured by the use of focus stacking will be permissible in a Natural History application. However, if focus stacking is used for images that make up a complete, or substantial part of, an application, it should be submitted in the Applied category.


In case of close-ups and extreme close-ups – macrophotographs and photomicrographs (with focus stacking or without) final image magnification must be listed in addition to your statement of intent and species list. The applicant clearly needs to indicate with an arrow to show the right way up for the print presentation.

Assessment of your application will include whether it meets the criteria set out in your statement of intent, and whether the techniques used are appropriate and suitably controlled.

Important information on Commercial or third party set ups

- Associate applications can have a maximum of four images taken in commercially/ third party set up conditions. These images must be listed on the species list.
- Fellowship applications must not include any commercially/ third party set up images.

Commercial/ third party set ups are deemed to be those where any wildlife subject is baited, trapped, lured or otherwise encouraged to a specific area by someone other than the photographer.



Field craft is an important element of natural history photography and it is therefore desirable for the images in an application to wholly reflect the photographers own work and effort.

Failing to declare images that are commercial/third party set ups, will result is your application being rejected.

# RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND APPLICATION OF PHOTOGRAPHY

This category looks at how photography is considered, how its history is recorded and preserved, how photography is taught and how it is understood in its own terms and as part of wider visual and artistic culture.

Applications are usually of a written and scholarly nature. The following covers most of what the Panel would expect to see:

- Research on an individual photographer, school or genre.
- Photographic education.
- Aspects of the history of photography.
- The conservation and restoration of photographs and photographic material.
- Curatorial accomplishments.
- New thinking about photography and photographic theory.

## REQUIREMENTS – GENERAL

In addition to the particular requirements for Licentiate, Associate and Fellowship, the panel will also assess the following:

- Context and analysis.
- Quality of writing.
- Presentation, References and Bibliography.
- Research, and analysis and interpretation.
- Content.
- Arguments and Conclusions.
- Any other relevant issues.
- Originality (applies to Associate and Fellowship applications only).

Irrespective of subject matter, in addition to the general requirements noted above, the panel will assess the following:

## LICENTIATE

- Clear and concise standard of writing.
- A high standard of technical presentation.
- Evidence of thorough research, appropriately referenced, to include a bibliography.
- Awareness of relevant current theory and context.
- Developed, structured and coherent arguments.
- Contribution to the understanding of photography.

## ASSOCIATE

- Clear, focused and fluent standard of writing appropriate to specialists and non-specialists in the field.
- A high standard of technical presentation.
- Evidence of thorough and wide ranging research, appropriately referenced, to include a bibliography.
- Understanding of relevant current theory and context, divergent points of view are represented and evaluated.
- Developed, structured and coherent arguments, with an evidenced clear point of view.
- Contribution (some original) to the understanding of photography.

## **FELLOWSHIP**

- Clear, focused, fluent and of the highest standard of writing, detailed without repetition appropriate to specialists and non-specialists in the field.
- An excellent standard of technical presentation.
- Evidence of thorough and wide ranging research, engaging with diverse sources and points of view, appropriately referenced, to include a bibliography.
- Thorough understanding and evaluation of relevant current theory and context, divergent points of view are represented showing a critical engagement with the subject.
- Developed, structured and coherent arguments that are original and sustained throughout, supported by appropriate evidence.
- Original contribution to the understanding of photography.

## **PROCEDURE OF LICENTIATE, ASSOCIATE AND FELLOWSHIP**

- Potential candidates are expected to submit an application form along with a synopsis of approximately 500 words, summarising the intended work. At this stage, the Panel will comment and provide advice on your proposed submission. Subsequently two examples of the completed work will be required.
- An application may be submitted for work that already exists, e.g. a thesis, dissertation, exhibition, website or book. In this case, the Panel reserves the right to request additional information providing details of the methodology, research sources, assessment and the potential merits of the work. Such a report will be two to three thousand words long, and may carry illustrations.
- In exceptional circumstances, an applicant in this category may apply direct for Fellowship, without being an Associate of The Society. Applicants wishing to apply using this route must contact the Distinctions Manager at [distinctions@rps.org](mailto:distinctions@rps.org), who will seek the approval of the Panel Chair and Distinctions Advisory Board. It is recommended however, that applicants should become an Associate before applying for Fellowship.

