



Competition Rules and Guidance

Introduction

There is no requirement for members to participate in competitions, but the club will support members that wish to.

Please familiarise yourself with the rules applicable to each of the competitions you enter.

Ely Photographic Club (EPC) holds member competitions throughout each season. Points accumulated in the regular print and projected digital image (PDI) competitions count towards three leagues (Print Colour, Print Mono, and PDI) with results declared at the end of the season.

The General Rules below apply to all competitions. There are additional rules depending on whether the competition is for PDI or print work, and some rules specific to non-league named competitions, such as the Print Panel, Ken Hitch and Members Choice competitions which have their own variations to the rules, outlined below.

The club also competes in several external competitions and PDIs or prints entered into club competitions that score well may be selected by the External Competition Secretary to represent the club. The club will normally pick its strongest entries but will try to involve as many members as is practical.

Members may use diverse techniques and tools for creative image making. The over-riding principle for a competition entry is simply that every process used in making the image must be only the work of the named author.

General rules

Who can enter

Entries will be accepted from current full members of the club who are up to date with their subscription.

Time limit for entries

Entry dates are published on the club website and noted on the club's PhotoEntry system. For **both PDI and print** competitions a correctly formatted and titled PDI image must be entered into PhotoEntry by the required date and time. Entries for print competitions must then be brought to the competition on the night no later than 15 minutes before the start of the competition.

Similarity and re-entry

Any image that is identical or similar to an entry to any previous league competition can be entered into one further league competition as long as it previously scored 17 or less.

Identical or similar league competition PDI or print image entries may be re-entered to the Member's Choice competition, as elements of a Panel competition or the Ken Hitch Trophy competition, or vice-versa whatever their score in a previous competition.

An image is similar if it is a reworking or altered crop of a previously used image or one very like it. This includes a monochrome conversion of a colour image or vice versa, or the addition of any post-production filters or effects. If the image is from the same original RAW or jpeg file, or another image from a burst of images, then it is considered to be a similar image.

Where members are not sure whether images could be disqualified because of similarity to a previous entry, they should seek the guidance of the appropriate Competition Secretary who will make a ruling on this.

Origination of image (or elements of a composite)

A competition image may be from a single capture or made as a composite or collage from multiple elements. The club promotes photography, so it is expected that an image entered for competition is entirely or substantially made from photographically captured material i.e. from a film or digital camera, a phone or tablet, or a scanner. An image may contain drawn or painted elements and effects added by editing tools, but these must only be to support the photographic work of the author.

Elements created using generative artificial intelligence (Generative AI) are not permitted to be included.

Pictorial elements such as skies or textures can only be used if they were captured and created by the member that authored the image.

Brushes used for textures or patterns such as smoke or grain are permitted whereas brushes that insert pictorial elements such as a cloud or a flock of birds are only permitted if they were captured and created by the member that authored the image.

Authorship

The member entering a competition image must be the sole author of every element of the capture and post-processing work. Images created at studio or location tutorials for example must have been composed and captured without the direct involvement of other participants or tutors.

Post processing

All post-processing must be by the hand of the author in realising their own version of the image. If the image is edited as part of a tutorial, the tutor must not edit on the author's behalf.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems may not be used to perform automatic edits on the author's behalf.

AI tools can be used to

- Select areas for processing or masking
- Remove elements or blemishes
- Colour correct
- Upscale
- Sharpen
- De-noise.

Identifying marks

Images are judged anonymously. The author must not be identifiable by any mark or text within the image or any part of the front of a mounted print.

Monochrome vs. colour

Some competitions are specifically for either colour or monochrome images as defined below.

Monochrome: a black and white image or one which is made from shades and tones of a single hue. This includes chemically processed images such as sepia or cyanotype prints.

Colour: all images except those included above are defined as colour images. Split toned images or monochrome images with a 'colour popped' element are colour images.

Model releases and onward publication

Members are advised to obtain a signed release from models used in their photography work and to agree with each model how and where the images may be published. Photos of minors (anyone under 18 years old) for publication always require a release signed by a parent or legal guardian unless you are their parent or legal guardian.

Competition entries may be shared on the club's social media pages and the club website. The author of an image can request that it is not published on social media and/or the club website by contacting the club secretary before the competition.

The author of an image may provide a watermarked copy of an image to the club secretary on the day after a competition if they prefer this version to be published online.

Content

Competition entries must not contain violent, explicitly sexual or demeaning imagery.

Arbitration

Members are expected to abide by the spirit and the letter of the rules in fairness to other members. If there is any dispute over the eligibility of an entry the Competition Secretary or an appointed person or group from the club's committee will decide if an entry is valid. The member may be asked to provide original un-edited source material if this is needed to arbitrate.

General guidance

Judging process

The external Judge will critique each image and score it out of 20. The critique is important as the judge may provide an opinion on how each image may be enhanced. Members will learn from the critique of other members images as well as their own. Those members that are more competitive will be equally focused on the score their image is given, remembering that the Judges opinion is subjective and is only their opinion.

Judges usually 'hold back' a selection of the best images and score these at the end. At their discretion the judge may nominate an image as the 'Judges Favourite'.

Scoring is allocated by judges relative to other images in the same competition so an entry may score differently from one competition to another.

Reviewing entries

Normally, on the day following a competition, members will be able to view all the entries including the authors' names and scores via PhotoEntry.

We also feature competition images on our website and social media. The results of all competitions and the highest scoring images are normally available on the club website within 24 hours of the competition. Images featured on the website will be of low resolution with a Copyright warning, and will have right-click copying disabled, to protect members' work.

