



The
Royal
Photographic
Society

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen. Incorporated by Royal Charter

A STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO HELP
YOU APPLY FOR A SOCIETY DISTINCTION

DISTINCTIONS HANDBOOK

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SECTION A: FOR ALL APPLICANTS

A1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Welcome to the Distinctions of The Royal Photographic Society!

The Royal Photographic Society is a unique organisation, not only for its long history - founded in 1853 to 'promote the art and science of photography' this has remained its mission up to the present day - but also because it embraces all aspects and genres of photography. This also applies to its Distinctions - whatever your particular photographic interest, you will find it here.

Whatever stage you have reached in your photography, relative beginner or experienced professional, the Distinctions of The Royal Photographic Society have something to offer, a focus and goal towards which you can work.

The one requirement for becoming a member of The Royal Photographic Society is an interest in photography. You may be amateur or professional, starting out with your first camera, or already possess a wealth of experience - it doesn't matter, all are welcome.

However, to be awarded one of The Society's prestigious Distinctions - Licentiate, Associateship and Fellowship - you need to prove your abilities as a photographer. You can do this either by submitting a portfolio of work or by submitting proof of a photographic qualification recognised by The Society which you have already achieved. (For further details see Section F: Exemptions and Accreditations)

The Society also awards Imaging Scientist Qualifications which provide a structure leading to vocational qualifications for those engaged in a professional career in imaging science. You may be working in a relatively narrow specialisation, but your achievements will require a range of professional skills. When you gain an Imaging Scientist Qualification, you will also receive a Society Distinction. (For further details see final section: Qualifications)

This Handbook is packed with information about how to apply, what the assessors are looking for and tips to guide you towards a successful submission. However, don't panic! While it is **essential** to read all the relevant information for whichever Distinction you are aiming at, you do not have to read every section:

DISTINCTION FOR WHICH YOU ARE APPLYING

Licentiate
Associateship
Fellowship

SECTIONS YOU SHOULD READ

Essential	Recommended
A,B,G	H
A,C,E,G	H
A, D,E,G	H

Everyone involved in the Distinctions wants you to be successful and it is hoped that this Handbook will help you to achieve that aim. Whatever the final outcome, we want you to feel that you have progressed in your photography and learnt from the process, maybe even making some new friends along the way. Most importantly of all, however, we want you to enjoy the whole experience.

A2 WHERE DO I START?

Most people progress through the levels of Distinction starting with the Licentiate, moving on to the Associateship and finally to the Fellowship.

However, you can apply straight for the Associateship without being a Licentiate member, although this is not recommended unless you have considerable photographic experience.

A3 TYPES OF APPLICATION

The Distinctions of The Royal Photographic Society cover all aspects of photography, so whatever your specific area of photographic experience or expertise, you can be confident that it will be assessed by a Panel of suitably qualified members with specialist knowledge who are recognised as experts in that field. Your application will normally be submitted in one of the following ways:

- A** Stills Photography (i.e. prints, or slides or images on CD/uploaded to FTP site [overseas applicants only] or a book)
- or B** Time Based Media
- or C** Research, Education and Application of Photography
- or D** By Exemption (if you already have a photographic qualification)

A4 LEVELS OF DISTINCTION

THE THREE LEVELS OF DISTINCTION ARE:

Licentiate (LRPS): This is usually the starting point. You need to show that you have good technical skill as well as the visual ability to compose and control your work as a means of communication.

Associate (ARPS): At this level, you need to show evidence of creative ability, a high standard of technical competence and a complete, expert, comprehensive knowledge of your discipline. Your work should be consistent and also make a statement of a strong personal style. A high standard of presentation is expected.

Fellowship (FRPS): The highest level of Distinction, the Fellowship is awarded for excellence and evidence of distinguished ability. Excellence of technical quality is essential, but if your work is interpretive, then the quality should be appropriate to the subject and intent. At this level, it is expected that you will show individuality, with a strong personal input and an element of originality or freshness in your approach.

When you are awarded a Distinction, you are entitled to use the letters LRPS, ARPS or FRPS after your name and you will receive a certificate under the Seal of The Society and signed by the President.

A5 WHO MAY APPLY?

LICENTIATESHIP AND ASSOCIATESHIP: Open to all - anyone, whether you are a member of The Society or not, may apply. (Non-members - see section A6 below)

FELLOWSHIP: Only Associates of The Royal Photographic Society and Fellows of the British Institute of Professional Photography (BIPP) may apply.

A6 NON-MEMBER APPLICATIONS

We welcome applications from non-members for both the Licentiate and the Associate. When submitting, you must be sure to complete the non-member section on the application form and include the appropriate membership subscription. If you are successful with your Distinction application, your membership will be processed automatically as it is necessary to be a member of The Society before a Distinction can be awarded.

If you are not successful, you have the choice of whether or not you join The Society. Otherwise your application is treated in exactly the same way as a member's and you will still receive the same guidance and advice.

A7 BEFORE YOU APPLY - WHERE TO SEEK ADVICE

In order to avoid disappointment, before you apply for a Distinction it is important that you understand the standard required and get an idea of where your own work fits in. There are several ways of doing this:

- A** The first and most important thing you should do is to read the relevant sections of this Handbook which will give you all the requirements as well as tips and a great deal of useful information to guide you towards a successful submission.
N.B. Criteria at the earlier levels apply equally as one progresses.
- B** Download an interactive CD from the website - full of helpful information, examples of successful portfolios, opportunities to test your knowledge and experiment choosing and laying out a portfolio. At present this is only available for LRPS, but CDs are currently being prepared for ARPS in the different categories. Contact the Distinctions Department for latest details.
- C** Attend one of the Distinctions Advisory Days which are organised around the UK. These are led by Panel members who will show successful examples and comment on any work you bring with you on the day. See Section H3.3 Distinctions Advisory Days for further details.
- D** Attend an Assessment Panel meeting for Licentiate or Associate: open to both members and non-members who want to watch, whether or not your own work is being assessed. The dates, locations and where to obtain tickets are published in The Royal Photographic Society Journal and on the website - www.rps.org See Section H3.1 for further details of what happens on the day.
- E** See examples of successful stills photography submissions published in The Royal Photographic Society Journal and also on the website.
- F** Attend local Regional or Group meetings where successful portfolios are shown - details in the programme of events published on the website, in Regional and Group Newsletters and in The RPS Journal.
- G** When you become a member of The Society you can upload your images for advice from a Panel member using our FTP site. Full details of how to do this can be found on the Distinctions Introduction page on the website

While Panel members are happy to give advice, you should not expect them to choose your portfolio for you. This must be your decision.

NOTE: Panel Members who give 'one to one' advice other than at an official advisory day, may not vote on the application at the adjudication. It follows that if you consult more than one Panel member, you could jeopardise the adjudication of your work.

GENERAL GUIDANCE

You may make as many applications as you wish to the same or different categories, but each one must be accompanied by a completed application form and fee. A portfolio which has failed in one category must not be submitted to another category.

The evidence must be your own work (and you will, therefore, normally own the copyright) but you can have your work commercially processed. Remember, however, that you must accept total responsibility for the quality of the work submitted.

Your submission should be of a consistent standard throughout and you should be starting to develop your own personal style. The way you present your portfolio is equally important - the Panels expect a high standard of presentation.

It is essential that you submit your evidence in accordance with the requirements as set out in this Handbook. Submissions which do not conform to these requirements will be returned without being assessed. You must also ensure that your images are in the correct order for presentation - it is not the responsibility of the Distinction staff to check portfolios prior to assessment.

If you took any of your images as part of a group activity, such as during a course or on a travel expedition where guidance is provided, you must clearly show your own individual style and approach. If there is any doubt, you may be asked to provide additional evidence.

You must not approach any Assessment Panel member concerning your application for a Distinction, either directly or indirectly, from the time that your application has been submitted until after the recommendation has been made. To do otherwise will result in automatic disqualification.

N.B. Only members of The Royal Photographic Society are entitled to hold a Distinction; if, therefore, your membership lapses, you should stop using the letters after your name. It is usually possible, however, to rejoin and have your Distinction re-instated for a small additional administration fee.

A8 HOW YOUR WORK IS ASSESSED

Submissions are assessed by a Panel of four or five Fellows of The Society and a Chairman (the minimum number required is three and Associate members may serve on the Licentiate Panel). Applications are assessed one at a time, anonymously (only the Chairman has your application form) and the first time your evidence is seen by the Panel is when it is presented at the meeting.

PRINTS: Print submissions are displayed in two or three rows and Panel members view them from their seats before getting up to have a closer look.

CDs/TRANSPARENCIES/IMAGES UPLOADED TO FTP SITE (OVERSEAS APPLICANTS ONLY): All submissions suitable for projection are projected twice and in the case of digital applications the thumbnails are then displayed for reference. Larger format transparencies are viewed on a light box.

BOOKS: As a book cannot be viewed in the same way as other formats, the assessment takes place in camera, but otherwise the same procedure is followed.

LRPS: The Licentiate Panel members each complete a marking sheet which is based on the criteria set out in this Handbook (Section B3).

ARPS: For the Associateship the statement is read out and the assessment, again made using the criteria in this Handbook (Section C4), is made on the basis of a vote.

LRPS AND ARPS: In both cases the Chairman asks one or more Panel members to comment on each application and announces the result i.e. whether or not it is being recommended to Council for the Distinction. It is only following the formal ratification by Council that the result is official. If you are successful, then your name is announced - usually to a round of applause. (For further details of Panel Assessment days see Section H3.1)

FRPS: Assessments for the Fellowship are held without an audience, but follow exactly the same procedure as the Associateship except that the recommendations go to the Fellowship Board. (For further details see Section H3.4)

A9 NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

LICENTIATESHIP: All applicants will receive an email informing them of the Panel's recommendation. (If you do not have e-mail

a letter will be sent by 1st Class post.) Within two working days of the assessment, a list of all the recommended applicants will be posted on the website in the Distinctions Advisory Zone. Normally within 10 working days of the assessment, all unsuccessful applicants will receive a comment sheet giving the Panel's reasons for their decision.

ASSOCIATESHIP: All applicants will receive an email informing them of the Panel's recommendation. (If you do not have e-mail a letter will be sent by 1st Class post.) Within two working days of the assessment, a list of all the recommended applicants will be posted on the website in the Distinctions Advisory Zone. Unsuccessful applicants will be given the opportunity of seeking further advice and guidance from a Panel member.

FELLOWSHIP: The award of Fellowship is moderated by the Fellowship Board. Submissions recommended by the Panels go to the Fellowship Board which meets every six months after the spring and autumn round of assessments (usually May and November). If the specialist Panel does not recommend your submission to the Fellowship Board, you will receive feedback, normally from the Chairman of the Panel, and given the opportunity of seeking further advice and guidance from a Panel member.

You will be kept informed of the progress of your application and, if you are recommended to the Fellowship Board but your application is not successful, you will be encouraged to attend the Fellowship Showing where you will be given the reasons for the Board's decision; you will also have the opportunity to discuss your work in depth with a member of the Fellowship Board. This can either be done privately or, if you are willing to share the comments on your portfolio, it is very helpful if you are prepared for the discussion to take place in front of the other attendees. Overseas applicants will be sent a video by a member of the Fellowship Board explaining the reasons for the Board's decision.

The Science and Research, Education and Application of Photography categories which take a different form of submission are not included in this arrangement. Successful applicants in these categories will be notified of the Panel's recommendation by email (or 1st Class post) and their names will be posted on the website within two working days of the assessment. Unsuccessful applicants will receive feedback, normally from the Chairman, giving the reasons for the Panel's decision.

All recommendations from the Panels and the Fellowship Board have to be formally ratified by Council and it is Council who awards the Distinction.

A10 WHAT NEXT?

A10.1 SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Successful applicants will receive a formal letter awarding the Distinction, together with a lapel badge and a certificate under the Seal of The Society, signed by the President. If you are going to an event which is also being attended by the President or another senior Officer of The Society and you would like to have your certificate formally presented, contact your Regional Organiser and this can be arranged.

Gaining a Distinction, at any level, is a significant achievement and new Licentiates and Associates are naturally keen to move on to the next stage. While The Society would wish to encourage this enthusiasm, a word of caution is necessary. The Associateship is a very big step up from the Licentiateship and the Fellowship an even bigger, more significant step up from the Associateship. Too often members rush to apply for the next level, only to be disappointed. It is far better to take your time, seek advice and work towards it, gradually developing not only your skills but also your own personal style.

