

SANDTON
PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



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Rules for the Submission, Judging and Management of images

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	
SPS	Sandton Photographic Society
PSSA	Photographic Society of South Africa
LPSSA	Licentiatehip of The Photographic Society of South Africa
APSSA	Associateship of The Photographic Society of South Africa
FPSSA	Fellowship of The Photographic Society of South Africa
Photovault	http://www.photovaultonline.com
AFIAP	Artist – The International Federation of Photographic Art
EFIAP	Excellence, The International Federation of photographic art
JAP	Judges Accreditation Program
JPG/JPEG	Joint Photographic Expert Group
HDR	High Dynamic Range
Nature	A generic term for the Botanical and Zoological categories

1. INTRODUCTION

This document describes the requirements for the submission of images by members, along with other relevant information.

These rules have been voted on and accepted by club members at the **November 2020 Special General Meeting** and will replace all rules prior to this date with effect from 1 January 2021. The rules will be reviewed on a regular basis as new substantial new technologies need to be incorporated or material rule changes are made by the PSSA.

2. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The following general requirements apply:

- a. Members may submit up to four images per evening for advancement. These may be either colour digital, monochrome digital, colour print or monochrome print.
- b. For the set subject competition, members may enter two digital images.
- c. Print titles must be legible and include the relevant Category.
- d. Members should not submit similar images at the same meeting, even if they are in different mediums or sections.
- e. A print or digital image entered for club judging may only be used once for advancement. You may not re-use an entry in a higher star rating nor in another medium (e.g. A digital colour image may not be converted to monochrome or to a print and resubmitted for advancement). However, you may use the same image for set subject, Trophy Night, inter-club competitions and National and International Salons. An image entered for advancement in one medium may be entered in competitions and salons in another medium e.g. a print entry may be entered in a digital salon.
- f. For permitted enhancement and manipulation, see Section 9.
- g. The original image and all elements therein must have been taken by the photographer, whatever photographic medium is used. All actions in reaching the final presentation must be made by the photographer with the exclusion of film processing, un-manipulated commercial scanning and printing. By virtue of submitting an entry, the photographer certifies the work as his own.
- h. An image should not contain any added text, signature nor watermarks.

3. YOUR IMAGES AND COPYRIGHT CONSIDERATIONS

When we, as photographers, share our images with others, we are in effect publishing our work.

The author owns these creative images, just like property.

When an author enters an image into a Club competition, for grading, or any other reason, the author is in effect entering into a “Limited Use” arrangement with the Club – in this case with the Sandton Photographic Society.

This “Limited Use” includes the following:

1. The author automatically agrees to and accepts all the rules which apply to the competition, grading, or other purpose for which the author has entered his/her image.
2. By entering images to the Club, the author agrees to these images being posted on the Club website and social media pages, and in terms of an arrangement with PSSA, to be entered for inter-club competitions. The Club assumes no liability for any misuse of copyright.
3. “Best Image of the Year”, is an award presented to one of our members annually and is projected prior to every meeting.
4. Notwithstanding clauses 2. and 3. above, the Club does appreciate that an author might like to preserve the impact of a particular image, such as in the assembly of a panel of images for possible Honours. In such a case, where the author would like to restrict the publishing of a particular image, the responsibility will rest on the author to advise the SPS Committee in this regard.
5. Except for the above, the Club guarantees that these images will not be printed, published nor projected at any other time and for any other reason, and that they will never be passed on, nor sold to, any other third party.
6. The SPS Club cannot prevent members, judges, or guests, from discussing or commenting on these images, and this shall not be considered a violation of the author’s privacy, integrity, or copyright.

4. SUBMISSION OF DIGITAL IMAGES

a. General

All digital images must be entered electronically via <http://www.photovaultonline.com> and must be submitted prior to the cut-off date and time – usually midnight on the Sunday prior to the Wednesday monthly meeting. Please refer to the PhotoVault website for details.

b. Sizing and naming of electronic files

Sandton Photographic Society follows the PSSA guidelines for digital photography. When submitting for digital projection the image file must be no larger than 2000 kb and must be in JPEG High Definition format with a maximum horizontal pixel resolution of 1920 and a maximum vertical pixel resolution of 1080. It is recommended that the image be converted to the sRGB colour profile to ensure correct colours during display and judging.

Each image must have a title consisting of no more than 24 letters – and capitals should be used where applicable. Only the title is required when uploading images to Photovault – the members name and star rating are obtained from the member's profile in Photovault. It is the individual member's responsibility to ensure that their details are kept up-to-date.