## **ADVICE**

The Panel will consider a proposal from a potential applicant (member or non-member) and give an opinion as to its suitability for an application. Contact the Distinctions Manager with a short outline of your proposal, and you will receive a brief opinion from the Panel – please note that opinions are given without prejudice.



## 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 imaging, medical imaging, medical photography or other related discipline by the submission of a portfolio of prints, transparencies or Images for screen (ARPS only).

All applications for the Associate and Fellowship Distinctions of The Society will be assessed against the criteria set out in the Associate and Fellowship outline document. The following criteria are in addition to, not instead of, those criteria.

- The Statement of Intent should provide a clear explanation of the purpose, objectives or intent of the images, and should also clearly indicate whether they were entirely undertaken and produced by the applicant or were a collective effort. Any contribution from others must be clearly stated.
- Separately, full information on the technical details of each image should be provided that includes details of sample preparation (where appropriate) and any image manipulation or image processing that has been applied. Any manipulation must not alter the authenticity of what is being presented. Where appropriate, magnification or scale of reproduction should be included.
- Each image must be numbered, correctly orientated (by indicating top and bottom on the reverse side if in print format) and correctly identified.
- Submissions will be assessed against criteria appropriate to the particular nature of the material submitted as well as the general criteria applicable to all categories. In particular, your images will be assessed against the criteria in your Statement of Intent and must be of the highest technical quality and level of technical skill.
- Applications at Associate level must show a range of skills even if in a narrow discipline; at Fellowship level there must be a demonstration of distinguished ability in the chosen field.
- In exceptional circumstances, an applicant in this category may apply direct for Fellowship, without being an Associate of The Society. Applicants wishing to apply using this route must contact the Distinctions Manager at [distinctions@rps.org](mailto:distinctions@rps.org), who will seek the approval of the Panel Chair and Distinctions Advisory Board. It is recommended however, that applicants should become an Associate before applying for Fellowship.

Assessment of your application will include whether it meets the criteria set out in your Statement of Intent, and whether the techniques used are appropriate and suitably controlled.

# TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY

Applications have no geographical limitations and should express the feeling of a time and place, portraying a land, its people or culture.

All applications for the Associate and Fellowship Distinctions of The Society will be assessed against the criteria set out in the Associate and Fellowship outline document. The following criteria are in addition to, not instead of, those criteria.

- Your submission should show clear evidence of a genuine knowledge and understanding of your theme.
- The theme could, for instance, relate to a journey, to aspects of a particular place – landscapes, seascapes or architecture of a region, to an event or activity carried out in a place, or to people making up a community.
- The images should accurately depict the theme.
- The Statement of Intent should describe the theme being illustrated and particular important aspects of it.
- There should be a strong content of related, but varied pictures to match the statement.
- Care should be taken to avoid stereotyped images.
- Image manipulation that significantly alters the truth of the situation or event is not permitted.
- The use of some images recorded using High Dynamic Range (HDR) photography will be acceptable for an application in the Travel category provided the use of such a method does not alter the truth of the original scene. However, if High Dynamic Range (HDR) photography is used for images that make up a complete or substantial part of a submission, it should be entered in the Applied category.

Assessment of your application will include whether it meets the criteria set out in your statement of intent, and whether the techniques used are appropriate and suitably controlled.

Please note a Associate Travel Guide is available from The RPS online shop.

# How to contact and find us



**LICENTIATE (LRPS)**



**ASSOCIATE (ARPS)**



**FELLOWSHIP (FRPS)**

# CONTACT DETAILS

## THE DISTINCTIONS DEPARTMENT

The RPS, Fenton House, 122 Wells Road, Bath BA2 3AH, UK

t +44 (0)1225 325733 f +44 (0) 1225 448688

[www.rps.org](http://www.rps.org)

[twitter.com/The\\_RPS](https://twitter.com/The_RPS)

[facebook.com/royalphotographicsociety](https://facebook.com/royalphotographicsociety)

For general Distinction enquires please email [distinctions@rps.org](mailto:distinctions@rps.org)

For individual Distinction enquires please email either Licentiate [lrps@rps.org](mailto:lrps@rps.org), Associate [arps@rps.org](mailto:arps@rps.org),  
or Fellowship [frps@rps.org](mailto:frps@rps.org)

You will be most welcome to visit Fenton House. We are open weekdays from 9am to 5pm, and look forward to seeing you. Please note, there is no parking at The Society's offices but on-street parking can be found on the main road or on streets to the left.

Link to [Google Maps](#)