A10.2 UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Unfortunately not everyone is successful. If you do not succeed whenever possible you will be given the opportunity to receive help and advice from a member of the Panel who will explain the reasons for the decision. Everyone, particularly the Panel members, want you to succeed and will do all they can to help. However, you should remember that the final choice of work to be submitted should be your decision.

You may make one re-submission at Licentiateship or Associateship level for half the usual application fee; for the Fellowship you may re-submit to the same category for a reduced fee.

N.B. If you fail in one category of the Associateship or Fellowship, you may not submit the identical portfolio to another category.

SECTION B: LICENTIATESHIP

B1 INTRODUCTION

The Licentiate (LRPS) is the first level of The Society's Distinctions. When you come to read the criteria, please don't panic and think 'This is not for me'! It is surprising how many photographers there are who do not realise that they already cover all these criteria in the work they do. The standard is high, but it **is** achievable.

To be successful, you require a sound basic technical skill and you need to show that you are competent in all the areas set out in the criteria below. The Panel also looks for evidence of your own developing personal style.

B2 REQUIREMENTS

Your application will be in the form of stills, or time based media, or research, education and application of photography and, depending on your choice, you will need to submit as follows:

STILLS PHOTOGRAPHY: 10 prints, or 10 transparencies, or 10 images on CD, or 10 images uploaded to FTP site (overseas applicants only), or a book containing a minimum of 20 significant images.

TIME BASED MEDIA: See Section B6.

RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND APPLICATION OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Submissions are likely to be in written form (Section B7).

B3 CRITERIA

When you start putting your portfolio together, you need to consider the following criteria which are used in the marking system for this Panel; in order to be successful you need to score the pass mark as well as gaining a minimum mark in each section.

Presentation: OVERALL IMPRESSION OF PORTFOLIO

- Editing, selection and sequencing should be considered to display the portfolio to its best advantage.
- The overall impression should be cohesive with sufficient variety of approach even within a narrow range of subject. Repetition of similar images should be avoided.

Technique: CAMERA WORK

- Choice of viewpoint and lighting should be sympathetic with the subject.
- Suitable and accurate focusing and exposure.
- Suitable depth of field by use of correct aperture.
- Choice of appropriate shutter speed to record the subject with suitable sharpness.
- Highlight and shadow detail, density and colour correctly recorded.

Technique: TECHNICAL QUALITY

- Absence of processing faults i.e. chemical staining or spots and digital manipulation artefacts.
- Choice of materials suitable for the subject depicted.
- Evidence of tonal control.
- Good image finishing and spotting
- Attention to masking and colour management

Seeing: VISUAL AWARENESS

- An understanding of light and effect on mood and texture is expected as well as good use of colour.
- Composition, design and cropping of the images should be visually satisfying.
- Good use of masking and manipulation where appropriate
- Intrusive and inappropriate backgrounds should be avoided and correct viewpoint considered.

Thinking: COMMUNICATION

- Evidence is expected of personal input, understanding of, and empathy with the subject.
- Evidence of communication as appropriate of mood, ideas, narrative and information is required.
- The choice of the medium should suit the subject and assist in communication.
- An approach which shows some imagination and creativity is expected and an ability to capture the decisive moment.

B4 REQUIREMENTS: STILLS

B4.1 PRINTS

- Prints should be mounted, **not** framed, one print per mount. However, if you have a specific reason for doing so, you can put more than one print on a mount. You would need to submit 10 mounts.
N.B. Unmounted prints from overseas are accepted, but they should still be stiffened with thin card so that they can be properly displayed on our print stands. It should also be noted that mounting can considerably enhance a portfolio.
- The overall thickness of each print must not exceed 7mm. Heavy materials (such as hardboard, perspex or frames) are not permitted because of handling difficulties.
- Suggested print sizes are between 10" x 8" and 20" x 16".
- Prints are viewed as a set in 2 or 3 rows. The total length available for each row is 15 feet.
- The **maximum** height available for each row is 23"; i.e. mounts must not exceed 23" in height. If you have a particular reason for submitting mounts exceeding these dimensions, you must obtain permission in advance by contacting the Distinctions Department. If you submit a portfolio of oversize prints without prior approval, it may not be assessed.
- You should consider the presentation and mounting which should be sympathetic with the subject matter and free from marks and blemishes.
- You can mix colour, monochrome, silver gelatine and digitally produced prints if you have good reason to do so.
- Label your prints on the reverse with your name and number them in the order in which you want them to be displayed.
- You should not have any title or name on the front.
- You should include two copies of a hanging plan with your portfolio. This should be a set of thumbnails, set out in the order of display, on a plain A4 sheet (i.e. **not** mounted on card). These hanging plans will be retained by The Society for reference purposes.
- At RPS Headquarters in Bath, prints are illuminated at EV8 with the meter set to ISO 100 (equivalent to 1/20 sec at f4 incident light reading). It is not always possible to replicate this exactly at assessments held elsewhere, although we aim to do so as closely as possible.
- You can have your prints commercially processed.
- To see how prints are displayed, go to the Distinctions Advisory Zone on the website.

B4.2 DIGITAL IMAGES ON CD/OR UPLOADED TO FTP SITE (OVERSEAS APPLICANTS ONLY)

- Please ensure that your images comply with the following requirements as your submission will not be viewed prior to the assessment. If, therefore, there is any problem projecting your images, your portfolio will not be assessed.
- Images must be in RGB mode (even for monochrome images), and in the sRGB colour space.
- The image size must be no larger than 1400 pixels wide and 1050 pixels high, with one dimension (width or height) at its maximum. (Therefore, images in landscape format will be 1400 pixels wide and up to 1050 pixels high; images in portrait format will be up to 1050 pixels wide and 1050 pixels high.) The ppi setting of the image is not relevant.
- Files must be saved in uncompressed TIFF format, with only a single layer, and with no alpha channels.
- The file names must be two digit numbers: 01, 02, 03... to 10 so that the files sort for projection in the required order. Any suffix to the number, such as a title, will be disregarded.
- All the image files must be placed in one folder named 'Evidence' or you can use your name. You should also include a text file containing your name and address in the same folder.
- The evidence folder should be written as the only contents of a CD-R disk (not DVD or CD-RW media). You should also label the disk with your name.
- If you are applying from overseas, you can also upload your images ready for assessment using our FTP site - full details of how to do this can be found on the website.

B4.3 TRANSPARENCIES

- The minimum size we accept is 35mm which will be projected.
- 6 x 6 cm transparencies will also be projected.
N.B. Transparencies can only be projected if they are all the same size, i.e. all 35 mm or all 6 x 6 cm
- Larger transparencies will be viewed on a light box.
- You should make sure that each transparency is marked with your name and a number to indicate the viewing order. You should place a spot on the bottom left hand corner of the mount as viewed on a light box.

B4.4 BOOKS

- If you are submitting an application in the form of a book you should submit 2 copies.
- Your book must contain a minimum of 20 significant images, all of which must be of the required standard.
- The size of every significant image should be at least 75% of the page size.
- The book can be hard or soft back; minimum size should be 8" x 10" and maximum 11" x 13"
- If you wish, you may submit a brief statement describing the content of the book; this should be limited to a single page introduction and short captions for images.
- The sequencing and storyline will be assessed within the standard criteria.
- You are responsible for the quality of the book in the same way that you must take responsibility for commercially produced prints. In neither case can The Society make recommendations for a preferred supplier.

The Panel Chairman may call for additional evidence such as a sample of the original material used in compiling the book. As a book does not lend itself to viewing by an audience in the same way as prints, CDs or transparencies, the assessment will take place in camera.

B5 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL

- 1 Do I need to read the Distinctions Handbook?** Yes, it is essential you read the relevant sections of this Handbook i.e. Sections A, B and G. Section H is also recommended.
- 2 Do I have to be a member of The Society before applying for the Licentiatehip?** No, you may apply as a non-member, but if you are successful you are asked to join The Society in order to hold the Distinction and use the letters LRPS after your name.
- 3 What format do I have to submit?** The choice is yours: prints, transparencies, images on CD/uploaded to the FTP site (overseas applicants only) or a book.
- 4 How many images should I submit?** In most cases 10: minimum 20 if submitting a book.
- 5 Can I mix black and white and colour images?** Yes, but think carefully how you display/sequence them so that you do not appear to be mixing them just in order to make up the numbers.
- 6 Do I have to apply for LRPS first?** No, if you are a reasonably experienced photographer, you can apply straight for the Associateship.
- 7 When will I hear the result of my application?** All applicants will receive notification of the Panel's recommendation by e-mail. (If you do not have e-mail a letter will be sent by 1st Class post.) Within two working days of the assessment, a list of all the recommended applicants will be posted on the website.
- 8 Can I get help if I am not recommended?** Yes, all unsuccessful applicants receive feedback and whenever possible are put in touch with a Panel member for further advice.
- 9 Will my work be returned to me?** Submissions on CD are not returned unless specifically requested. All other portfolios are returned, but you must pay for the postage.
- 10 How do I know how much to pay for the return of my work?** UK applicants: details of next day courier service are given on the application form. Overseas applicants: you are asked to provide credit card details so that the cost of return can be charged after the assessment up to a maximum of £70. If postage is over £70 your authorisation will be requested.
- 11 Do I have to submit a variety of work to include landscape, portraiture, pictorial etc?** No, if you have a particular area of interest in your photography, you can submit a portfolio of work on that subject. You should ensure, however, that you show variety in the composition, technique, lighting, etc.
- 12 Does my submission have to be on a specific theme?** No, you can submit work with varied subject matter, but think about how the portfolio looks as a body of work.

PRINT APPLICATIONS

- 1 Can I have my prints commercially processed?** Yes, but remember - you are responsible for the quality.
- 2 Should prints always be mounted?** Yes, although we do accept unmounted prints from overseas for Licentiatehip. However, as the prints are displayed on a print stand, they should at least be stiffened. Mounting also enhances the overall impression of the portfolio.
- 3 Can the prints/mounts be different sizes?** Yes, but in general if the prints are different sizes, it is preferable to have the mounts the same size (and colour) as it adds to the cohesion of the portfolio.
- 4 Do prints have to be window mounted?** No, any form of mounting is acceptable as long as it is neatly done.

APPLICATIONS ON CD OR UPLOADED TO FTP SITE (OVERSEAS APPLICANTS ONLY)

- 1 **Can I submit my images on CD or DVD?** No, CD only.
- 2 **What format should I save my files in?** See Section B4.2
- 3 **What size should I save my files?** See Section B4.2
- 4 **How should I number my images?** Please number your images 01, 02, 03 etc. See Section B4.2
- 5 **Do I have to send my CD with my application?** No, you may send them together or separately.
- 6 **Will my CD be returned after the assessment?** No, unless you make a specific request on the application form and send the cost of return postage.
- 7 **What do I need to write on the CD?** Please put your name and Membership number if you have one; also create a text file either in word pad or word with your name and address and save this with your images.
- 8 **Do I need to calibrate my monitor?** It is recommended that you calibrate your monitor to ensure that a graduated grey scale is completely visible. A suitable grey scale and colour bars to check monitor set up can be downloaded from Electronic photo-imaging centre. www.epi-centre.com/charts/charts.html
- 9 **What software do you use to project the images?** We use ACDSee software; the software does not perform any manipulation in putting the image to the screen.

SLIDE APPLICATIONS

- 1 **Can I submit medium format transparencies or are only 35mm slides accepted?** You can submit 35mm, medium or large format, but for projection they should all be the same size – either 35mm or 6 x 6 cm.
- 2 **Why can't I submit glass mounted slides?** It is not prohibited, but in the past many have arrived cracked or broken so we suggest that glass is not used.
- 3 **Can I mask slides?** Yes!

BOOK APPLICATIONS

- 1 **If my book has more than 20 images, will the Panel choose the 20 best ones to assess?** No! The Panel will assess ALL the significant images in the book.
- 2 **What do you mean by 'significant' images?** If there are any images such as thumbnails which are not part of the main storyline, they will not be included in the assessment.
- 3 **Can I attend when my book is assessed?** No. As books cannot be displayed to an audience in the same way as prints or projected images they are assessed in camera.

