



Godalming Photographic Club ('GPC')

Preparing for Club Competitions / Competition Rules – September 2024 v1

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INTRODUCTION

Each year GPC 's programme includes a range of internal competitions, where members' entries are assessed by accredited external judges to provide constructive feedback and enable members to progress through the three competition levels, from Club class to Intermediate and Advanced.

Entering all league competitions and critique-only events would involve submitting around 24 images per member during the year, split between Print and Projected Digital Images ('PDIs') and between Open (unrestricted content) and Themed events.

These guidance notes are intended to help you to submit entries for these competitions, but if you need more assistance, don't hesitate to ask a Committee member or email

GoFocal@gmail.com.

The guide is reviewed regularly for accuracy, but if you find any errors or omissions, please let a Committee member know.

SUBMITTING COMPETITION ENTRIES

All GPC competitions (Print and PDI) require digital images to be uploaded ahead of the competition date to the Club's PhotoEntry system ('PE'). This advance entry allows images to be processed for screening in good time and /or added to the bank of images the Club can use for promotional purposes or draw on for external competitions. For PDI competitions, all you need to do is upload your images to PE; whereas for Print competitions, you also need to print and mount your images (as explained below).

All subscribing Club members will be automatically enrolled in the PE system (<https://photoentry.uk>). Any new member experiencing difficulty accessing the system should speak to the Internal Competitions Secretary.

Those members who competed in the previous season's league competitions will be added to their competition class, which is shown on each PE league competition page. Other members will be allocated an 'unclassified' status, which also applies to all members participating in single class non-league competitions. If unclassified members wish to enter a league competition, they should agree a competition class (see APPENDIX 2) with a Committee member prior to submitting entries, and this will then be reflected in the system. If unclassified members would prefer not to receive emails relating to internal competitions from PE, they can request these to be suppressed.

Members will be reminded before each competition of the event date, submission deadline, competition theme and any entry limits (the default limit is 2 entries per member). Emails may originate from the Internal Competitions Secretary, the club newsletter or directly from the PE system.

TIP: Check your junk mail regularly to make sure GPC emails aren't treated as spam, and if this is the case, add the originating address to your email address book.

USING PHOTOENTRY

PE's main menu will show two competition groups which, when clicked, will provide a list of **a) League Competitions** and **b) Other Competitions and Events**, with some summary information. If the judges' name is underlined, you can click on this to see information about them.

The competition 'Status' will show either Open, Closed, Judged or Future. Open indicates that members are able to submit entries to the competition, by clicking on its Title and then the Add Entry button.

Each competition or event has a limit on how many images may be submitted, which will be shown at the top of the competition entry page in PE under 'Maximum Entries Allowed'. The default for league competitions is two images, but this may be higher for non-league and other events.

Members may continue to add entries up to the limit for that event (which may be dependent on the member's class). The new season's competitions will open for entries at the start of the season for all members who have paid their subscriptions.

When adding entries to PE, you will first be asked to input the entry title. This should just be the desired caption in block capitals that appears with the image when projected or read out to the judge, without author information e.g. 'BARN OWL' or 'SUNSET IN THE MOUNTAINS'. In a separate field, you may add your own reference if you wish; this is not reported elsewhere.

The standard format for submitted images is JPEG file type (.jpg or .jpeg) up to 1600 pixels wide and up to 1200 pixels high, and in the sRGB colour space. Generally, it is advisable to submit an image near to (or at) the maximum length on at least one dimension. However PE will resize images for you as long as they are under 10MB in size.

Smaller images or those in the wrong colour space will not be adjusted and a warning will be given on upload.

Tip: Use PE to resize your images if they are larger than 1600 x 1200px, but less than 10MB in size.

However, images submitted in the wrong colour space will be converted to sRGB by the Club's projection software, so this warning may be ignored unless you prefer to manage the conversion process yourself and re-submit your image. Fuller guidance on image preparation is set out in **APPENDIX 1**.

If you wish, you may delete, re-title or replace any uploaded image at any time up to the entry deadline. These deadlines are usually midnight on the Sunday prior to the competition evening, unless advised otherwise by the Internal Competitions Secretary.

There will be no acknowledgement email when you submit your entries, as PE will confirm whether your entries have been submitted at the time of upload.

Once the entry deadline has passed, the Competition status will become Closed, and PE will email a list of entries to participants. No further submissions may be made to a competition once it is closed. However, if corrections are required to images already submitted, this may be possible at the discretion of the competition administrator.

