

Distinctions Procedure: Guidelines for Distinctions Advisory and Review Days (The Distinctions Department are currently rewriting and updating this document. Publishing date: February 2019)

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Scope

These Guidelines are intended to give guidance to those involved in planning and running Advisory Days. The aim is that these events should be run consistently and be as helpful as possible to the members and non-members who attend.

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Associated Documents: DP001; DP002; DP004; DP009; DP010; MP008; MF003

1. All Advisory Days

1.1: Purpose

The Society's Policy is to offer a programme of Distinctions Advisory Days to assist the substantial part of the membership and non-members who are working towards a Distinction. Distinctions Advisory Days should be seen as advising the potential candidate on the requirement and standards of the Distinction. The aim should be to boost confidence, to help to promote the Distinctions and to encourage further applications, but without giving false hope. They are not training days and are not a teaching activity as such.

Distinctions Advisory Days are held for the Licentiate and Associate on the same day. Advisory Days for the Fellowship are held separately for members who: (a) are currently Associates of The



Society or Fellows of the BIPP and (b) have already produced a substantial body of work towards their Fellowship submission. There will be no additional observers at Fellowship Advisory days.

1.2: Planning and Organisation

Advisory Days must be planned in conjunction with Headquarters. Regional Organisers and Group Organisers should approach the Distinctions Manager if they wish to hold an Advisory Day. Planning through HQ ensures that dates do not clash, that the work is fairly spread amongst advisors and that there is an adequate cross section of experience available on the day. The Distinctions Manager will consult with Panel Chairmen/Distinctions Advisory Board to decide which advisors should attend. The decision on which panel members attend will be made by the Distinctions Department.

Tickets for Distinctions Advisory Days are normally made available via the Region or Group.

It is Society policy that only the following may give advice:

- Fellowship Board Members
- Current Panel members
- Panel members who have stood down after 4 terms (8 years), may give advice for another term (2 years).
- DAB members with panel experience

Regional Organisers and Group organisers must not offer advice or make comments on the day.

Organisers should ensure the date does not clash with other local events.

The Journal will publicise events with information taken from the website.

Successful portfolios of work are held by The Society and appropriate sets will be sent to the Organiser a few days prior to the event with literature on the Distinctions requirements.

It is understood that no advisor will receive a fee for attending Advisory Days, but travelling expenses will be paid. If overnight accommodation is required, this will be arranged by the Regional Organiser or Group Organiser concerned.

Each Region is asked to hold at least one Advisory Day each year. The timing of the Advisory Days should be spread to facilitate the movement of work between them. This will be co-ordinated by the Distinctions Department, as all dates have to be confirmed through them.

Booking: when booking, participants should be sent a form to return to the organiser on which they indicate whether or not they are bringing work and, if so, which level of Distinction and category they are interested.

Fees for all Advisory and Review days are fixed by The Society. Should lunch be provided, this cost will be additional to the fee. Any variations to this pricing structure must be agreed with the



Distinctions Manager. Individuals paying the non-member rate will be given a discount voucher redeemable towards their membership fee should they join The Society within 3 months.

1.3: Organisation on the Day

1. Facilities: the following are essential when considering a venue:

- Large room and seating
- Print boards to accommodate up to 20 large prints, preferably 3 rows - must be lit to a high standard.
- Package of literature from HQ
- Example of successful portfolios provided by HQ
- Coffee/tea facilities
- Lunch catering for assessors (participants to make their own arrangements)

2. Structure of the day: one advisor (normally the most senior) will be designated by the Distinctions Manager, to chair the Advisory Day. The final structure of the day should be agreed with the Panel Chair. Suggested programme for the day as follows:

- Introduction to The Society and its Distinctions by the Panel member chairing the day. It should be emphasised and made absolutely clear in the introduction that the opinions given are those of the Panel members present. It must be clearly stated that the opinions being expressed may not represent the view of the Panel on the day of the assessment, which will consist of up to five members and a Chair. The text statement which must be read out and provided to all attendees is given in Appendix 1.
- Short presentation by each advisor on the requirements and assessment criteria of his/her particular discipline.
- Examples of successful portfolios should be shown with a brief commentary by the appropriate Panel member.
- It is possible that not all work shown will have been unanimously approved. Panel members should not express disagreement with the final decision on their own or other Panels' decisions.
- Attendees then show their work for comment. Each applicant will receive a summary advice form. The other copy of this duplicate Advice Form is returned to the Distinctions Department by the organiser. The organiser is asked to complete the personal details with the advice completed by one of the advisors, who may work together as a team to assist each other. There can be no question as to the advice given and any subsequent enquiry or complaint can be readily answered by referral to the form. This form must be used by all panel members who give advice in any situation, including one to one advice, when they should retain the Society copy.



1.4: Notes for Advisors

1. Giving advice to would be applicants and those who have failed an assessment are two of the most important services The Society provides to its members. It can also be one of the most difficult situations for Panel members to handle.