B6 TIME BASED MEDIA

A working group has been set up to include The Society's interests in audio-visual and the current international standards, the well progressed culture for time based media in colleges and universities, the moving image sector and the new technologies - particularly of convergence and the web. It is anticipated that a Distinction Panel will be formed which will encompass time based media and audio-visual. As soon as the criteria have been agreed, they will be available on the website in the Distinctions Advisory Zone.

B7 RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND APPLICATION OF PHOTOGRAPHY**INTRODUCTION**

By its very nature, the requirements of this Panel are difficult to define.

As a general rule, applicants gain a Distinction for work that is generally written, rather than for the ability to compose, expose and produce photographic images. Note, however, that submissions on medical applications of photography, or the imaging sciences are directed to the appropriate Panel.

Because the work submitted is usually of a scholarly nature, the Panel has identified a number of popular categories for submissions:

- The application of photography in education
- Research on a photographer who merits a biographical treatment
- Aspects of the history of photography
- The use of photography to access history
- The conservation and restoration of photographs and photographic materials.
- Photography as an aid to conservation
- Curatorial accomplishments, such as, archival content management, photographic exhibitions
- A treatise on a new way of thinking about photography

REQUIREMENTS

Irrespective of the application or the subject matter, the Panel assesses the submission from a number of viewpoints. The Panel members will judge the form of presentation and look for assurance that you are able to demonstrate good technical skills. In a successful submission, you will display competence in gathering suitable material as well as the ability to present the material as evidence, and which supports the claims made for it. In doing so you may choose to place the emphasis on text or images, or both. Illustrations must be of good quality and for a written document, it is important to provide the appropriate references to any information that third parties provided. In addition to written or printed work, a website may also form a submission.

PROCEDURE

At Licentiate level, the Panel will be anxious to ensure that you have a basic, but sound, knowledge of the selected subject and that all assertions and claims are accurate and verifiable. The submission will include conclusions, which may include suggestions for further work.

SECTION C: ASSOCIATESHIP



C1 INTRODUCTION

The second level of The Society's Distinctions is the Associateship - a significant step up from the Licentiateship. While in the Licentiateship we are looking for a basic competence and skill, to be successful at Associateship level you need to demonstrate a high standard of technical competence as well as provide evidence of creative ability and the development of a personal style. You also need to be able to show that you are in complete control of the technical aspects which allows you to produce quality which is entirely 'fit for purpose' i.e. it suits the subject.

You can apply straight for the Associateship without having gone through the Licentiateship, but in general we do not recommend this unless you have considerable experience in photography.

C2 REQUIREMENTS

Your application will be in the form of stills, or time based media, or research, education and application of photography. Depending on your choice, you will need to submit as follows:

STILLS PHOTOGRAPHY: 15 prints, or 15 images on CD, or 15 images uploaded to the FTP site (overseas applicants only), or a book containing a minimum of 30 significant images (2 copies)

N.B. The Contemporary Panel considers a wide range and mix of formats, but check first with Distinctions Department.

TIME BASED MEDIA: See Section E2.

RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND APPLICATION OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Submissions are likely to be in written form (Section E3)

ALL APPLICANTS MUST ALSO SUBMIT:

- **A Statement of Intent:** A statement of **not more than** 150 words outlining the purpose, objectives or intent of the work. This gives you the opportunity to tell the Panel about your work and explain why you took the images and what you want them to convey; it also enables the Panel to consider your work in a meaningful context. It should not describe the images or give technical details, unless you wish to highlight any special or unusual techniques employed. See the website for examples.

C3 THE CATEGORIES FOR STILLS PHOTOGRAPHY

When you apply for the Associateship in Stills photography you need to submit your work in one of the following categories:

- **Contemporary**
- **Creative Production**
- **Natural History**
- **Professional and Applied** (incorporates documentary, portraiture, record, theatrical, visual journalism, wedding)
- **Science**
- **Travel**
- **Visual Art**

C3.1 WHICH CATEGORY SHOULD I APPLY FOR? HOW TO DECIDE

Sometimes applicants find it difficult to decide on the category they should go for; and in fact some types of photography could be submitted to more than one Panel.

The main thing to consider is the purpose for which the photographs were taken - what are the photographs intended to show? Are they records, were they taken with an artistic intent or were they taken on commercial assignment? Think about what you are going to say in your statement.

INTENTION / MOST SUITABLE CATEGORY

Is your work creative, pictorial, artistic? / **Visual Art**

Do you have a purposeful message that you wish your images/presentation to convey? / **Contemporary**

Is your work taken for publication or other commercial purpose? / **Professional and Applied***

Is there a clearly defined end use or application, not necessarily commercial? / **Professional and Applied***

Is your main purpose to make an accurate record of, for example, a building, or to document a process or event? / **Professional and Applied***

Is your main intention not only to make an accurate record of a place, or to document a journey, but also to portray the essence of that place, or the places through which you travel? / **Travel**

Is your main intention to make an accurate record of some aspect of the natural world? / **Natural History**

*The Professional and Applied category includes architecture, illustrative, theatrical, wedding, portraiture, documentary, visual journalism, whether taken for commercial or for personal use.

N.B. Landscapes, taken for their pictorial impact, should be submitted to the Visual Art category; landscapes taken to show concerns over environmental issues (e.g. global warming) could be submitted to either the Contemporary or the Professional and Applied category, depending on the purpose for which they were taken.

Obviously there are crossovers - a good record nature picture is often a good pictorial image as well, but its main intention is still to record. It is therefore important that you clearly describe the main purpose of your work in the Statement of Intent.

The Society recognises that not all photographers wish to specialise but prefer variety in their photography. While, therefore, you may submit a portfolio which concentrates on a specific theme, it is equally acceptable to submit a selection of work comprising two or three different types of photography. You could, for example, submit five pictures of street photography, five abstracts and five landscapes to the Visual Art Panel; similarly, you could submit five portraits, five documentary and five weddings to the Professional and Applied Panel, or any other types of work taken for commercial purposes.

If you decide to send a portfolio comprising two or three themes, the individual pictures should be presented within their themes and not intermingled. You should still consider how the portfolio looks as a whole; it is important that it is arranged in a cohesive manner and there should also be a consistency throughout. A completely random set of images is rarely acceptable.

If you are still undecided, the Distinctions Department can advise but remember - if a Panel thinks that the work submitted to them is really more suitable for another category, then they will transfer it. Your work and form will be retained by the Distinctions Department and will be presented at the next meeting of the recommended Panel without further cost.

C4 CRITERIA FOR ALL CATEGORIES

The following general assessment criteria apply to all submissions. You also need to read the specific requirements for the specialist category in which you are applying which can be found in Section E.

COMMUNICATION

- The portfolio should clearly meet the objectives given in the written statement.
- The photographic style should be consistent across the portfolio.
- The images should capture and communicate mood, emotion, or a sense of atmosphere where appropriate.

PRESENTATION

- Presentation should be of the highest standard.
- There should be no repetition of images. (As a general rule more than two similar images will be unacceptable.)
- Prints should be appropriately mounted and free from marks and blemishes.
- Slides must be suitably masked and free from marks and blemishes.
- Projected images should be sequenced to their best advantage.

ARTISTIC SKILL

- A competent understanding of composition, design and form should be demonstrated to communicate the purpose of the work.
- Appropriate lighting and viewpoint must be evident.
- The printing style should be appropriate to the subject and intent.

COHESION

- The portfolio of work should be visually balanced and sequenced.
- The images should support each other in expressing the photographer's message.

ORIGINALITY

- There should be adequate evidence of originality in presenting the subject.
- The portfolio should show evidence of personal engagement with the subjects.

TECHNICAL SKILL

- Use of appropriate equipment and camera controls should be evident.
- Image exposure should be consistent in contrast and/or colour balance.
- Highlight and shadow detail should be adequately recorded.
- Images should be adequately sharp.
- The work should demonstrate appropriate control in the preparation of images.

C5 REQUIREMENTS: STILLS**C5.1 PRINTS**

- Prints should be mounted, **not** framed, one print per mount. However, if you have a specific reason for doing so, you can put more than one print on a mount. You would need to submit 15 mounts.
N.B. Unmounted prints from overseas are accepted for the Associateship, but they should still be stiffened with thin card so that they can be properly displayed on our print stands. It should also be noted that mounting can considerably enhance a portfolio.
- The overall thickness of each print must not exceed 7mm. Heavy materials (such as hardboard, perspex or frames) are not permitted because of handling difficulties.
- Suggested print sizes are between 10" x 8" and 20" x 16".
- Prints are viewed as a set in 2 or 3 rows. The total length available for each row is 15 feet.
- The **maximum** height available for each row is 23"; i.e. mounts must not exceed 23" in height. If you have a particular reason for submitting mounts exceeding these dimensions, you must obtain permission in advance by contacting the Distinctions Department. If you submit a portfolio of oversize prints without prior approval, it may not be assessed.
- You should consider the presentation and mounting which should be sympathetic with the subject matter and free from marks and blemishes.
- You can mix colour, monochrome, silver gelatine and digitally produced prints, if you have good reason to do so.
- Label your prints on the reverse with your name and address and number them in the order in which you want them to be displayed.
- You should not have any title or name on the front.
- You should include two copies of a hanging plan with your portfolio. This should be a set of thumbnails, set out in the order of display, on a plain A4 sheet (i.e. **not** mounted on card). These hanging plans will be retained by The Society for reference purposes.
- At RPS Headquarters in Bath, prints are illuminated at EV8 with the meter set to ISO 100 (equivalent to 1/20 sec at f4 incident light reading). It is not always possible to replicate this exactly at assessments held elsewhere, although we aim to do so as closely as possible.
- You can have your prints commercially processed.
- To see how prints are displayed, go to the Distinctions Advisory Zone on the website.

C5.2 DIGITAL IMAGES ON CD/UPLOADED TO FTP SITE (OVERSEAS APPLICANTS ONLY)

- Please ensure that your images comply with the following requirements as your submission will not be viewed prior to the assessment. If, therefore, there is any problem projecting your images, your portfolio will not be assessed.
- Images must be in RGB mode (even for monochrome images), and in the sRGB colour space.
- The image size must be no larger than 1400 pixels wide and 1050 pixels high, with one dimension (width or height) at its maximum. (Therefore, images in landscape format will be 1400 pixels wide and up to 1050 pixels high; images in portrait format will be up to 1050 pixels wide and 1050 pixels high.) The ppi setting of the image is not relevant.
- Files must be saved in uncompressed TIFF format, with only a single layer, and with no alpha channels.
- The file names must be two digit numbers: 01, 02, 03... to 15 so that the files sort for projection in the required order. Any suffix to the number, such as a title, will be disregarded.
- All the image files must be placed in one folder named 'Evidence', or you can use your name. You should also include a text file containing your name and address in the same folder.
- The evidence folder should be written as the only contents of a CD-R disk (not DVD or CD-RW media). You should also label the disk with your name.
- If you are applying from overseas, you can also upload your images ready for assessment using our FTP site - full details of how to do this can be found on the website.

C5.3 TRANSPARENCIES

- The minimum size we accept is 35mm which will be projected.
- 6 x 6 cm transparencies will also be projected.
N.B. Transparencies can only be projected if they are all the same size, i.e. all 35 mm or all 6 x 6 cm
- Larger transparencies will be viewed on a light box.
- You should make sure each transparency is marked with your name and a number to indicate the viewing order. You should place a spot on the bottom left hand corner of the mount as viewed on a light box.

C5.4 BOOK SUBMISSIONS

- A book may be either published with an ISBN number, or an artist's book.
 - If you are submitting an application in the form of a book you should submit at least 2 copies.
 - It must contain a minimum of 30 significant images for Associateship (40 for Fellowship).
 - The size of every significant image should be at least 75% of the page size.
 - All the significant images must be of the required standard
 - Your statement should provide information concerning the following areas:
- A Concept or commission**
- What was the initial idea or concept for the book – a personal project or commissioned by a client?
 - Was the book accompanied by any other presentations of the work such as an exhibition?
 - What were the decision making processes in the planning and production of the photography and to what extent was the photographer involved?
 - If there was joint authorship in either the text or photography, give details of your personal contribution as well as publisher and distribution details.
- B Editing/Narrative**
- What was your personal contribution to the planning process of the editing and the sequencing or layout of the imagery and text?
- C Design and Presentation**
- What was your personal contribution in the negotiation process of the design, layout and presentation?
 - To what extent have the original photographs been modified by the publisher?