Once the competition has been completed, its status will be set to Judged, scores will be entered into the system and PE will email the results to members.

During the course of the season, members may also view in PE the cumulative results of each of the League Print and PDI Series

Tip: When navigating around PE, use the links at the top or side of each page. If you use your browser's back button instead, you may get an error message.

PRINT COMPETITIONS

Print competitions involve you (or a nominee) bringing along your mounted prints to a competition evening by 7:45pm and booking them into the competition, but don't forget that you also have to submit a digital copy of your images to the PE system before the competition deadline. Print entries should be marked on the back with your name and the title of your image and the same details recorded on the entry listing for the class you are competing in.

Tip: Write your name and image title very clearly on the back of your print, as the title is read out to the judge during the assessment.

Printing and Mounting

Prints should be between A4 and A3 in size. If you have your own inkjet printer, you can produce these yourself, or you can have these printed for you by a local print service (e.g. Boots or Snappy Snaps) or an online service (such as Loxley, DS Colour Labs, ProAm Imaging, Photobox or Snapfish).

Tip: Borrow the Club's PC colour profiler for a nominal charge, which will help ensure that the colours you see on your screen match those you will get on your prints or displayed by the Club projector.

Once printed, your image needs to be mounted. **Mounts should ideally be sized 50 cms x 40 cms** and no more than 4mm thick, as this is the national competition standard. **Smaller mounts are acceptable**, particularly in Club class, but you shouldn't use larger ones.

White, cream or black mounts are most common. Coloured mounts can be effective in complementing colour images, but some judges do find them contentious.

You can either have your boards prepared for you, use a mount cutting service - try your local framer (Godalming has several) or you can prepare them yourself (see below).

Tip: The Club occasionally has a stock of pre-cut boards in black or cream with apertures suitable for 12" x 8" or 8" x 8" prints, available to members at near cost.

Mount cutting

If you want to cut your own boards, these can be purchased in A1 and A2 sizes, which will need to be firstly trimmed and then an aperture cut for your print.

Mountboard and precut mounts can be purchased locally (e.g. Godalming Art Shop)

You can cut your mounts with a steel rule and a sharp craft knife, or you can purchase a mount cutter. The simplest of these is the Jakar model, where a cutter slides along a groove in a metal rule and can be angled to produce straight cuts for the edges and 45 degree

bevels for the aperture.

Mark on the BACK of the board the window size you need to show your image. If you want a white edge around the image, make the window 5 mm bigger all around. If you want to have the window overlapping the image slightly, cut a window 2 mm smaller than the image to allow a margin for cutting tolerance.

Following the instructions with your cutter create a bevel-edged window (make sure the bevel slopes the correct way). If you have slightly undercut the corners use a craft knife at 45 degrees to finish the cut to avoid tearing the corners.

Place two small (1 cm square-ish) pieces of double-sided tape on the top edges of the front of your print clear of the window and carefully overlay the mount adjusting the position to get the image in the correct position. Press down so that the tape secures the print to the mount.

Carefully slide the mount to the edge of the table and holding the top turn it over face down onto a clean surface, so as not to scratch the print.

Using a good quality mounting tape secure the top of the print to the mount fully along the top edge. NB Brown craft tape is best; masking tape or sellotape are not recommended.

Overlay the print using a thick piece of cartridge paper or card - bigger than the print, but smaller than the mount.

Stick this to the mount with mounting tape to strengthen and protect your print. Run your finger nail down the stepped edges to secure the tape.

By doing this, the print is secure but free to shrink or expand in the mount with changes in temperature/moisture content. This prevents buckling and it can also be easily removed if the mount gets damaged.

Tip: If you obtain or prepare a selection of mounts in standard sizes, these can easily be recycled during the competition season to minimise the cost and effort involved.

FINALLY...

If you run into difficulty, don't give up! Talk to a fellow Club or Committee member for advice or contact GoFocal@gmail.com. Many encounter some initial challenges, but once you have a tried and trusted method for preparing for competitions, it will become second nature.

Sizing your images correctly for PDI Competitions

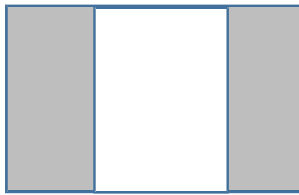
APPENDIX 1

All PDI competition entries must fit within a frame 1600 pixels wide and 1200 pixels high, but they don't have to fill the full frame.

