

# A GUIDE ON HOW TO APPLY

## Distinctions and Qualifications Guidelines



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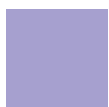
# What are Distinctions and how do I apply



**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.

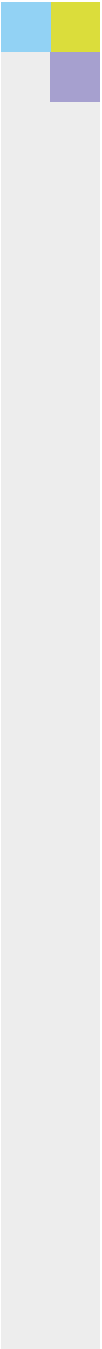
## LICENTIATE

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 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.

#### **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 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.

## **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 be 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

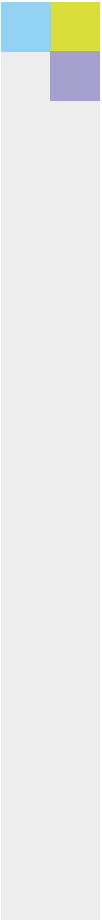
Distinctions Advisory days are educational events and provide an opportunity for members and non-members working towards The Society's Distinctions at Licentiate and Associate level to receive informed advice from members of the appropriate Distinctions Panel. You will see successful submissions and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

- 
- 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 LRPS Distinction



**LICENTIATE (LRPS)**



**ASSOCIATE (ARPS)**



**FELLOWSHIP (FRPS)**

# LICENTiate OF THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

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

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

Application for Licentiate is open to everyone. However, Distinctions can only be awarded to members of The Society; 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 use the Distinction as long as you are a member of The Society.

Your submission can be one of the following:

- 10 prints (if prints are mounted, then more than one image per mount is permitted, but only counts as one of the ten).
- 10 JPEG images for screen.
- A book containing a minimum of 20 key images.
- 10 transparencies (any format is acceptable, but please advise the Distinctions department before submission to allow appropriate viewing).
- A **Multimedia** application can also be submitted for Licentiate membership. This includes the various elements of audiovisual, moving image and multimedia. For specific requirements, see the Multimedia category (5f).
- Applications cannot be a mix of the above.

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

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

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

## **CAMERA WORK AND TECHNICAL QUALITY:**

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



- Correct colour **rendition/management** for the image.
- An absence of **processing faults or digital defects**.

#### **VISUAL AWARENESS:**

- You need to show a good understanding of **how to use** light in photography. The correct choice of source and direction, time of day (if natural) and intensity of light can greatly enhance an image. Correct use of light can create a mood or atmosphere and add impact to an image.
- **Composition and design** brings all the visual elements together. Effective composition directs the viewers' attention and prompts them to look where the creator intended.
- Correct choice of **viewpoint** and awareness of inappropriate **backgrounds and distractions**.
- Appropriate use of **colour/monochrome** medium.
- Appropriate use of **manipulation or post-production techniques**. It is not a requirement to include manipulated images but if you choose to do so it should add value to the image and any post-production work must be technically appropriate.

#### **COMMUNICATION:**

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

#### **OVERALL IMPRESSION:**

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

Your portfolio may 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 A LICENTIATE APPLICATION WITH PRINTS**

### **MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS**

- The application must be a portfolio of 10 prints.
- Framed images are not permitted.
- Your portfolio can be displayed in one, two or three rows but not more.
- Under no circumstances can the applicant's name be displayed on the front of the prints. (Failure to comply with this requirement will result in immediate disqualification and loss of application fee).
- Two copies of the sequence must be printed on A4 paper, not mounted.

## ADVISORY

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

Your submission may be forwarded 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 A LICENTIATE APPLICATION WITH IMAGES FOR SCREEN (IFS)

### MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- The application must be a portfolio of 10 digital images.
- The image data must be in RGB mode (even for monochrome images) and in the sRGB colour space, NOT CMYK.
- The current display dimensions are either 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 10.
- The applicant's name must not be included in the file name or displayed with the image. (Failure to comply with this requirement will result in disqualification and loss of the application fee).
- Two copies of the 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).

### ADVISORY

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

Your submission may be sent on a USB stick/CD/DVD by post to **Mr Simon Vercoe LRPS, 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 A LICENTIATE APPLICATION WITH TRANSPARENCIES**

### **MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS**

- The application must be a portfolio of 10 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).

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

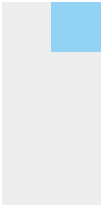
## **REQUIREMENTS FOR A LICENTIATE APPLICATION WITH BOOKS**

### **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 20 key images.
- Each key image must occupy a significant area of the page.
- All key images must be to Licentiate standard.
- Where there is joint authorship in any aspect of the production of the book, the applicant must state clearly who was responsible for which elements.

### **ADVISORY**

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



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

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

# 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](#)