The Panel Chairman may call for additional evidence such as a sample of the original material used in compiling the book.

C6 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL

- 1 Do I need to read the Distinctions Handbook?** Yes, it is essential you read the relevant sections of this Handbook i.e. Sections A, C, E and G. Section H is also recommended.
- 2 Do I have to be a member of The Society before applying for the Associateship?** No, you may apply as a non-member, but if you are successful you are asked to join The Society in order to hold the Distinction and use the letters ARPS after your name.
- 3 What format do I have to submit?** The choice is yours: prints, transparencies, images on CD or book. (Overseas applicants may also apply by uploading images to the FTP site.)
- 4 How many images should I submit?** Usually 15; 30 if submitting a book.
- 5 Do I have to apply for LRPS first?** No, if you are a reasonably experienced photographer, you can apply straight for the Associateship.
- 6 When will I hear the result of my application?** All applicants will receive notification of the Panel's recommendation by e-mail. (If you do not have e-mail a letter will be sent by 1st Class post.) Within two working days of the assessment, a list of all the recommended applicants will be posted on the website.
- 7 Can I get help if I am not recommended?** Yes, all unsuccessful applicants receive feedback and whenever possible are put in touch with a Panel member for further advice.
- 8 Will my work be returned to me?** Submissions on CD are not returned unless specifically requested. All other portfolios are returned, but you must pay for the postage.
N.B. For overseas applicants the cost of returning prints may exceed the cost of reprinting, so you may decide not to have them returned.
- 9 How do I know how much to pay for the return of my work?** UK applicants: details of next day courier service are given on the application form. Overseas applicants: you are asked to provide credit card details so that the cost of return can be charged after the assessment up to a maximum of £70. If postage is over £70 your authorisation will be requested.
- 10 Can I use some of the images from my successful LRPS application in my ARPS application?** You can, but it is not usually recommended as there is a big difference in standard between the two levels.

- 11 **Can I mix black and white and colour images?** Yes, but think carefully how you display/sequence them so that you do not appear to be mixing them just in order to make up the numbers.
- 12 **Do I have to wait a certain length of time after gaining my LRPS, before applying for an ARPS?** No, but it is best not to rush into it for the reason given above in No. 10.
- 13 **My photography is very varied but do I have to concentrate on a fairly tight theme?** No, you may submit a variety of work to the Visual Art Panel. However, you should not submit a completely random set of images, but concentrate on 2 or 3 areas. And don't forget to consider how they look when displayed together or in sequence. If your work is taken for commercial purposes, you can still submit a variety, but it should go to the Professional and Applied Panel.

PRINT APPLICATIONS

- 1 **Can I have my prints commercially processed?** Yes, but remember - you are responsible for the quality.
- 2 **Should prints always be mounted?** Yes, although we do accept unmounted prints from overseas for Associateship. However, as the prints are displayed on a print stand, they should at least be stiffened. Mounting also enhances the overall impression of the portfolio.
- 3 **Can the prints/mounts be different sizes?** Yes, but in general if the prints are different sizes, it is preferable to have the mounts the same size (and colour) as it adds to the cohesion of the portfolio.
- 4 **Do prints have to be window mounted?** No, any form of mounting is acceptable as long as it is neatly done.

APPLICATIONS ON CD AND IMAGES UPLOADED TO FTP SITE (OVERSEAS APPLICANTS ONLY)

- 1 **Can I submit my images on CD or DVD?** No, CD only.
- 2 **What format should I save my files in?** See Section C5.2
- 3 **What size should I save my files?** See Section C5.2
- 4 **How should I number my images?** Please number your images 01, 02, 03 etc. See Section C5.2
- 5 **Do I have to send my CD with my application?** No, you may send them together or separately.
- 6 **Will my CD be returned after the assessment?** No, unless you make a specific request on the application form and send the cost of return postage.
- 7 **What do I need to write on the CD?** Please put your name and Membership number if you have one; also create a text file either in word pad or word with your name and address and save this with your images.
- 8 **Do I need to calibrate my monitor?** It is recommended that you calibrate your monitor to ensure that a graduated grey scale is completely visible. A suitable grey scale and colour bars to check monitor set up can be downloaded from Electronic photo-imaging centre. www.epi-centre.com/charts/charts.html
- 9 **What software do you use to project the images?** We use ACDSee software; the software does not perform any manipulation in putting the image to the screen.

SLIDE APPLICATIONS

- 1 **Can I submit medium format transparencies or are only 35mm slides accepted?** You can submit 35mm, medium or large format, but for projection they should all be the same size – either 35mm or 6 x 6 cm.
- 2 **Why can't I submit glass mounted slides?** It is not prohibited, but in the past many have arrived cracked or broken so we suggest that glass is not used.
- 3 **Can I mask slides?** Yes!

BOOK APPLICATIONS

- 1 **If my book has more than 30 images, will the Panel choose the 30 best ones to assess?** No! The Panel will assess ALL the significant images in the book.
- 2 **What do you mean by 'significant' images?** If there are any images such as thumbnails which are not part of the main storyline, they will not be included in the assessment.
- 3 **Can I attend when my book is assessed?** No. As books cannot be displayed to an audience in the same way as prints or projected images they are assessed in camera.

SECTION D: FELLOWSHIP



D1 INTRODUCTION

The highest Distinction offered by The Society is the Fellowship, which is awarded for excellence and distinguished ability, combined with evidence of originality or freshness in approach. By definition, achieving the Fellowship involves a significant amount of time and effort, but it is a goal worth aiming for and it is attainable.

The award of a Fellowship confers a recognition that you are a photographer of considerable merit and expertise, and is an achievement of which to be very proud.

In order to be successful, it is essential that the technical quality of your submission for the Fellowship is excellent and, if the work is interpretive, then the quality should be appropriate to the subject and intent. The presentation of your submission should be to the highest possible standard.

The assessors are looking for outstanding work that may be pushing forward the boundaries of photography in the discipline concerned or showing the very best practice in a given area. They want to see individual work with a strong personal style and a maturity of vision, both in the individual image and the presentation as a whole. They also want to be convinced that you are seeing, thinking, and working as a photographer at the highest level.

D2 THE FELLOWSHIP BOARD

When you apply for the Fellowship of The Society, you submit your application to one of the specialist categories. These assessments are strictly confidential and therefore not open to an audience in order to allow for a totally open debate on each submission.

The procedure is the same as for the Associateship (Section H3.1) but in the case of Fellowship, the Panel makes its recommendations to the Fellowship Board which normally meets after the spring and autumn assessments.

The purpose of the Board is to ensure that standards are maintained evenly across all categories and it is this Board that makes the final recommendations to Council.

You are kept informed of the progress of your application, but you should be aware that a recommendation to the Fellowship Board does not in any way guarantee success; submissions which do not have the unanimous support of the Panel can be referred to the Board; the reasons for this will be explained to the applicant. See Section H3.4 for further information on the Fellowship Board.

D3 CATEGORIES AND REQUIREMENTS

The categories in which you can apply for the Fellowship and the criteria are the same as for the Associateship. They are assessed, however, at a considerably higher level, as described above (D1).

Your application will normally be in the form of stills, or time based media, or research, education and application of photography. Depending on your choice, you will need to submit as follows:

STILLS PHOTOGRAPHY: 20 mounted prints (displayed in 2 or 3 rows, maximum height between each row 23" and length up to 20") or 20 transparencies or a book containing a minimum of 40 significant images (at least 2 copies).

N.B. The Contemporary Panel considers a wide range and mix of formats, but check first with the Distinctions Department.

TIME BASED MEDIA: See Section E2.

RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND APPLICATION OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Submissions are likely to be in written form (Section E3).

ALL APPLICANTS MUST ALSO SUBMIT:

- **A Statement of Intent:** A statement of not more than 150 words outlining the purpose, objectives or intent of the work. This gives you the opportunity to tell the Panel about your work and explain why you took the images and what you want them to convey; it also enables the Panel to consider your work in a meaningful context. It should not describe the images or give technical details, unless you wish to highlight any special or unusual techniques employed. See website for examples.

- **Direct Application:** A direct route for application to the Fellowship is also available for photographers (both members and non members) who have an established national/international reputation. Assessment is normally done on the basis principally of your CV and references or, exceptionally, it can be at the invitation of the Distinctions Advisory Board or Council. Contact the Distinctions Department for further details.

D4 INSTALLATIONS

An installation is a presentation of photographs within an environment that may be permanent or semi-permanent within a designed or natural space and may be presented as evidence for a submission for the Fellowship. The photographic requirements come within the general regulations for the Fellowship of The Society.

The application is in two stages: the pre-assessment and the on-site / off-site assessment. The former requires a statement of intent and a visit to the site by a member of a Distinction Panel. Following a positive report, members of the Fellowship Board will visit the site and make a recommendation to Council. Alternatively it is possible to present the installation as a model or show the environment in still or movie form. The photographic element may be presented as a panel of prints or as a book.

Whatever the outcome of your submission, you will be asked to cover all expenses relating to these viewings. While The Society will endeavour to keep costs to a minimum, this could result in an additional charge in the region of several hundred pounds.

D5 RESPONSIBILITY OF FELLOWS

The Fellowship is The Society's highest Distinction and, as such, makes a statement about you and your achievement. As a Fellow, you have a continuing commitment to maintain the highest level of photographic excellence as well as conducting your photography to the highest ethical standard. As a representative of The Society you are expected to play a full and meaningful role in promoting good photographic practice.

D6 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL

- 1 Do I need to read the Distinctions Handbook?** Yes, it is essential you read the relevant sections of this Handbook i.e. Sections A, D, E and G. Section H is also recommended.
- 2 When will I hear the result of my application?** Recommended submissions go to the Fellowship Board which meets every six months after the spring and autumn round of assessments. Applicants are kept informed of the progress of their applications and those who are not successful will receive feedback from the Chairman.
- 3 Can I get help if I am not recommended?** Yes, all unsuccessful applicants receive feedback and whenever possible are put in touch with a Panel member for further advice.
- 4 Do I have to apply for the Fellowship in the same category that I gained the Associateship?** No, you may apply in any category.
- 5 Can I apply straight for the Fellowship?** No, you need to be an Associate member of The Society before applying for the Fellowship, or a Fellow of the BIPP.
- 6 I have heard that there is a direct Fellowship route - how does that work?** This is for photographers who have an established national/international reputation and is based on their CV, exhibitions, publications etc and four references. Details available on request.
- 7 Should prints always be mounted?** Yes, for the Fellowship prints should always be mounted.

**SECTION E:
REQUIREMENTS
FOR INDIVIDUAL
CATEGORIES**

**ASSOCIATESHIP
AND
FELLOWSHIP**

E1 INTRODUCTION TO STILLS PHOTOGRAPHY

As well as the general criteria which apply to all (Section C4) each category has its own specific criteria which are set out in this section. **PLEASE NOTE:** Occasionally you will find that the criteria for a particular category is different from the general criteria. Where this occurs you should make your submission in accordance with the requirements set out by the specialist category. If you are in any doubt, please do not hesitate to ask. As with any other query, the Distinctions Department is only too pleased to help.

E1.1 CONTEMPORARY

The fundamental essence of a Contemporary submission is conception. The Panel attaches key importance to ideas and favours work by photographers who, through their photographic image making, wish to explore, define, illustrate or evaluate contemporary issues or their own particular vision of the world.

It is for this reason, that primary emphasis is placed upon the statement of intent which should be a minimum of 150 words and a maximum of 300. The success of the work depends very much on the strength of the idea, the appropriateness of expression and how well the work articulates its message. Submissions should have intellectual content, be visually engaging and provide evidence of distinctive personal practice and commitment.

The Contemporary category cuts across the other categories, as it is about what you want your work to say on a topic, rather than what that topic actually is. Work that carries this personal message can be of any genre - visual art, documentary, portraiture etc; however, work that is purely pictorial, commercial etc. for its own sake would not be suitable.

Submissions in this category should be in the form of a body of work based on a theme, project or concept that really interests or concerns you. Typical themes could be those that explore contemporary issues of self, society, environment, art and culture. They can range widely from substantive to more whimsical topics.