5. SUBMISSION OF PRINTS

• General

All print entries must be registered on PhotoVault and must be submitted prior to the cut-off time and date which is usually midnight on the Sunday prior to the monthly meeting. The images must be sized and labelled in the same manner as the digital images.

These images will not be projected nor seen by the judges, but will provide a reference for club management and also enable the PhotoVault Judging System to be used.

• Mounting Requirements

Choose a mount that suits the size of the print – allow for a reasonable border.
Minimum size: 20 x 25 cm excluding mount (8" x 10")
Maximum size: 40 x 50 cm including mount (16" X 20")

The following information must appear clearly on the back of the print (this is mandatory):

The photographer's **name, title of image, category, star rating, and colour/monochrome**, and an **arrow** to show the **right-side up**.

↑ *Example 1:*
Harry Potter – A Windy Day
Pic – 1 star
Colour

Example 2:
Mary Lamb Elephants
Zoological 3 star
Monochrome



6. SALONS

A Photographic Salon is a competition held either Nationally or Internationally.

Members are encouraged to enter Salons and do require salon acceptances for advancement beyond 3 Star, however, a member may only be credited for three acceptances from any one image.

Members are encouraged to study the individual salon rules and requirements as they all differ.

Members may only be credited with three salon acceptances for a single image even if the same image has been entered in salons of a different medium – e.g. colour, monochrome, prints or digital, or if the title has been changed.

7. COMPETENCY CATEGORIES

Members are all graded into so called “Star Ratings”. New members are all graded as

1 Star, unless they have previously been graded by another club, or can motivate a higher grade, based on proven photographic ability, in which case a panel of 12 images must be submitted to the committee who will then decide on an appropriate star rating.

As members advance, based on the criteria in section 12, they move from one star rating to the next. This process is documented by the Club administrators.

Members who return to the club after a period of absence may return at their previous star rating. New members who join from other clubs may join at an equivalent star rating at their previous club.

The star ratings are discussed in section 10.

8. IMAGE CATEGORIES

Images may be entered as either Colour or Monochrome.

Monochrome is described as black and white or toned entirely with a single colour.

Sepia will remain a monochrome work as will one where a single colour has been used e.g.blue (the entire image is blue). A black and white image that has a colour added to it becomes a colour work.

Image categories used at SPS are assigned as follows:

NATURE

- Includes Nature landscapes - human elements not allowed
- Images of live, wild animals, birds and reptiles in their natural surroundings.
- The presence of scientific bands on wild animals is acceptable.
- Human elements are not allowed.
- No mounted specimens.
- No domestic animals.
- No manipulation is allowed in this category.
- No elements may be moved, cloned, added, deleted, rearranged or combined.
- Resizing, sharpening, cropping, selective lightening or darkening, and restoration of original colour is allowed

SPORT/ PHOTOJOURNALISM/STREET PHOTOGRAPY

- Photographs of recognised sport activities illustrating its participants in action.
- Images in this section must be informative and have emotional impact, usually with human interest.
- The images must be story telling or sequences such as are seen in the news media.
- Documentary and travel photographs are included in this section.
- Images may not misrepresent the truth and may not, therefore, be manipulated in any way.
- No manipulation is allowed in this category.

PICTORIAL

- This category is for images that do not qualify for any other category.
- Manipulation is allowed in this category, provided the end result "looks natural".

It is important to note that the above applies to SPS and may or may not be the case with other clubs, competitions or salons. Members are encouraged to study the rules for each individual competition prior to entering.

9. DIGITAL MANIPULATION

Manipulation shall constitute any of all of the following modifications to the original image:

- Adding an element to the image that was not contained in the original capture;
- Removing an element from the image that was contained in the original capture;
- Moving or repositioning an element of the image that was contained in the original capture.

The following enhancements are allowed, and are not seen as manipulation (as long as the end result is a faithful representation of the original scene):

- Cropping;
- Correction of lens distortion, chromatic aberrations, purple fringing, lens vignette and vertical/horizontal perspective adjustments;
- Removal of dust spots or scratch marks from sensor or scanned images;
- Due to the limitation of digital sensors regarding dynamic range, the blending of different exposures of the same scene to broaden the dynamic range. (e.g. HDR);
- Focus stacking to widen the depth of field;
- Photo stacking to overcome heat artefacts of the digital sensor in long exposures.

