

Photographic Awards

Ian Whiting

April 2012

Many photographers like to prove or improve their skills by obtaining recognised awards that allow them to add the qualifications after their name, e.g. John Smith ARPS and Susan Smith DPAGB.

Probably the two main awards for photography in the UK are the RPS (Royal Photographic Society) and PAGB (Photographic Alliance of Great Britain)

I have tried to distil the differences between the two organizations. If anyone notices an error please let me know so I can update this document. Charges and conditions may change over time so do download the latest rules and regulations from their respective web sites.

RPS

You can join as an individual, ordinary member and attend their lectures etc at a reduced rate. You must be a member and renew your membership to use the letters after your name.

Web site: www.rps.org

PAGB

The PAGB exists to promote club photography. You cannot join as an individual member but must belong a club that is affiliated with the PAGB. You may apply for their awards and once awarded can continue to use the letters after your name at no further charge.

Web site: www.pagb-photography-uk.co.uk

Awards

Each has its own flavours and rules. For instance the first (lowest) RPS level is LRPS and the next award is ARPS

The first (lowest) PAGB award is the CPAGB and the second is DPAGB

They both use a similar system of judging a panel of your prints (or PDIs) and make their award accordingly. They both make a charge for submission and, should you not pass, a resubmission. They both have a waiting list of several months. They both have rules that regarding when and you can apply at each level. They both have guidance days where one can get advice. They both accept either prints or PDIs. The initial entry fees are generally similar but the PAGB does not charge an annual fee to add the award after your name.

Award	Level	No.of Images	Submission	Resubmission	+ Annual fee (65+)
LRPS	1	10	£50	£25	£108 (£80) *
ARPS	2	15	£75	£37.50	£108 (£80) *
FRPS	3	20	£100	£60	£108 (£80) *
CPAGB	1	10	£60	£50	0
DPAGB	2	15	£75	£65	0
MPAGB	3	20	£95	£85	0

* Different rates for students, disabled, youth, overseas, retired etc.

PAGB Awards Summary

These next two sections have been copied from an email by Rod Wheelans, April 2012, *my notes added in green italics*

CPAGB

The Descriptive Guideline for CREDIT Award (CPAGB) is GOOD CLUB PHOTOGRAPHY

GOOD = above average club photography

The entry fee is £60.00. Resubmission £50.00.

10 Prints or 10 PDI are required and the total score of 200 or more will gain the Award. This is an average of 20 per photograph but you do not need to score 20 for every photograph in your entry.

Six judges award their score for each image, each giving a score of 2, 3 or 4 (possibly 5 for a very exceptional image.) Thus making a maximum score of 24 (or 30 if you get all fives!) points per image. The accumulative score for the entire portfolio denotes whether the award is won or not. For CPAGB you need 200 or more points from 10 images.

To compare this with a Bedford CC competition (judged out of 20 points per image) I would estimate that each of your 10 images must expect to score 18 and above. Although you might get away with one at 16 if another gets 20 etc.

We have to put some descriptive label on the Award to give an idea of the standard you require to achieve but, in reality, there is no such thing as a consistent "Club Standard". The standard of photography varies considerably from club to club and what is 'Good' in one club may not be as successful in another.

We cannot know the standard of work in your Club or in your Federation and, by the their sheer variety, there can be no consistent "Club Standard". It is our highly experienced Adjudicators who define what "Good Club Standard" is.

Our Adjudicators have judged at a great many Clubs and they are well equipped to do this, plus we have in place a permanent team and careful briefings to ensure that this is as fair and consistent as is humanly possible.

VOTE "YES" Should do well in the Average Club in domestic competitions or in Inter-Club competitions. Could be chosen to represent the club in Federation competitions. This merits a vote of YES which is recorded as 4.

VOTE "NO" Not up to the required standard. May have some merit but does not meet the criteria for a pass. No better than average club photography. This merits a vote of NO which is recorded as 2.

VOTE "NEAR MISS" Only used when the Adjudicator is not quite sure or where the photograph has just missed the standard - only very close misses would be marked as 3. Remember that FOUR Adjudicators voting NEAR MISS and TWO Adjudicators voting YES is recorded as a passing score of 20. (3+3+3+3+4+4 = 20)

VOTE "NEXT LEVEL" Well above the standard required. Likely, but not of course guaranteed to score 4 at the DPAGB level. This merits the best vote possible indicating that the photograph will be satisfactory at the NEXT LEVEL and that Adjudicator would vote Yes at the DPAGB level. This is recorded as 5.

The PAGB decided at its last meeting to add a requirement that Print entrants must submit a CD of PDI versions of each Print entered to be projected for the audience when the print is being judged. This will apply for the Nov 2012 Adjudication and thereafter.

DPAGB

The Descriptive Guideline for DISTINCTION Award (DPAGB) is OPEN EXHIBITION STANDARD PHOTOGRAPHY

The entry fee is £75.00. Resubmission £65.00

15 Prints or 15 PDI are required and a total score of 300 or more will gain the Award. This is an average of 20 per photograph but you do not need to score 20 for every photograph in your entry.

Application can be made for the DPAGB Award without first gaining the CPAGB provided the applicant meets their Federation

The Adjudicators are looking for photographs that, in their opinion, would be likely to achieve a high level of acceptance in Open Exhibitions but, although there is a much greater commonality of standard at exhibition level, there are still variations. Some Exhibitions accept up to 40% of the entries, many accept around 20%. Some Exhibitions have high class judges who the PAGB would choose as Adjudicators, some don't. Some Exhibitions apply different criteria and standards. Not necessarily poorer but different.

Exhibitions cannot therefore be relied upon to define a consistent "Exhibition Standard". Other bodies, such as FIAP and PSA award distinctions for a high number of exhibition acceptances but the PAGB Award is given based on an assessment by an expert panel of Adjudicators. The pictures do not need to have been previously entered in any Open Exhibition but success at this level is obviously a good guide. Conversely, a high number of acceptances in exhibitions for a photograph does not necessarily guarantee a high mark in the PAGB Adjudication.

VOTE "YES" Up to the standard that is likely to do well in Open Exhibitions, achieving a high rate of acceptance. This merits a vote of YES which is recorded as 4.

VOTE "NO" Not likely to be accepted very often in Exhibitions and will probably, in the opinion of our Adjudicators, be rejected more often than it is accepted. This merits a vote of NO which is recorded as 2.

VOTE "NEAR MISS" Only used when the Adjudicator is not quite sure or where the photograph has just missed the standard - only very close misses would be marked as 3. Remember that FOUR Adjudicators voting NEAR MISS and just TWO voting YES is recorded as a passing score of 20. $(3+3+3+3+4+4 = 20)$

VOTE "NEXT LEVEL" Well above the standard required. Likely, but not of course guaranteed to score 4 at the MPAGB level. This merits the best vote possible indicating that the photograph will be satisfactory at the NEXT LEVEL and the Adjudicator would vote Yes at the MPAGB level. This is recorded as 5