The Panel will also consider mixed-media images and text. Applications in the form of books or catalogues are acceptable but a small number of prints will be required as supporting evidence. The number of images may slightly exceed the 15 or 20 normally allowed for Associateship and Fellowship respectively if these are important to ensure a balanced coverage of the topic selected. Several images may be mounted together if this is required to support the presentation and such images (not the mount numbers) will be considered as separately making up the totals required.

Applications for both Associateship and Fellowship may be in a wide range of forms and the examples listed below are based on graduate and postgraduate-level photography and similar fine art degree work. This list is not restrictive.

Personal project portfolios comprising workbooks, associated research, references to relevant influences, or similar material, plus a minimum of three representative photographic images for display relating to such projects. Assessment will be based on all material submitted, not just the images for display. Personal project portfolios as above where some or all of the work is in the form of a visual-based construction e.g. in three-dimensional form.

If you are considering a wider form of submission, you should seek advice from the Chairman of the Contemporary Panel well in advance of the assessment day. This can be done through the Distinctions Department who will also need to know of such a submission so that arrangements for its display can be considered; you should ensure that it can be put in place within a short timescale on the assessment day.

Exhibited work: Requests for assessment of exhibition work e.g. displays in gallery spaces, where the context or other practicalities do not allow normal submission, will also be considered. In these cases you will be required to make additional payments to cover the cost of Panel members travelling to the venue.

SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Submissions must fulfil their stated aim well and with clarity. The work must be cohesive in structure. Communication of the meaning/purpose of the work needs to be clear. It must be of good and balanced technical quality as appropriate to the subject.

Submissions for both Associateship and Fellowship will be assessed as to how well they relate to your written statement in both content and meaning. The assessors will consider the images and their arrangement in the totality of the photographic artwork submitted. Assessment will be based on interpretation and meaning of the work rather than primarily on photographic technique. However, the technical quality must be at the general levels that apply to all Associateship or Fellowship submissions. Technical quality must support your ideas and not be overtly gimmicky. If the submission is a book you, the applicant, are responsible for the quality of the printing and reproduction. The Panel members will be looking for the depth of your involvement in the work submitted.

If your submission is in the form of projected images, you should ensure that you exploit the use of the display space to fully express your ideas, not just be limited to a series of sequential single images.

Communication of a personal style at both informative and emotional levels is expected and assessors will take into account work where a wider degree of involvement may be required from the viewer in extracting the messages contained.

E1.2 CREATIVE PRODUCTION

This relates to the printing process, both silver and digital, normally produced for a commercial purpose and is currently being developed.

E1.3 NATURAL HISTORY

This category covers any of the various branches of natural history, including zoology, botany, meteorology, astronomy and palaeontology.

Each image should be correctly identified and, as well as your statement of intent, you should include with your application a list in the order of presentation, with both a common name and a scientific name.

In general, subjects should be free and unrestricted, in a natural or adopted habitat, although in some circumstances, subjects photographed under controlled conditions may be permissible.

No kind of manipulation that alters the truth of the photographic statement is permissible, except for the removal of minor distractions or blemishes.

PURPOSE AND COMMUNICATION

Your statement should clearly state your intention in choosing the work submitted, in order to enable the Assessment Panel to consider your work in a meaningful context.

Your work should bear out the intention set out in your introduction, and should provide clear evidence of a genuine interest and involvement in this type of photography.

Each individual subject should be shown in an illustrative way, which is of interest to a well-informed naturalist, but should be clearly seen to be relevant to the submission as a whole. It should at the very least accurately depict what the subject looks like, although it might, to your advantage, show some aspect of its life-cycle or behavioural pattern as well.

For Fellowship, the Assessment Panel looks for a personal style or an original approach, but at the very least you must demonstrate that you are capable of maintaining to the highest standard the momentum of current trends and developments in nature photography. It is advisable to choose a particular natural history theme or topic and to explore and develop it photographically. It is only rarely acceptable to present a similar collection of images, produced by similar techniques and differentiated from each other only in terms of species differences.

COHESION

If you are submitting prints, you should present them so that they appear coherent and visually well-balanced in terms of subject matter, print size, format, colour, contrast and mounting. A submission of prints displayed in an unplanned, haphazard manner is unlikely to impress.

Transparency and digital image submissions should be sequenced in a similarly coherent and visually well-balanced way, avoiding sudden changes in colour, contrast or key. Where several different subject types are included in a submission, it is usually more effective to present them interspersed with each other, rather than grouped altogether.

TECHNICAL QUALITY

Your submission should demonstrate that:

- i) you are able to produce consistently sharp and correctly exposed pictures, with image sizes appropriate to the subjects being shown;
- ii) you have the ability to control depth of field in such a way that all your images have backgrounds appropriate to the type of subject being shown; whether that subject is being depicted in close-up or within the wider context of a particular habitat
- iii) you have a good understanding of how to use light effectively, whether natural or artificial.
- iv) if flash is used, it has been used discreetly, sympathetically and in a manner which is completely in keeping with the subject, avoiding areas of heavy shadow or excessive contrast.

ARTISTIC CONSIDERATIONS

Although work submitted in the Natural History Category should be mainly informative or illustrative, an overlay of pictorialism is not only permissible but may be to your advantage, provided that it does not detract from the informative content of the work.

Good composition is an important aspect of effective and visually satisfying nature work, so your submission should show your skill in this respect.

N.B. There is one hard and fast rule for all nature photographers, the spirit of which must be observed at all times: The welfare of the subject is more important than the photograph. The Nature Photographer's Code of Practice gives some useful pointers for the well being of subjects as well as indicating legislation of which all nature photographers should be aware. Copies may be downloaded from the website.

E1.4 PROFESSIONAL AND APPLIED

The Professional and Applied Panel incorporates Documentary, Portraiture, Record, Theatrical, Visual Journalism, Wedding.

Applied photography can be defined, for the purposes of the Panel, as photography which is used to illustrate, record, promote or inform on a specific subject or project. For example, it may include work that can be categorised as architecture, illustrative, documentary, portraiture, theatrical, wedding or visual journalism. An application may illustrate different disciplines especially if you are a professional photographer working in various fields of photography or perhaps if you are a stock photographer. Note: Work from different disciplines must still look good as a cohesive set and show your own distinctive style and approach.

An application at Associateship level must demonstrate a range of photographic ability even if the chosen discipline is of a narrow nature. Repetition is a common cause of failure.

At Fellowship level there must be a distinctive personal style demonstrating a distinguished ability. The use of appropriate equipment cannot be over emphasised.

Your statement of intent should clearly set out the purpose and end use of your photography. You should not include technical matters or outline any problems.

Your application will be assessed to a large degree against the criteria you set out in your statement of intent. For example if the photography is for publication, part of the assessment will question whether or not the work is of the required standard to be published (i.e. in national press or major magazines). You may submit supporting evidence with your application.

Applied photography is often of a technical nature and the emphasis will be on a very high standard of technical skill relevant to the purpose of the photography. You will also have to demonstrate that you have applied imaginative and visual skill to your photography.

E1.5 SCIENCE

Most applicants involved in scientific subjects apply for one of the Imaging Scientist Qualifications (ISQ). However, it is possible to apply for a Distinction in imaging science, medical imaging, medical photography, or other related discipline by the submission of prints, transparencies or digital images.

Your statement of intent should provide a clear explanation of the purpose, objectives or intent of the work as is required for other Panels. The statement should also clearly indicate whether the work was entirely undertaken and produced by the applicant or if it was a collective effort. If there was contribution from others, then clearly state the contribution made by those involved.

In addition, separate and full information on the technical details of each image should be provided that includes details of sample preparation (if appropriate) and any image manipulation or image processing that has been applied. Any manipulation, however, 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 & bottom on the reverse side of the image if in print format) and correctly identified.

Submissions will be assessed against criteria appropriate to the particular nature of the material submitted and similar to the

criteria for other 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 Associateship 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 subject area.

E1.6 TRAVEL

GENERAL

The one criterion which probably defines this category is that it should possess “a sense of place, or related places”. Your statement should describe the theme being illustrated and any particularly important aspects of it.

The actual place which the photography depicts is not of great importance: it can be literally anywhere in the world, but ideally, the submission should be entirely from one place or region, which could be as small as a beach, or as large as a country; but a collection of random pictures from around the world is not a sensible choice.

Your submission should have a theme which could relate, for example, to a journey from place to place; to aspects of a particular place - landscapes, seascapes, or architecture of a region; to an event or activity carried out at a particular place; or to the people making up a community; and so on.

CRITERIA

There should be a strong content of related but varied pictures to match the statement which should describe the theme being illustrated and any particularly important aspects within it.

The subject should be explored as widely as possible and your images should show some originality, inspired vision and interpretation, inferring devotion and commitment on your part. Artistic and technical issues must be of a high standard and consistent throughout the portfolio.

Manipulation by digital or other means which significantly alters the truth of the situation or event is not permitted.

For Fellowship the assessors are looking for outstanding work which shows considerable originality, inspired vision and interpretation, as well as clear evidence of distinguished ability. The subject should be explored as widely as possible and your images should infer complete devotion and commitment on your part.

ADVICE

Remember that it is the actual photographs that are being assessed, not the difficulty of obtaining them. A good set of pictures from your local area, which you have time to study and explore in depth, and repeat with ease until you are satisfied, is much more likely to succeed than a set snatched on a one day's visit to an exotic location.

Similarly, be aware of “event” pictures: if your viewpoint is constrained by being in a public stand, with little or no chance of being able to move amongst the action, and the event is a one day a year affair, you have virtually no chance of getting a sufficient variety of pictures to meet the criteria.

It is recognised that photographers may travel in groups and care must be taken to avoid stereotyped images.

E1.7 VISUAL ART

The Visual Art category is very wide ranging and really there is no restriction about the subject matter. However, the images must be much more than just a record; your portfolio, whether you are an amateur or professional photographer, should communicate a personal statement about your chosen subject. The Panel is looking for clear evidence of a personal vision or style which should convey a sense of design, emotion, mood or some meaning which encourages the viewer to look beyond the subject. The Panel will ask not where or how the images were taken, but why?

In recent years there has been a tendency at Associateship level for many applications to be quite narrowly focused around a theme or a particular technique. An alternative approach could be to submit a portfolio consisting of more than one theme. If you decide to send a portfolio comprising two or three themes, the individual pictures should be presented within their themes and not intermingled; it is also important that you consider carefully the cohesiveness of the work as a whole. A set of random images is unlikely to be successful.

E2 TIME BASED MEDIA

A working group has been set up to include The Society's interests in audio-visual and the current international standards, the well progressed culture for time based media in colleges and universities, the moving image sector and the new technologies - particularly of convergence and the web. It is anticipated that a Distinction Panel will be formed which will encompass time based media and audio-visual. As soon as the criteria have been agreed, they will be available on the website in the Distinctions Advisory Zone.

E3 RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND APPLICATION OF PHOTOGRAPHY

INTRODUCTION

By its very nature, the requirements of this Panel are difficult to define.

As a general rule, applicants gain a Distinction for work that is generally written, rather than for the ability to compose, expose and produce photographic images. Note, however, that submissions on medical applications of photography, or the imaging sciences are directed to the appropriate Panel.

Because the work submitted is usually of a scholarly nature, the Panel has identified a number of popular categories for submissions:

- The application of photography in education
- Research on a photographer who merits a biographical treatment
- Aspects of the history of photography
- The use of photography to access history
- The conservation and restoration of photographs and photographic materials.
- Photography as an aid to conservation
- Curatorial accomplishments, such as, archival content management, photographic exhibitions
- A treatise on a new way of thinking about photography

REQUIREMENTS

General: Irrespective of the application or the subject matter, the Panel assesses the submission from a number of viewpoints. The Panel members will judge the form of presentation and look for assurance that you are able to demonstrate good technical skills. In a successful submission, you will display competence in gathering suitable material as well as the ability to present the material as evidence, and which supports the claims made for it. In doing so you may choose to place the emphasis on text or images, or both. Illustrations must be of good quality and for a written document, it is important to provide the appropriate references to any information that third parties provided. In addition to written or printed work, a website may also form a submission.

Associateship: The work submitted will be of a high standard and must further an understanding of the subject, with all the evidence presented clearly and unambiguously. In places, you should demonstrate evidence of original thinking, but you must also show a comprehensive knowledge of the chosen subject.

