

THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

# RESEARCH

DISTINCTIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS GUIDELINES

DP004  
10/05/2019

## RESEARCH

**This category encompasses research in the arts & sciences of photography. It also 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 predominantly scholarly nature. The following covers most of what the Panel would expect to see:

- Research in all its aspects encompassing the arts & sciences of photography reflecting the mission statement of The Society.
- 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.

## STANDARDS

In general, an ARPS will have parallels with a bachelors award at 2.1 or above or a credit or above at a taught masters. A research masters (MPhil or equivalent) and above with a distinctive photography/imaging element in the research could lead to a FRPS. Appropriate evidence should be submitted to the panel.

## 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.

## 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.
- A candidate with a successful PhD in an appropriate topic from a recognized university need only submit a ca.500 abstract along with the name of the university and any collaborating institution, names of supervisors and names of external examiners. As most PhD theses are now in the public domain, the link to that is advisory but will not be essential to the submission.

## 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. An application must be submitted in electronic form along with one hard copy.
- Applicants must supply a PDF version of their submission with their hard copies. If you are unable to provide a PDF version, please contact the Distinctions Manager Andy Moore [andy@rps.org](mailto:andy@rps.org)
- 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 [andy@rps.org](mailto:andy@rps.org), who will seek the approval of the Panel Chair. They will be expected to demonstrate their ability to undertake research at research masters or higher. These should be PDF files (not word/pages or design packages) below 20mb in size for easy transmission. 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 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.