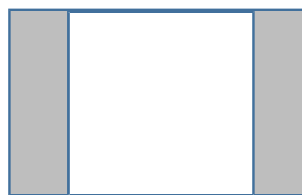


So, your image could be sized at 1600 pixels wide and 1200 tall to fill the available frame, or any other size that fits into this frame, such as the examples given below.

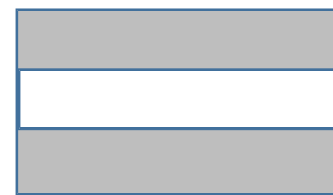
You could have a portrait image 800 wide x 1200 tall,



a square image 1200 wide x 1200 tall, or



a letterbox image 1600 wide x 400 tall, and so on.



Tip: Your image must not be too big, but if it is too small it will lose impact when projected. So try to ensure that it meets the frame boundaries on at least one axis. However, avoid enlarging smaller images, as these will appear grainy when projected.

If you use a canvas, make sure it is black, so that the image background merges with the black background used by the projection software. A thin pin-line coloured border (or 'stroke') around your image can help set it off against the projected black background.

As noted above, PE will resize oversized images for you, but if you prefer to manage this process yourself, you can either **Crop, Resize** or use a combination of the two.

Cropping is the process of identifying the elements of the photograph you want in your final image to present a good composition, and is akin to cutting out the section you want from a printed image using a pair of scissors. All image editing software will contain a crop tool, which will usually involve drawing a grid over your image and then discarding the unwanted pixels. You should note that if you want to change the proportions (aspect ratio) of your image e.g. change a rectangular image to a square format, you have to crop it to the right shape. Similarly, if you want your image to exactly fill the GPC projector frame, it will need to have a 4 x 3 aspect ratio – you may be able to set your camera to produce original images of those proportions, otherwise you can crop it to that shape.

Use the Help feature of your software package or search online to find out more about cropping.

Resizing is the process of reducing an image in size by making a smaller replica – the picture looks similar to the original, but on close inspection has had a lot of detail removed. When resizing, it is key to maintain the proportions of the image, as otherwise it will become distorted. Take an example of an image 3200 pixels wide x 2000 pixels high. When we resize for the GPC projector, we maintain the image proportions, which in this case would involve reducing the width to 1600 pixels and the height to 1000 pixels.

Examples:

John's camera is set to produce images of 5760 pixels wide by 3840 pixels high (an aspect ratio of 3 x 2). He wants his competition entry to exactly fit the projector frame. He first crops his image using a cropping tool set to an aspect ratio of 4 x 3, which delivers an image of 4064 pixels wide by 3048 pixels high. He then resizes the image, maintaining its proportions, reducing it to 1600 pixels wide and 1200 pixels high.

Mary's camera also produces images of 5760 pixels wide by 3840 pixels high, but she like the original composition of her competition entry, so doesn't want to crop it. Instead, she just resizes her image, maintaining its proportions, so it is 1600 pixels wide. Reducing the height by the same factor shrinks it to 1067 pixels tall.

Using Various Software tools for resizing

The following paragraphs give specific guidance on how to resize images using different software tools.

Photoshop Elements – retouch your image as required, - but do not sharpen at this stage.

Go to Image>Resize>Image Size and ensure that Pixels are selected for Width and Height and that the check boxes for Scale Styles, Constrain Proportions and Resample Image are selected. Type 1600 in the width box. If this results in the height being greater than 1200 then change height to 1200, which will reduce the width. Click OK, then sharpen the resized image as necessary.

Now go to Image>Convert Color Profile. If "Convert to sRGB Profile" is greyed out you are fine, otherwise select Convert to sRGB Profile to ensure image will project correctly.

To save the image for the competition, go to File>Save As. Choose a suitable location to save it, ensure quality is set to Maximum, click OK and save the image. Remember the title needs to be in the precise format described above.

In **Photoshop CS/CC**, use Image>Image Size.., to follow the method described above. Alternatively, use File>Automate>Fit Image and enter 1600 width and 1200 height for automatic smart resizing.

Edit>Convert to Profile... to change the colour space to sRGB.

File>Save As to save a version in JPEG form, confirm the sRGB space in the dialog box and choose Maximum Quality.

Using **Lightroom**, select your image and then Library>Export. Firstly, create a user preset with the following settings and then Add to the preset library (this can then be subsequently selected without the need to change settings).