Fellowship: You must be an Associate member of the Society, or a Fellow of the BIPP.

In general, work submitted for Fellowship must achieve a high level of excellence. It will also represent a significant contribution to the comprehension of photography. Your submission will reveal an individual style and display originality, either in its methodology or in the material discovered, or in both.

PROCEDURE FOR ASSOCIATESHIP AND FELLOWSHIP

For both Distinctions, there are two phases. At the first stage, all potential candidates are expected to submit an application form along with a synopsis of approximately 500 words, which summarises the intended work. At this stage, the Panel will comment and provide you with advice on your proposed submission. Subsequently, two examples of the completed work will be required.

If necessary, you can submit an application form for work that already exists, e.g. a thesis, dissertation, exhibition, website or a book. In this case, the Panel members reserve the right to ask for additional information, which provides 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.

ADVICE

On occasions, the Panel will consider a pre-application proposal from a potential candidate (member or non-member) and give a brief opinion on its suitability. Contact the Distinctions Manager with a short outline of your proposed submission and you will receive a brief opinion from the Panel; please note that the opinions are given without prejudice.

SECTION F: EXEMPTIONS AND ACCREDITATIONS

F1 INTRODUCTION

If you already hold a photographic qualification you may not have to submit a portfolio of work for the Licentiate or Associateship. (There are no exemptions for the Fellowship.) Qualifications which are accepted by The Society for its Distinctions are listed below, but this is not a definitive list as courses are continually changing. If your course is not listed, it is always worth checking with the Distinctions Department to see if it could be included.

Applying is then very easy. All you need to do is complete the relevant sections of the application form (i.e. the beginning, concerning your personal details and the end, regarding payment) and send it to the Distinctions Department together with the application fee (which is half the standard application fee) and proof of your qualification (usually a copy of your certificate). The Distinctions Manager checks all exemption applications and if there is any problem will contact you. If it turns out that your qualification is not suitable, your application will be withdrawn and you will not be charged.

These applications – like all Distinction applications – go to Council to be formally ratified. Council meets every month, so you may apply through the exemption scheme at any time and the Distinction will normally be awarded within one month.

Qualifications currently included in the exemption scheme are:
(N.B. No online courses are currently included)

F2 LICENTIATESHIP

- Current Licentiate members of the BIPP or MPA
- A level photography – A or B grade
- City & Guilds Level 3 photography
- BTEC ND/HNC/HND in photography
- Foundation degree in photography
- Dip HE in photography

F3 ASSOCIATESHIP

- Current Associate members of the BIPP or MPA
- BA degree in photography
- Combined BA Hons degree (provided at least 75% is photography)
- MA degree in photography

F4 OVERSEAS ACCREDITATIONS

The Society's Distinctions can be achieved by accreditation of courses that are the academic responsibility of a United Kingdom university and delivered by the same university overseas. The conditions for overseas accreditation can be obtained from the Distinctions Manager.

This new initiative currently recognises the University of Middlesex MA WBS Photography course delivered by the East Asia office Hong Kong for three cohorts with effect from September 2010.

SECTION G: THE PRACTICALITIES

This section sets out the practical aspects of applying for a Distinction.

One of the first and most important things you should do is read the criteria in this Handbook for the level of Distinction (and for Associateship and Fellowship the category) for which you are thinking of applying. This provides you with vital information of the sort of things the assessors are looking for in a successful submission and against which they assess your work.

G1 YOUR APPLICATION - THE FORM

- All applications must be made on the appropriate application form which can be downloaded from the website or requested from the Distinctions Department.
- Complete the form and send it with the appropriate fee to the Distinctions Department. The number of submissions which can be accepted at any one session is limited, so early application is advisable to avoid disappointment.
- You may submit more than one application at the same time, but a separate fee and form must be submitted for each one.
- Application forms must not be enclosed with the work (except CD which can be sent together).

G2 YOUR APPLICATION - THE EVIDENCE

- Evidence can be brought on the day of assessment - you should arrive no earlier than 9.15am and no later than 10.00am.
N.B. There will be no access before 9.15am.
- Portfolio boxes are highly recommended for carrying as well as sending your evidence. ('Nomad' will make boxes, whatever size you want: 01858 463114; when ordering it is advisable to ask for it to be foam lined and with handles.)
- If you are sending your work, make sure it is securely packed and arrives in Bath at least 10 days before the assessment.
- Please stick the evidence label provided on to the front of your parcel. Make sure that you have clearly written your email address on this label.
- As long as you use the labels provided, you should normally receive confirmation that your evidence and application form have arrived at The Society within 2 working days of receipt. If after 2 days you have not heard please contact distinctions@rps.org
- Please make sure that prints/slides are in the correct order (i.e. 1 - 10/15/20) and your name is on the back.
- The form and evidence must be sent separately, except for CD which can be sent with the application form.
- Please enclose your hanging plans and statement with your portfolio.

G3 PERSONAL DELIVERY AND COLLECTION

- Submissions may be left at Reception at The Society's Headquarters during normal office hours (9.30am - 4.30pm Monday to Friday) not at weekends.
- If you intend to collect your evidence on the day of the assessment, you should state this on your application form and it will be available at lunch time or at the end of the day.
- You can collect your evidence from The Society after assessment during office hours - contact the Distinctions Department and give a week's notice if possible.

G4 OVERSEAS PARCELS

- Please make sure that all clearances are paid, in order to avoid delays in delivery. For customs purposes, you must indicate that your evidence is a **Temporary import only - no commercial value** i.e. it is not being sent to the UK to be sold.
- Please stick the evidence label provided on to the front of your parcel. Ensure that 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 any import fees or taxes, and will not accept parcels that require any additional payments.
N.B. For overseas applicants the cost of returning prints may exceed the cost of reprinting, so you may decide not to have them returned.

G5 FEES

- For current fees please see application form.
- One resubmission for Licentiate or Associateship may be made at the reduced rate of half the normal application fee.
- For Fellowship, one resubmission to the same category may be made at a reduced fee.
- The fee for applications through the exemption scheme is half the standard application fee.

G6 PAYMENT

- Application fees must be sent with each application and can be paid by credit card, sterling cheque or postal order, or by an International Money Order or banker's draft drawn on a UK bank made payable to The Royal Photographic Society and crossed.
- Distinctions are only awarded to current members of The Society, so if you are already a member, you must ensure that your current year's 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.
- You should also include the cost of the return of your evidence including the cost of any insurance or registration by air freight.

G7 RETURNING YOUR PORTFOLIO

- Please see application form for details.
- CDs will not be returned unless specifically requested.
- Personal collection - see G3 above
- All reasonable care will be taken of evidence submitted, but The Society will not be responsible for any loss or damage whilst in its care or in transit.

PLEASE NOTE: The Society may wish to retain your portfolio for six months beyond the date of assessment. This is to enable it to be copied and used to help other potential applicants, for inclusion in a Society publication without payment of a fee, or for use on The Society website. Your co-operation is very much appreciated.

G8 CANCELLATION OR OTHER ALTERATIONS

- After submitting your application form, if for any reason you are unable to submit your portfolio or need to make any other changes, you must immediately email ben@rps.org Due to the volume of work received, it is essential that cancellations are made in writing.
N.B. Owing to the high demand for places, if you cancel within 2 weeks of the assessment date – either by withdrawing your application or transferring it to a future date - you will still be charged for that assessment.

G9 APPEALS PROCEDURE

- There is no appeal against recommendations made by the Panels or the Fellowship Board. However, an appeal for a review may be made on the grounds of a clearly demonstrated deviation from the Distinctions Procedures.

**SECTION H:
APPENDIX:
FURTHER
INFORMATION
AND ADDITIONAL
GUIDANCE**

H1 CHECK LISTS

We know that anyone ready to apply for a Distinction, whichever level, has put in a great deal of hard work in order to reach this stage. It is easy to be so anxious about getting the evidence right that some other aspect is overlooked. It is worth taking a few quiet moments to go through these check lists to make sure that you can tick all the boxes and reassure yourself that your submission is complete.

I) APPLICATION FORM

Completed all relevant sections

Application fee enclosed

Return postage included

Checked availability of places for Assessment

Non-Members: Membership details and payment included

Exemptions: Proof of qualification enclosed (i.e. copy of certificate)

II) EVIDENCE

Application form sent/place on assessment booked

Checked final date for submission of work

Prepared portfolio in accordance with criteria

Each image numbered in order required for display

Prints: numbered and named on the back

Transparencies: numbered, named and spotted on mounts

Hanging plans enclosed

ARPS/FRPS Statement enclosed

Evidence suitably packaged for sending

Label for sending completed and affixed to outside of parcel

Return label completed and enclosed

H2 TIPS

- 1 **Read the requirements carefully:** The general information, the criteria for the particular Distinction/category for which you are applying and the practical details of what /how to apply.
- 2 **The final choice of what to submit should be your decision:** Take plenty of time over this and try not to be influenced by your emotions i.e. that image of the Eiffel Tower may conjure up all sorts of reminders of a romantic holiday - but try to look at it objectively, without those associations. Is it still a good photograph?
- 3 **Body of work:** When putting a portfolio together, consider it as a whole as well as each individual image. Do the prints look good as a set? Do the slide/CD images flow easily in the sequence?
- 4 **'Making up the numbers':** If you have all but one image that you need for your submission do not include another just to make up the numbers - the Panel will spot it! Wait until you are satisfied with the whole set.
- 5 **Mounts:** In the main it is best to keep mounts all the same colour and size (even if the prints are different sizes). This helps to reinforce the cohesiveness of the set. Take care in the mounting of your prints - careless presentation creates doubts in the minds of the Panel members. White or off white mounts are generally thought to suit most types of work.

- 6 **Print Quality:** Try to ensure that the print quality is consistent throughout the submission; this adds to the cohesiveness of the set.
- 7 **Projected images:** It is generally better to avoid sudden changes from very bright images to very dark images. It can help to have some link from one image to the next such as subject matter, colour, tone, etc.
- 8 **Moving to the next level:** It is sometimes thought that you can add 5 images to a Licentiate submission and gain an Associateship, or even add to an Associateship submission to gain a Fellowship. In either case this is rarely successful as each level is at a considerably higher standard than the previous one. It is usually better to think about and work on a completely new project.

H3 HOW IT ALL WORKS

INFORMATION ABOUT THE DISTINCTION DAYS, PANEL MEMBERS

H3.1 ASSESSMENT DAYS/PANEL MEETINGS – LICENTIATESHIP AND ASSOCIATESHIP - STILLS

The dates for Assessment Days (also known as Panel meetings) are listed in the RPS Journal and on the website.

Licentiate Panels are held regularly throughout the year, while Associateship Panels are held mainly in the spring and autumn.

Meetings usually start at 10.30am and finish about 3.00/4.00pm with a break for lunch around 1.00pm. (A few assessments finish at lunchtime – it depends on the number of applications received.) Tea and coffee are normally available for those attending, but you will need to find your own lunch.

The day usually begins with a welcome from the Distinctions Manager and a brief introduction from the Chairman and then it is time for the work to be viewed.

Each submission is assessed in turn and this will be the first time they have been seen by the Panel. For the Associateship the statement is read out and then, if it is a slide or digital submission, it is projected twice; for digital submissions the thumbnails are displayed for reference. Prints are displayed in 2 or 3 rows and Panel members view them from their seats before getting up to have a closer look. The Chairman then asks one or more Panel members to comment on the work.

The Licentiate Panel members each complete a marking sheet while for Associateship the assessment is done on the basis of a vote, but in both cases the Panel members are making the assessment against the criteria.

The Chairman announces the result of each application i.e. whether or not it is being recommended to Council for the Distinction, and it is only following the formal ratification by Council that the result is official.

The whole procedure takes place anonymously, only the Chairman has your application form, but if you are successful, then your name is announced - usually to a round of applause. By the end of the day you should have a good idea about what the Panel is looking for as you will have heard why each submission has been passed or failed by the Panel. Tickets are free to applicants and there is a small charge for observers, but bear in mind that seating is limited and tickets for some assessments do run out.

Video recording, tape recording or photography are not allowed during assessments.