HDR and photostacking are only allowed in Pictorial

In the case of both enhancement and manipulation, all images must portray the original work of the photographer and may not incorporate additional elements produced by anyone else

Text, signatures and watermarks are not permitted in any category

A Summary of enhancements and manipulation is as follows;

CATEGORY	POST CAPTURE PROCESSING
Pictorial	Enhancements and Manipulation
Photojournalism/Sport/ Street Photography	Enhancements only
Nature	Enhancements only

10. JUDGING CRITERIA

Awards

A judge will normally award a Gold Award if an image meets the criteria below (see Annexure A)

1 Star

ART

- Element of composition

CRAFT

- Correct exposure
- Focus
- Correct post processing
- Picture clean and well presented

VALUES

- Basic Camera Skills – Interesting Images ART

2 Star

ART

- Some knowledge of composition
- Some Impact
- Some knowledge of how and when to crop

CRAFT

- Correct exposure
- Focus
- Correct post processing
- Picture clean and well presented

VALUES

- Improved technical skills – Visual impact

3 Star

ART

- Knowledge of composition
- Impact
- Knowledge of how and when to crop
- Begin to show understanding of line, shape and form

CRAFT

- Correct exposure
- Focus
- Correct post processing
- Picture clean and well presented

VALUES

- Technical / digital mastery – Story – The moment - Some design

4 Star

ART

- Knowledge of composition
- Impact
- Knowledge of how and when to crop
- Show understanding of line, shape and form

CRAFT

- Correct exposure
- Focus
- Correct post processing
- Picture clean and well presented

VALUES

- Emotion – Feeling – Empathy – Originality – Decisive moment

5 Star and above

ART and CRAFT Becomes One

ART is the language of visual elements and design principles to convey information, emotions, thoughts, ideas and concepts

CRAFT relies on the understanding and mastering of the craft in order to successfully communicate

VALUES Emotion – Feeling – Empathy – Originality – Decisive moment

For star ratings from 5-star and above, judges will be expected to apply increasingly stringent standards to each of the elements of Art, Craft and Values in line with the star rating category being judged.

11. JUDGING

At SPS we strive to have ONE guest judge at each meeting. Judges are required to mark each image out of 15 and an award is given as detailed below:

14 - 15	Certificate of Merit
11 - 13	Gold
8 - 10	Silver
5 - 7	Bronze
1 - 4	No Award
0	Disqualification

11.1 Points for Advancement and Photographer of the Year

Advancement

COM	4 Points
Gold	3 Points
Silver	2 Points
Bronze	1 Point

Photographer of the year

In addition to points for advancement, points shall be earned towards the Photographer of the Year award for Set Subject awards as follows:

1st Place	3 Points
2nd Place	2 Points
3rd Place	1 Point

The winner of each section (Primary and Senior) also receives a point towards the Photographer of the Year competition.

11.2 Disqualification

An image may be disqualified if:

- The judges feel that an image has been entered in a wrong category, or
- The judges feel that there has been enhancement which has rendered the image “unnatural” in certain categories, or
- The judges feel that manipulation has occurred in a category that does not allow it.

THE JUDGES’ DECISIONS ARE FINAL AND NO DISCUSSION WILL BE ENTERED INTO NOR WILL ANY RESULT BE OVERRULED OR REVERSED

NOTE: PLEASE RESERVE ANY COMMENTS UNTIL AFTER THE MEETING AS IT IS VERY DISTRACTING AND DISRESPECTFUL TOWARDS THE VISITING JUDGE.

12. COMPETENCY LEVEL ADVANCEMENT CRITERIA

General principles for advancement

1. The main principle is that the advancement system is based on time rather than accumulated points, with accumulated points derived based on the average possible accumulation of points over the selected period.
2. Points are accumulated for all possible awards, but there is also a requirement of a minimum number of Gold and COM awards.

3. In all but the entry level, advancement will be based on points acquired for club photo submissions, as well as for acceptances received in PSSA affiliated salons. Acceptances for International Salons not accredited by PSSA will not be recognised for club advancement.
4. In the case of a member belonging to more than one club, their submissions and achievements in other clubs will have no influence on the submissions and achievements in SPS.
5. Where salon acceptances are required for advancement, only 3 acceptances per photo will count towards advancement.