- Always give your honest opinion.
- Try to encourage but do not give false hope. It is important to be honest at this stage, then to find out at the assessment.
- Don't be unkind or rude but if work is very substandard - say so and clearly explain why.
- If you are unsure about the current requirements of Panels other than your own or where the work would best fit, say so.
- Be careful how you recommend an application to your own Panel - it is understandable but looks bad if you subsequently disagree with yourself on assessment day, unless they have not followed your advice.
- If it is impossible to advise which Panel should adjudicate on a set of work advice should be given to contact the Distinctions Manager who will seek the opinion of Panel Chairmen or the DAB.
- Remember applicants hear what they want to hear. Check their understanding of your comments. If possible, give a clear summary at the end of your advice.
- If two members from the same Panel are present only one should give an opinion.
- Avoid selecting and/or prescribing the complete panel. The final selection should be that of the candidate.
- Unless agreed in advance with the Distinctions manager, you must only give advice on your own category/level.

2. Failed Work:

- Establish the background.
- Listen to the applicant.
- You may find there is a grievance, which they need to express. If so advise the Distinctions Department.

3. Dress Code

Society Policy is that at least a smart casual style of dress should be worn.

4. Expenses

Expenses may be claimed in accordance with The Society's guidelines (MF003). Expenses exceeding the guidelines must be agreed in advance.

2. Licentiate and Associate Advisory Days

2.1: As the Licentiate and Pictorial and Creative categories are the most popular, it is suggested that members from these Panels should be represented at most LRPS and ARPS Advisory Days. One member from each advertised category must be in attendance.

2.2: Numbers: It is recommended that there should be a maximum of 20 participants bringing work to be seen in a day. Numbers of viewers is only limited by venue itself.



2.3: Quantity of work: (minimum of 10 images)

Prints should be mounted if at all possible

- Licentiate up to 20 images
- Associate up to 25 images

3. Fellowship Advisory Days

3.1: Fellowship Advisory Days will normally be held three times a year. The number of members participating will be limited to 12 and there will be no additional audience.

3.2: There will be two specially selected assessors to advise on the day, ensuring that the work presented is fitted to the appropriate areas of the specialist. Advisors who have the required skill to undertake such advisory days will be selected by the Distinctions Advisory Board. Normally there will be one advisor from the Fellowship Board and one from a list of suitably experienced members designated by the Distinctions Advisory Board.

3.3: These advisory days 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.

3.4: Attendees should bring with them a body of work which forms a substantial part of their proposed Fellowship submission, with a draft statement of intent, and should be ready to show a possible set of twenty images.

Quantity of work: minimum of 20 images and maximum 30; prints should be mounted.

3.5: Applicants will be allowed to attend only two such days prior to applying for the Fellowship unless they produce an entirely new body of work.

3.6: Regional Organisers must return the Society copy of the duplicate Advice Form to the Distinctions Manager who will maintain a record for future reference.

4. Distinctions Review Days: Licentiate and Associate

4.1. These days provide timed individual sessions with an Advisor and image requirements are as for Advisory Days. However two advisors will be present at all time during the session in order that there is corroboration of the advice given. The second advisor will complete the Advice form.

4.2. The purpose of these events are to allow busy people to access a specific slot in the day, rather than giving up a complete day. In addition it may help those who are reticent about their work being discussed in public. They will normally be offered in five key locations, London, Edinburgh, Bath, Cambridge and Manchester.

4.3. The fee is significantly higher than an Advisory day. In addition it is hoped that such a programme will reduce the need for one to one in panel member's homes.



Appendix 1

Advisory Days Statement

Text to be read out and provided to attendees at Advisory Days

Advice given by Panel Members on Attaining a Distinction

Distinctions are awarded by Council on the recommendations of Panels of experts in the given disciplines. Typically each Panel consists of a Chair and five Panel members.

The Panels do not always agree unanimously on a submission. It therefore follows that the advice given by an individual Panel member may not be that of the majority.

ALL advice and a recommendation to submit are given on the understanding that they are the personal opinions of the Panel member present and may not reflect the majority view.

It is possible that in a marginal situation a Panel member may give advice to submit and then, after discussion with the other members of the Panel, may vote against the submission on the adjudication day.

Similarly, advice to submit in a particular discipline is given on the same basis.

The Society makes every effort to give applicants the best possible chance of success while also ensuring that consistent standards are maintained. For this reason a submission may be referred from one expert Panel to another if this is considered appropriate.

- The advice we give is our personal opinion.
- When the Panel members meet they may not agree with us.
- At the Panel meeting we may change our opinion after hearing the views of our colleagues.
- We shall be honest and we want to help.
- If your work is below the standard required we shall say so, it's not in your interest or ours to give false hope.
- Do ask questions.
- Do listen carefully, and if you are not sure please ask for clarification.
- Do not record or take photographs; also do not post about any image on which advice is given on Social media sites.
- You will be provided with a summary of the advice in writing.
- Our aim today is to give you the best chance of being successful, by giving advice to the best of our knowledge.

Appendix 2

New Advice Form to follow when approved