H3.2 PANEL MEMBERS

At each assessment there are usually 4 or 5 Panel members and a Chairman. Panel members are normally appointed every two years following the Council elections. Council makes these appointments, following advice from the Distinctions Advisory Board (DAB). All are Fellows of The Society (although Associate members may serve on the Licentiate Panel) and have been chosen for their experience and for their ability to assess, regardless of their own personal taste. Occasionally non-members with particular expertise are co-opted to Panels.

Panel members normally serve up to a maximum of 8 years and Chairmen for 6 years. In order to make sure that standards remain consistent, as well as taking into account advances in photography, changes in the membership of the Panels is a gradual process.

H3.3 DISTINCTIONS ADVISORY DAYS

LICENTIATESHIP AND ASSOCIATESHIP

Distinctions Advisory Days provide you with the opportunity of not only seeing successful submissions, but also having your own work considered and commented upon. You should, if possible, bring the number of images required for the Distinction for which you are applying, plus 5-10 extra. Ideally prints should be mounted. However, if you only have a few images about which you would like advice, that's fine – you do not have to bring a portfolio which is almost ready to submit.

Only Panel members can officially give advice and there are usually 2 or 3 present at these days which normally run from 10.30am - 4.30pm. The day usually starts with the Panel members saying a few words about the Distinctions and the specific categories they represent and showing examples of recently successful portfolios. Those attending then take it in turns to show their work; it can seem rather daunting to have to present your images in front of 20-30 people, but these advisory days are quite informal and remember - everyone is in the same position! At most of these days there is usually an opportunity also to have a private one to one session with the appropriate Panel member. Advisory Days are organised by the Regions in conjunction with the Distinctions Department and held all over the UK – see the Journal and website for details. Tickets need to be booked and paid for in advance through the relevant organiser.

You should bear in mind that any advice you receive from a Panel member is only his/her own opinion and at the assessment itself there will be four or five Panel members who may view your portfolio differently. It follows that Panel members cannot commit themselves to saying that you will definitely be successful; they can only give you guidance and the benefit of their experience.

Advisory days for the Licentiateship and Associateship are held throughout the UK. Details of dates and venues can be found on the website, in regional newsletters and in the RPS Journal.

FELLOWSHIP

Advisory Days for the Fellowship are normally held three times a year in different parts of the UK and are limited to 12 participants with no additional audience. They are open to anyone eligible to submit an application for the Fellowship, i.e. current Associate members of The Society and current Fellows of the BIPP. Two specially selected advisors with the appropriate skill and experience give advice on these days which follow a similar format to those held for Licentiateship and Associateship, i.e. successful submissions are shown and then those attending have their own work discussed.

If you want to attend one of these days, you need to book a ticket in advance through the relevant organiser - details can be found on the website and in the RPS Journal. You should bring a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 30 prints which should be mounted. You should bring a body of work which forms a substantial part of your proposed Fellowship submission. You will be expected to have a clear idea of the theme/concept of your submission.

You are only allowed to attend one such day prior to applying for the Fellowship unless you produce an entirely new body of work.

H3.4 FELLOWSHIP BOARD

The Fellowship Board normally comprises five members plus a Chairman, appointed by Council for their in-depth knowledge and wealth of experience of both photography and the Distinctions of The Society. The Chairmen of all the Fellowship Panels subject to review are expected to attend as observers and also to present any submissions recommended from their Panel.

The purpose of the Fellowship Board is to provide a moderating process and to ensure that the standard of work required to achieve a Fellowship is consistent across all the categories. It usually meets every six months and considers all the submissions recommended for the Fellowship by the specialist Panels and makes the final recommendations to Council.

H3.5 FELLOWSHIP SHOWINGS

Twice a year following the spring and autumn assessments, the successful submissions for Fellowship from the previous six months are shown in Bath. They are also shown in the regions from time to time. Sometimes one or two of the successful Fellows themselves are able to attend and talk about their work and it provides an excellent opportunity to see the best work that has been received.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. IMAGING SCIENTIST QUALIFICATIONS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Photographic and imaging techniques are used increasingly in practically all walks of life; the image is as important as the printed word. The basic science and technology that makes this possible comes from imaging scientists who work in a wide range of disciplines and applications. To recognise achievements in this field, and also to enhance career prospects and recognise professional competence, The Royal Photographic Society offers professional Imaging Scientist Qualifications.

These provide a structure leading to professional qualifications for engineers, scientists and technologists whose professional activities are concerned with quantitative or mechanistic aspects of imaging systems or their applications. They are being recognised by the imaging science community as essential benchmark qualifications benefiting all sections of the imaging world. The relevant academic disciplines (chemistry, engineering, physics, computer science, imaging science, colour science etc.) and their applications, will be interpreted as widely as possible.

The Qualifications may be gained by members of The Society working within relatively narrow specialisations but their achievements will require a range of widely applicable professional skills. Candidates are required to demonstrate at an appropriate level, and as required by their particular professional circumstances, an ability to undertake a programme of work, write reports and papers, work within a team and produce results.

Those members who acquire an Imaging Scientist Qualification will receive additionally a Society Distinction. In common with most bodies awarding vocational qualifications, the former (ISQ) status only continues whilst the person is professionally active, whether in full time employment or fully retired and is a member of The Society. Professional activity includes one (or more) of the following:

Professional activity (e.g. involvement in a professional body by serving on committees, attending meetings, mentoring)

Work based learning (e.g. consultancy, supervising staff/students, external examining, reflective practice)

Formal/Educational (e.g. writing articles/papers, further education)

Self-directed learning (e.g. reading journals, reviewing books/refereeing articles)

Other (e.g. voluntary work, public service)

Members who terminate qualified membership, on ceasing to be professionally active, may retain The Society Distinction as long as they remain paid up members of The Society.

1.2 LEVELS

Level 1: (QIS & LRPS) Qualified Imaging Scientist & Licentiate: for those with academic qualifications below degree level.

Level 2: (GIS & ARPS) Graduate Imaging Scientist & Associate: for those with a first degree.

Level 3: (AIS & ARPS) Accredited Imaging Scientist & Associate: for those with postgraduate experience as imaging scientists.

Level 4: (ASIS & FRPS) Accredited Senior Imaging Scientist & Fellow: the senior professional qualification.

Candidates with a valid claim for entry to a higher category need not proceed through the lower categories.

1.3 EVIDENCE

The evidence required in support of applications for qualifications will normally be in 4 parts:

- i) Documentary evidence of prior academic qualifications. In certain cases this requirement may be replaced by a longer period of relevant experience.
- ii) A statement of experience as a professional imaging scientist.
- iii) A full curriculum vitae.
- iv) Statements from referees which will allow the extent, level, scope, and experience of the candidate in imaging science to be assessed. Where a mentor (see supervision below) has been appointed, his/her report must be included.

1.4 STANDARDS

For each level of qualification there are three basic routes designated A, B and C. The descriptions below are not prescriptive but are intended to give a general indication of the level required.

1.4.1 LEVEL 1 QUALIFIED IMAGING SCIENTIST & LICENTIATE (QIS & LRPS)

For this level there is a minimum age of 21 years.

- A BTEC HND in engineering or science.
- B One year of relevant experience. Where the candidate has not satisfied part A, four years of relevant experience will be accepted instead.
- C Normally, the candidate will have performed work of a non-routine nature, which may have been directed by a senior colleague, and have produced accurate records and simple internal reports.

1.4.2 LEVEL 2 GRADUATE IMAGING SCIENTIST & ASSOCIATE (GIS & ARPS)

- A A suitable degree in engineering or science.
- B One year of relevant experience where the candidate has an honours degree and two years of relevant experience where the candidate has a pass degree.
- C Normally, the candidate will have made a useful contribution to the work of a team of scientists and may have directed the work of a technician.

1.4.3 LEVEL 3 ACCREDITED IMAGING SCIENTIST & ASSOCIATE (AIS & ARPS)

- A Normally either QIS or GIS.
- B Five years of relevant experience post QIS or 3 years of relevant experience post GIS. Where the candidate has not satisfied part A, nine years of relevant experience will be accepted instead.
- C As GIS but more evidence reflecting the years involved. Normally, the candidate will have generated and completed an individual project, such as a postgraduate thesis, and will have written internal reports and/or published refereed papers. The Qualifications Board will expect to see evidence of independent work.

1.4.4 LEVEL 4 ACCREDITED SENIOR IMAGING SCIENTIST & FELLOW (ASIS & FRPS)

NOTE: The ASIS qualification was conceived as being equivalent to having Chartered status.

- A Normally AIS.
- B Five years of relevant experience post AIS. Alternatively, nine years of relevant experience post GIS or eleven years post QIS. Where the candidate has not satisfied QIS (part A) fourteen years of relevant experience will be accepted instead.
- C Individual work of a high standard, which has shown originality. The Qualifications Board will expect to see evidence of a broad involvement in imaging science beyond a narrow specialism.

1.5 EXEMPTIONS

Members of The Royal Photographic Society who are also members of other professional or learned bodies and hold equivalent qualifications may apply for AIS (e.g. MRSC, or MInstP) or for ASIS (e.g. FRSC, or FInstP) provided that they have a sufficient period of appropriate imaging science work experience. In these cases, only evidence of the exempting qualification, a statement of relevant experience, a curriculum vitae and one referee's report (Referee 2) are required.

1.6 SUPERVISION

It is recommended that the candidate registers an intention to apply for a Qualification at the beginning of the period of qualifying experience or as soon as practicable thereafter. This allows the candidate to seek a mentor who will monitor, assist and advise the candidate on their progress during the qualifying period. The mentor's final report provides detailed evidence in support of the application. In cases where the candidate's work is confidential, the mentor's report may provide the major or sole evidence.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the candidate to identify and engage with a suitably qualified mentor and notify The Society for approval.

1.7 QUALIFICATIONS BOARD

The Qualifications Board will consider applications for all Qualifications. Membership of the Qualifications Board will be

determined by the Council of The Royal Photographic Society and will consist of members who hold an ASIS Qualification. The Qualifications Board will be responsible for the recognition of academic courses.

In cases of failure the Qualifications Board will give clear reasons to the candidate and, where appropriate, guidance and advice, without prejudice or commitment, as to how a future application should be made.

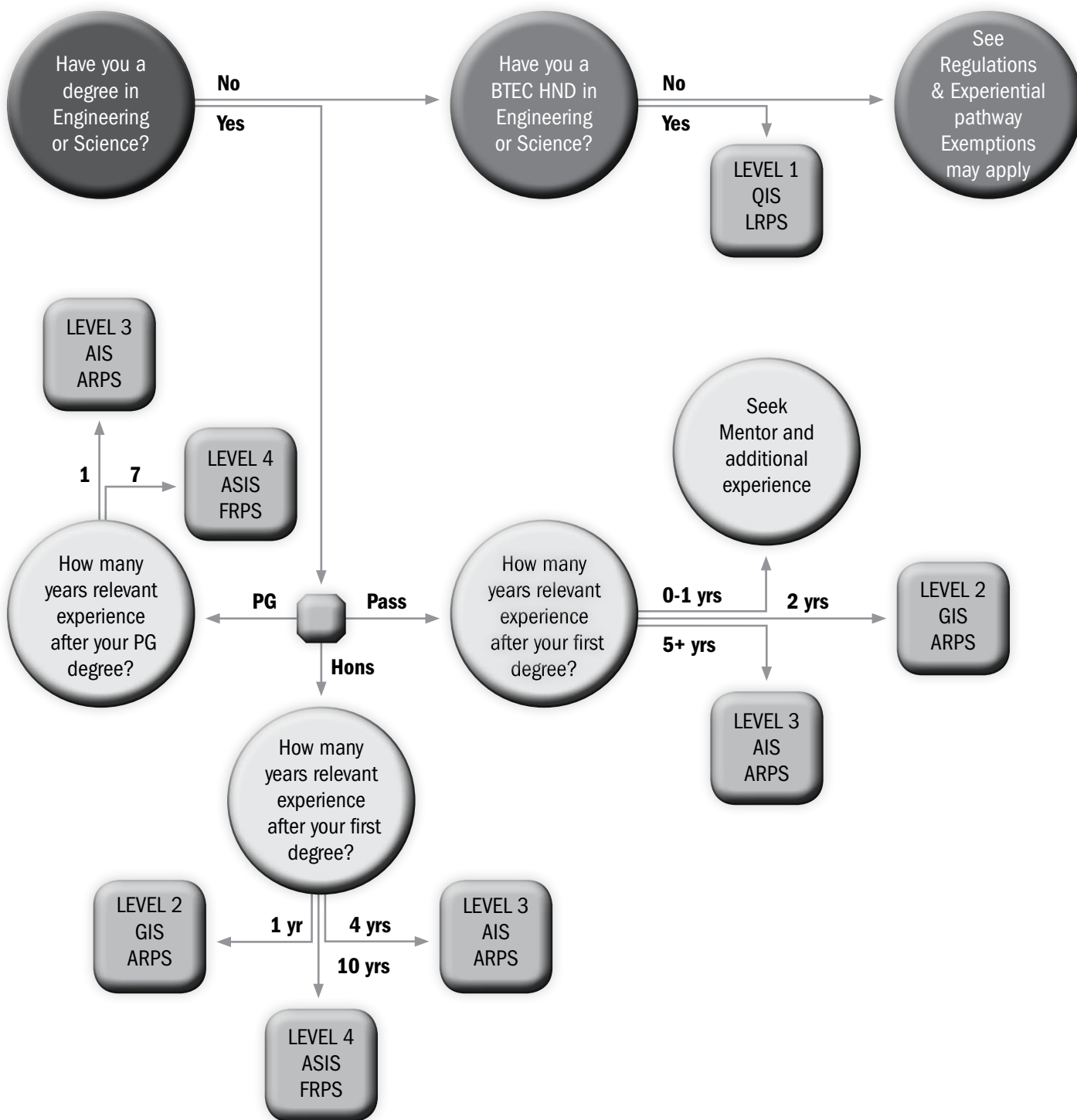
1.8 ENGINEERING COUNCIL (UK) REGISTRATION

Suitably qualified Imaging Scientists may be admitted to the Engineering Council (UK) Register as Chartered Engineers, Incorporated Engineers or Engineering Technicians.