Time based advancement principles

1. The basic principle is for a beginner photographer to learn and advance over time and to be ready to be promoted to the 5-star level at the end of year 5.
2. The expected time periods set for each level are based on the time it would take an average photographer to reach the next level.
3. An average photographer is defined as:
 - a. A photographer who receives 75% Gold awards (or higher) during club assessment in his/her current star level.
 - b. A photographer who receives at least 20% acceptances for photos entered in a national salon (where applicable).

Advancement from 1-Star to 2-Star level

Based on the rules specified, the following will be the requirements to advance from the 1-star level to 2-star level:

- Possible Gold awards in an 8-month period:
(4 photos per assessment * 75% Gold awards) * 8 months = $3*8 = 24$
Gold awards
- Each Gold award will receive 3 points, thus, possible points based on Gold awards over the 8-month period = $24*3=72$ points.
- At the same time, the other 25% of possible photos (8 photos) could receive 16 points (Silver awards receive 2 points).
- Total possible points required $72 + 16 = 88$

The advancement rule is therefore:

A 1-Star photographer requires 88 points of which at least 24 photos must receive a Gold or COM award to advance to the 2-Star level.

Advancement from 2-Star to 3-Star level

Based on the rules specified the following will be the requirements to advance from the 2-star level to 3-star level:

- Possible Gold awards in a 10-month period:
(4 photos per assessment * 75% Gold awards) * 10 months = $3*10 = 30$
Gold awards
- Each Gold award will receive 3 points, thus, possible points based on Gold awards over the 10-month period = $30*3=90$ points.
- At the same time, the other 25% of possible photos (10 photos) could receive 20 points (Silver awards receive 2 points).
- Total possible points required is $90 + 20 = 110$

We also would like a 2-Star photographer to “test the waters” with regards salon participation, and therefore would require the 2 Star photographer to get at least 1 Salon Acceptance.

The advancement rule is therefore:

A 2-Star photographer requires 110 points of which at least 30 photos must receive a Gold or COM award to advance to the 3-Star level. The photographer also needs at least 1 salon acceptance to qualify for advancement to 3-Star level.

Advancement from 3-Star to 4-Star level

Based on the rules specified the following will be the requirements to advance from the 3-star level to 4-star level:

- Possible Gold awards in a 14-month period:
(4 photos per assessment * 75% Gold awards) * 14 months = $3*14 = 42$ Gold awards
- Each Gold award will receive 3 points; thus, possible points based on Gold awards over the 14-month period = $42*3=126$ points.
- At the same time, the other 25% of possible photos (14 photos) could receive 28 points (Silver awards receive 2 points).
- Total possible points required is $126+28 = 154$

A 3-Star photographer must already feel comfortable in participating in national salons, and we would like them to enter in at least in 20% of the possible national salons. In an average annual salon calendar there are 24 national salons. The possible number of salons in 14 months is 28, thus $28*20\% = 6$ salons. On average a salon allows 24 photos, however we assume 12 images are entered per salon. Therefore the photographer could enter $12*6 = 72$ photos. At an average of 20% success rate, we would expect the photographer to receive at least 15 salon acceptances for advancement to the 4-star level.

The advancement rule is therefore:

A 3-Star photographer requires 154 points of which at least 42 photos must receive a Gold or COM award to advance to the 4-Star level. The photographer also requires at least 15 salon acceptances to qualify for advancement to 4-Star level.

Advancement from 4-Star to 5-Star level

Based on the rules specified the following will be the requirements to advance from the 4-star level to 5-star level:

- Possible Gold awards in an 18-month period:
(4 photos per assessment * 75% Gold awards) * 18 months = $3*18 = 54$ Gold awards
- Each Gold award will receive 3 points; thus, possible points based on Gold awards over the 18-month period = $54*3=162$ points.
- At the same time, the other 25% of possible photos (18 photos) could receive 36 points (Silver awards receive 2 points).
- Total possible points required is $162+36 = 198$

A 4-Star photographer must already feel very comfortable in participating in national salons, and we would like them to enter in at least in 35% of the possible national salons. For the 2013 salon calendar there were 24 national salons. The possible number of salons in 18 months is 36, thus $36*35\% = 13$ salons. On average a salon allows 24 photos, however we assume 12 images are entered per salon. Therefore the photographer could enter $12*13 = 156$ photos. At an average of 20% success rate, we

would expect the photographer to receive at least 32 salon acceptances for advancement to the 4-star level

The advancement rule is therefore:

A 4-Star photographer requires 198 points of which at least 54 photos must receive a Gold or COM award to advance to the 5-Star level. The photographer also requires at least 32 salon acceptances to qualify for advancement to 5-star level.