Select Export to Hard Drive and choose your preferred folder options. In File Settings, select JPEG Image Format, sRGB Colour Space and 100 Quality. In Image Sizing, select Resize to Fit, then Width & Height, with 1600 pixel width, 1200 pixel height and the default 72 ppi resolution. This will optimise sizing for both landscape and portrait images.

Other : Visit www.icecreamapps.com and download the free **Image Resizer** app. Drag or add an image to the resizer pane and select the Manual profile. Enter 1600 pixels into the width box to resize a landscape image or 1200 into the Height box for a portrait image. Resave the resized image back into the original folder with the recommended Mini filename suffix.

GENERAL COMPETITION & EXHIBITION RULES**APPENDIX 2****Competition Classes**

1. There will be three classes for entrants to GPC Print and Projected Digital Image (PDI) competitions: Club, Intermediate and Advanced.

Competition Class Criteria

Club Class: Even if you have owned a camera for years you might regard yourself as a beginner when it comes to competitive photography, and are only just starting to get involved in processing images. You might feel you have a lot to learn and would like to start from the bottom and work your way up the ladder at your own pace. If that is the case, Club is probably the best place for you.

Intermediate Class: Do you shoot in RAW – or do you at least understand the question? Do you regard yourself as a competent photographer with a reasonable stock of what you regard as good quality images? Are you confident about cropping, re-sizing and enhancing your images in software? Are you keen to challenge yourself and improve your photography as much as possible? If your answers are mainly 'Yes' then consider starting in Intermediate.

Advanced Class: Generally people do not start in Advanced. There are exceptions, however. If you have photographic qualifications and are used to competitive photography, in particular if you have been a member of other clubs in which you have competed at an advanced level, then we are happy for you to take direct entry into the Advanced group.

2. Before entering their first competition, new club members should agree with a member or members of the committee the appropriate class in which to compete. This will usually be Club or Intermediate unless the member has a proven track record at Advanced with another club.

3. A member will participate at the same level in both Print and PDI competitions throughout a given club season (September to June).

4. At the end of the season the winner of each of the Club and Intermediate Class Print and PDI competitions will be considered for promotion to the next higher league. A Committee member will discuss this with the club member prior to a final decision being made.

5. A club member may request a move to a higher or lower Class if they wish to compete at that level. This must be agreed with the Internal Competitions Secretary before the start of the next season.

6. In exceptional circumstances the committee may agree to vary the procedure from that set out above, e.g. a temporary merging of three classes into two; other highly placed members being recommended for promotion. This must be agreed before the start of the next season.

Competition Entries

1. All creative aspects of an image must be the photographer's own work and originate primarily from a photographic image or images, from any source (e.g. digital camera, film camera or scanner). N.B. The use of a commercial printing service is permissible.

2. PDIs for all competitions must be submitted in the specified format to the club competition entry system no later than the Sunday before the competition, or as advised for that competition. Extensions may be granted or deadlines extended – check email and social media.

3. In addition to the PDI submission, entries for Print competitions must be 'logged in' on the appropriate evening in good time. Ideally this should be by 7:50 p.m. so that prints can be displayed. The competition is deemed to start at 8.00 p.m. and late entries may be excluded.

4. No limit on the age of an image is normally stipulated for entries unless specifically identified for a particular competition.

5. All prints should be mounted with a mount size not exceeding approx. 500mm x 400mm. The minimum size of the print (prior to mounting) should be around 10in x 8in or A4, smaller prints will be accepted but may be judged differently in comparison.

N.B. Some SPA/PAGB external competitions require a mount of exactly 500mm x 400mm, and a thickness not exceeding 4mm. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that entries to club competitions are of this size to make them suitable for use in external competitions as well.

6. The number of entries per member in each Print and PDI competition will be limited to a number notified in advance by the Internal Competitions Secretary.

7. Each print entry must be clearly marked on the back with a title (announced prior to judging) and the author's name. No name or title should appear on the front of the image or mount.

8. Digital entries should be resized to the projection format required by the club (current maximum is 1600 pixels wide x 1200 pixels high) and saved as jpg images (full instructions on preparing digital entries are available on the Club website). No author's name, nor any other watermark, should be included in the image.

9. Images awarded a score of 9 or more are not eligible for re-entry to league competitions. Images awarded lower scores may be re-submitted once, but only once. In both cases this limitation applies also to modified images (e.g. a different crop), substantially similar images and images re-presented in a different format (e.g. PDI converted to print, colour converted to monochrome).