Full details of this scheme are available from Society Headquarters.

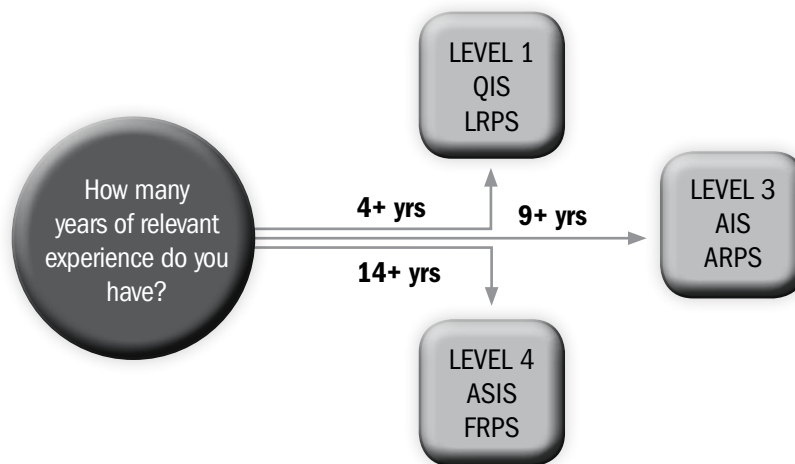
1.9 FLOW CHARTS

1.9.1 PATHWAYS TO IMAGING SCIENTIST QUALIFICATIONS

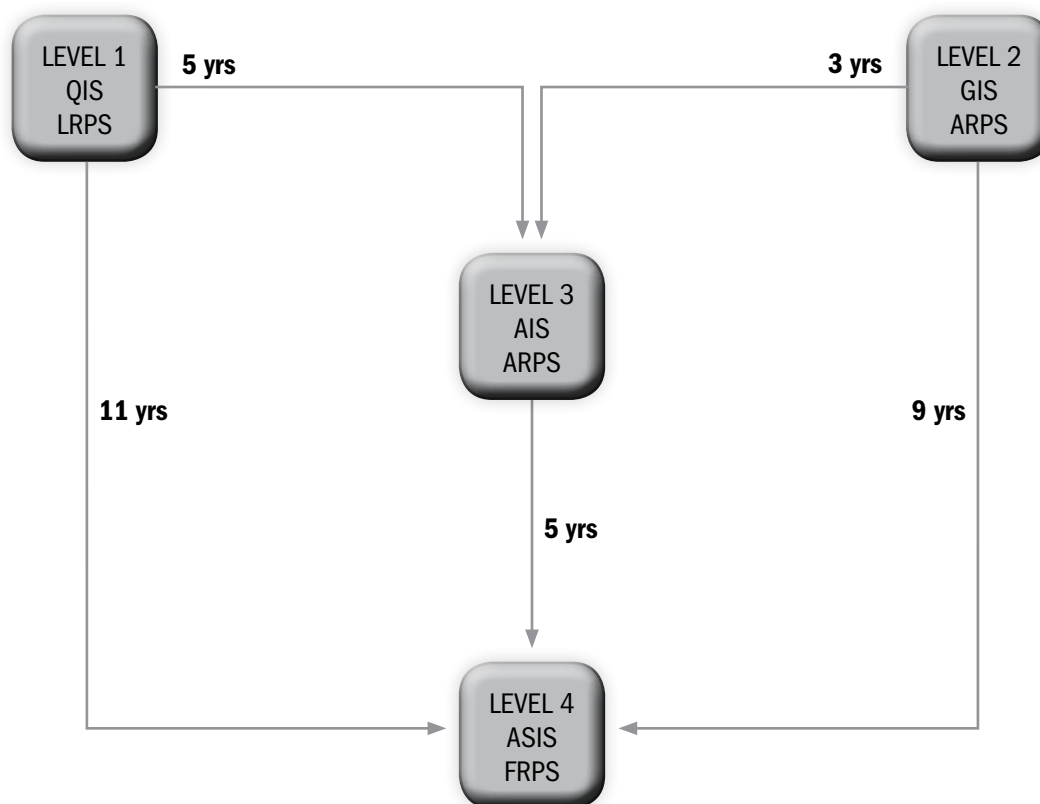


Level 1: Qualified Imaging Scientist & Licentiate (QIS & LRPS)
Level 2: Graduate Imaging Scientist & Associate (GIS & ARPS)
Level 3: Accredited Imaging Scientist & Associate (AIS & ARPS)
Level 4: Accredited Senior Imaging Scientist & Fellow (ASIS & FRPS)
PG: Postgraduate (Doctorate). For Masters add 2 years

1.9.2 EXPERIENTIAL PATHWAYS TO IMAGING SCIENTIST QUALIFICATIONS (FOR THOSE WITHOUT FORMAL DEGREE QUALIFICATIONS)



PROGRESS BETWEEN LEVELS



- Level 1:** Qualified Imaging Scientist & Licentiate (QIS & LRPS)
- Level 2:** Graduate Imaging Scientist & Associate (AIS & ARPS)
- Level 3:** Accredited Imaging Scientist & Associate (AIS & ARPS)
- Level 4:** Accredited Senior Imaging Scientist & Fellow (ASIS & FRPS)

CONTACT DETAILS

THE DISTINCTIONS DEPARTMENT

The Royal Photographic Society

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DIRECTIONS TO FENTON HOUSE

You can be sure of a warm welcome when you visit Fenton House. There is a small exhibition of members' work to view at Reception which changes every month and you can help yourself to a cup of tea or coffee. We are open weekdays 9.30am - 4.30pm and look forward to seeing you.

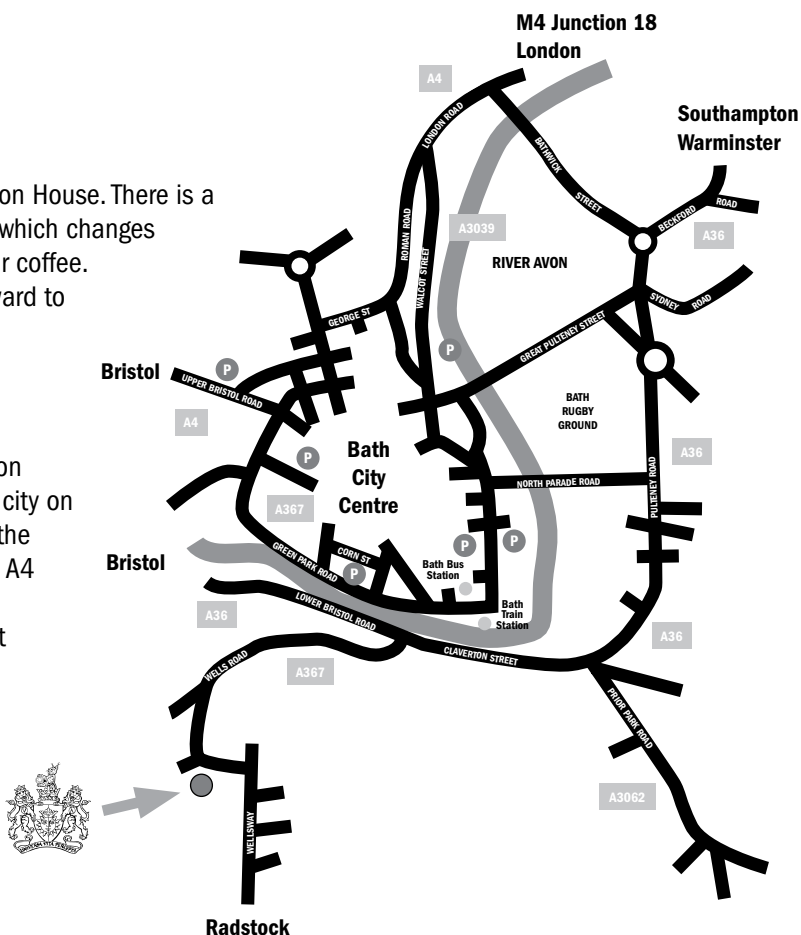
TRAVELLING BY CAR

Directions from M4 motorway Exit M4 motorway junction 18. Proceed south on A46 to Bath As you approach the city on a dual carriageway take the exit to Bath and go right at the roundabout, entering the city from the north east on the A4 London Road; follow this towards the city centre.

At the first main traffic lights (after Morrisons supermarket on the left) turn left onto A36/A367 Wells and Exeter "ring" road. Proceed over Bridge, past Fire Station (on your left) and at the second set of traffic lights turn right sign posted Bristol A36 (A4) Wells A39.

Go straight over next roundabout and follow "ring" road through main traffic lights under railway bridge and on through Widcombe Village, (follow road and stay in left hand lane) until you reach the large roundabout which is bisected by main railway line viaduct.

At this roundabout/intersection take first left exit A367 Shepton Mallet/Radstock and continue up the hill "Wells Road" for approx. $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile.



TRAVELLING BY TRAIN

Regular service from London Paddington: approximately 90 minutes
From Bath Spa train station: on foot - 25 minute walk up a steep hill.
Exit station walking left along Dorchester Street over foot bridge, under viaduct, through subway, turn right, go up the hill. Fenton House is at the top of the hill on the right.

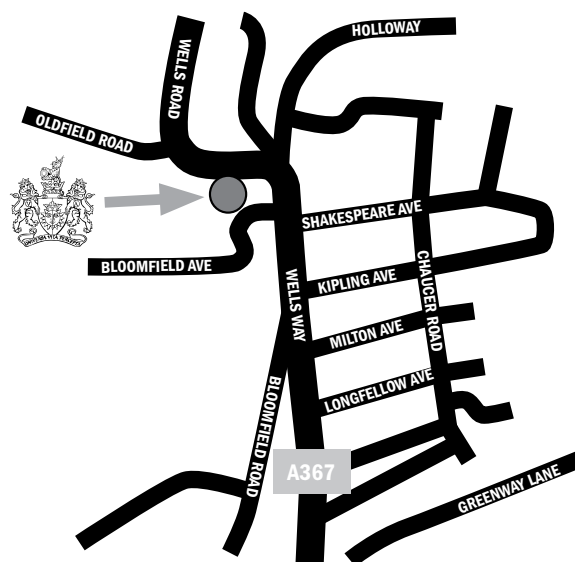
Alternatively, there is a taxi rank immediately outside the station.

PARKING

There is limited parking at The Society's offices at weekends when workshops are taking place.

During the week there is on street parking in the surrounding area.

If you drive past the RPS, parking spaces can usually be found either on the main road or the streets off to the left.



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