Advancement Rules for all levels

The following table summarises the advancement requirements for all the star levels

SANDTON	Expected months to advance	Golds & COMs	Points	Salon Acceptances	Cumulative Salons
From 1 Star to 2 Star	8-months	24	88	0	0
From 2 Star to 3 Star	10-months	30	110	1	1
From 3 Star to 4 Star	14-months	42	154	15	16
From 4 Star to 5 Star	18-months	54	198	32	48
From 5 Star to 6 Star - Master Bronze	18-months	54	198	41	89
From 6 Star to 7 Star - Master Silver	18-months	54	198	48	137
From 7 Star to 8 Star - Master Gold	18-months	54	198	48	185
From 8 Star to 9 Star - Master Platinum	18-months	54	198	48	233
From 9 Star to 10 Star – Master Diamond	18-months	54	198	48	281
From 10 Star to 11 Star - Grand Master Bronze	24-months	72	264	87	368
From 11 Star to 12 Star - Grand Master Silver	24-months	72	264	87	455
From 12 Star to 13 Star - Grand Master Gold	24-months	72	264	87	542
From 13 Star to 14 Star - Grand Master Platinum	24-months	72	264	94	636
From 14 Star to 15 Star - Grand Master Diamond	24-months	72	264	94	730

Expected salon participation rates at all star levels are as follows:

SALON PARTICIPATION*	SPS Required Salon Participation
From 1 Star to 2 Star	-
From 2 Star to 3 Star	-
From 3 Star to 4 Star	20%
From 4 Star to 5 Star	35%
From 5 Star to Master Bronze	45%
From Master Bronze to Master Silver	55%
From Master Silver to Master Gold	55%
From Master Gold to Master Platinum	55%

* From Master Platinum to Master Diamond	75%
From Master Diamond to Senior Master Bronze	75%
From Senior Master Bronze to Senior Master Silver	75%
From Senior Master Silver to Senior Master Gold	75%
From Senior Master Gold to Senior Master Platinum	80%
From Senior Master Platinum to Senior Master Diamond	80%

For PSSA salons and International Salons with PSSA patronage only: Assumes 12 images are entered per salon with a 20% acceptance rate

13. MEMBER'S OBLIGATIONS

When submitting images for judging, club members are requested to:

- a. Submit digital images electrically via <http://www.photovaultonline.com> by midnight on the Sunday before the Wednesday meeting based on the photoVault requirements.
- b. Keep accurate records of image submissions to the extent that the same image is not submitted more than once for advancement purposes.
- c. Keep accurate records so that less reliance is placed on committee members for this information.

14. COMMITTEE'S OBLIGATIONS FOR THE CUSTODIANSHIP OF IMAGES

- a. The committee must retain images for club and PSSA purposes only.
- b. The committee is not obliged to store or archive images on behalf of members, but may do so at its discretion.
- c. The committee will publish results, monthly, along with members point standing.

15. DIGITAL PROJECTOR CALIBRATION

The committee will ensure that the digital projector is calibrated to the recommended PSSA standards.

It will be the member's responsibility to ensure that his/her images project to his/her liking.

16. DISPUTES

In the event of a dispute the committee's interpretation of these rules will be final.

ANNEX A: STAR CRITERIA

	1*	2*	3*	4*	5*	5*+
CRAFT						
Exposure	X	X	X	X	X	X
Focus	X	X	X	X	X	X
Post Processing skills	X	X	X	X	X	X
Clean and well presented	X	X	X	X	X	X
ART						
Composition		X	X	X	X	X
Cropping		X	X	X	X	X
Impact		X	X	X	X	X
Line, Shape & Form			X	X	X	X
VALUES						
Basic camera skills	X	X	X	X	X	X
Interesting images		X	X	X	X	X
Improved technical skills			X	X	X	X
Visual Impact		X	X	X	X	X
Emotion				X	X	X
Feeling				X	X	X
Empathy				X	X	X
Originality				X	X	X
Decisive Moment				X	X	X
Technical Mastery				X	X	X
Design Elements			X	X	X	X
Art and Craft become one					X	X

ART: The language of visual elements and design principles to convey information, emotions, thoughts and concepts

CRAFT relies on the understanding and mastering photography principles to communicate successfully

VALUES are emotions, feelings, empathy originality and capturing images at decisive moments.