Competition Marks

1. The competition judge will, after commenting, mark entries out of 10 (including half marks) for both Prints and PDI.

2. For the Print and Digital Image of the Year competitions, only entries scoring 10 will be eligible unless decided otherwise by the committee. Lower scores would only be accepted if there are deemed to be insufficient images that scored a 10 in any category.

Annual Exhibition

1. The Annual Exhibition is primarily designed to allow members to exhibit the best of their season's work to the public. Currently this is in the form of prints only, although Images of the Year may also be screened.
2. Work may appear in only one Annual Exhibition and may be up to five years old unless specified otherwise. If additional exhibitions are organised, work entered in the Annual Exhibition can be re-exhibited.
3. An entry form will give details of the entry charge to be levied and the number of prints per member to be accepted.
4. Members may advertise their work for sale but details must be noted in the catalogue.
5. The committee reserves the right not to display some submitted work should hanging space be too limited. The committee's decision on this shall be final.

THEMED COMPETITION RULES**APPENDIX 3****a. NATURE****(derived from SPA Championship Rules May 2024)**What **IS** allowed:

- Techniques that remove elements added by the camera, such as dust spots or digital noise.
- Techniques that enhance the presentation of the photograph without altering the content of the original scene, including HDR, focus stacking and dodging/burning.
- Cloning of image defects and minor distractions are permitted when these do not distort the truth of the photographic statement.
- Colour images converted to greyscale monochrome.
- Natural history subjects including wild animals, birds, insects, marine and botanical (including fungi and algae).
- Scientific bands, scientific tags or radio collars on wild animals (and if present must not be removed).
- Images of natural history subjects in controlled conditions, such as zoos, game farms, botanical gardens, aquariums and any enclosure where the subjects are dependent on man for food.
- Factual titles identifying the subject are **required**.

What **IS NOT** allowed:

- Any form of manipulation that alters the truth of the photographic statement.
- Techniques that add, relocate, replace, or remove pictorial elements except by cropping.
- Stitched image or montages.
- Infrared images.
- Anthropology or archaeology.
- Human elements except if an integral part of the nature story (e.g. barn owls adapted to a human environment).
- Images of human created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral or domestic animals, or mounted specimens.
- Inappropriately humorous, twee, informal or sentimental titles.
- Note for example that an image of a domestic cat would not be permitted, whereas a Scottish wildcat would. If the latter, you would be advised to use a title that clearly identifies it as a wildcat.
- Landscapes are not generally permitted by this definition unless they contain subjects included above. Examples might be a bluebell wood or a herd of wildebeest.

b. MONOCHROMEWhat **IS** allowed:

- Black and white images encompassing various shades of grey, or toned entirely in a single colour (e.g. sepia).

What is **NOT** allowed:

- Black and white works modified by partial or split toning, or by the selective addition of colour (colour-popping).

Awards**APPENDIX 4**

1. Certificates for the Print and Digital Image of the Year competitions and the top three places in each Class in the season's Print and PDI competitions will be presented at the AGM.

2. Engraved trophies will be presented on the first night of the new season as will Certificates for the Exhibition awards.

3. The trophies awarded are as follows:

• **Prints:**

- a. Advanced Founders Plate
- b. Intermediate Mike Farmer Trophy
- c. Club The Mike Hoad Shield

• **Digital (PDI):**

- a. Advanced The IMAGinE Trophy
- b. Intermediate The Ian Head Cup
- c. Club The Harding Cup

• **Print of the Year Robbie Morgan Trophy**

• **Digital Image of the Year David Hampson Memorial Trophy**

• **Exhibition Awards:**

Best Exhibition Print Woolwich Trophy

Best Exhibition Portrait Head Tankard

Best Exhibition Monochrome Print Monochrome Cup

Best Exhibition Natural History Print The Len Deeley Memorial Bowl

Best Exhibition Landscape Print The Landscape Trophy

The 'Progress Bowl' will be awarded to the member who the Committee considers has made the most progress in the season.

Committee's Responsibility

1. The Committee will take every care of member's work, but images are entered at the owner's risk.
2. The Committee reserves the right to refuse any entry.
3. The ruling of the Committee is final in the event of any dispute.
4. Authors of images retain all copyright. At the Committee's discretion, however, images may be posted on the Club website / social media and entered into external competitions with due recognition of the author.