PDI rules – league competitions

File format

JPEG

Colour space

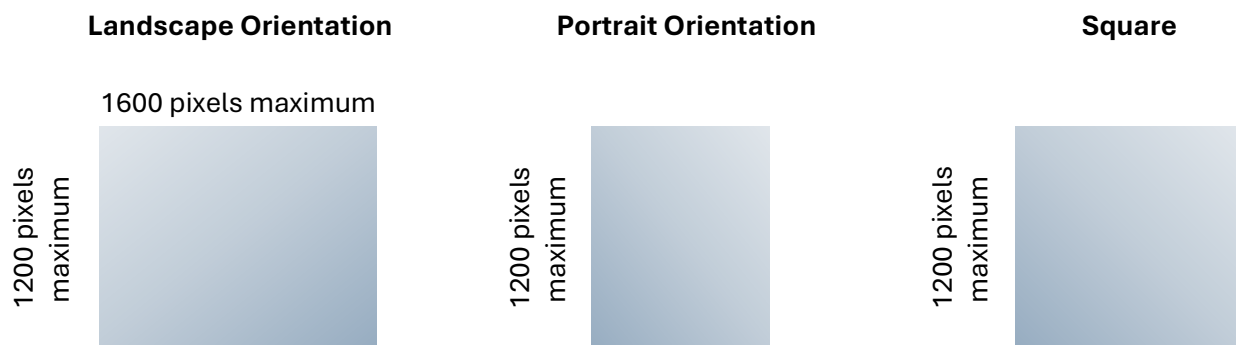
sRGB

Pixel dimensions

Landscape (longest side horizontal): No more than 1600 pixels wide and no more than 1200 pixels high.

Portrait (longest side vertical): No more than 1200 pixels high and less than 1200 pixels wide.

Square: No more than 1200 pixels wide or high.



File size

No more than 10MB.

Submission method

All entries are to be submitted using the PhotoEntry software that members will have been given access to when they joined the club. PhotoEntry will highlight any errors with your entry, such as the wrong Colour Space, etc, and will downsize over-large images automatically, but will not upscale images that are too small.

Members may enter up to two PDIs in each of the season's league rounds in any combination of colour and/or monochrome.

PDI guidance

An instructional video for using PhotoEntry is available on the Help Page of the club website.

It is good practice to finish an image that is dark at the edges with a thin lighter coloured line a few pixels wide so that the edge of the picture can be seen when it is projected.

Print rules – league competitions

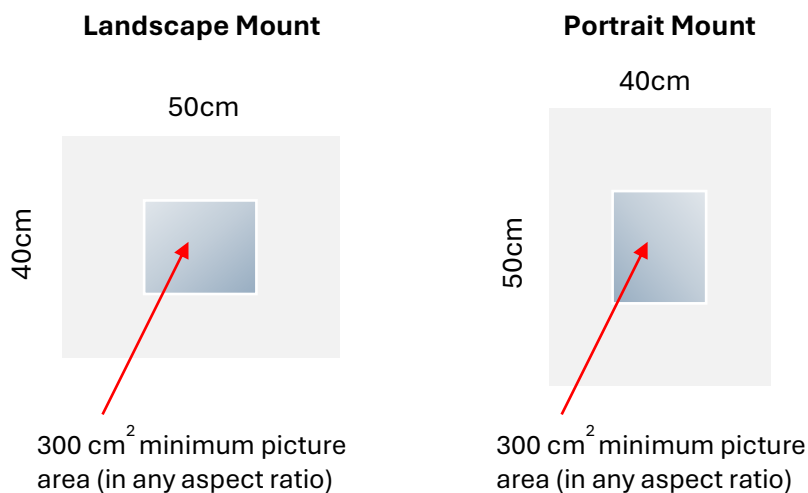
Mount size

Mounts must be 50cm by 40cm, either landscape or portrait aspect ratio.

Image print area

Prints may be in landscape, portrait, or square format. The print aspect ratio does not have to be the same as the mount aspect ratio.

The minimum print area is 300cm². The maximum print area can be chosen by the author within the limits of the mount size.



Mounting methods and materials

Prints may be mounted with an aperture mount or can be glued cleanly to the face of the mountboard. Prints are often stacked before and after competitions so backboards must be fixed with double-sided or proper framing tape (available online or locally from Tindall's stationery shop) to avoid damage to other entrants' prints. Never use gaffer tape, parcel tape, painter's tape or any other adhesive tape.

Labelling

All prints must be clearly labelled on the back of the mount with the author's name, the print title, and the entry number (one or two) for colour prints. If a competition is oversubscribed every entrant's second print will be withdrawn and can be entered in a later competition. If prints have not been numbered, the print withdrawn will be at the discretion of the competition secretary.

Submission method

League competitions for prints are divided into colour and monochrome classes.

As noted above in 'Time limit for entries' in addition to bringing prints to the competition, all entries are to be submitted before the entry deadline using the PhotoEntry software that members will have been given access to when they joined the club. The dimensions and colour space requirements for the PhotoEntry submission are the same as for a PDI competition so it's advisable to resize a copy of your print file for this purpose.

Members may enter up to two colour prints and one monochrome print in each of the season's league rounds. It is important to nominate your second choice of colour print as in the event of there being too many entries, your second entry will be withdrawn. When submitting your two colour print entries please ensure that your second choice is entered at position two within PhotoEntry. (If you change your mind about which is to be your second choice, you can use the Up/Down arrows beside your entry).

Print guidance

Mountboard is available in a wide array of colours, but you are advised to stick to a neutral white/cream/grey/black mount that shows your print to best advantage.

Mountboard can be purchased in packs as 50 x 40 cm sheets with or without a pre-cut aperture.

Aperture cutting and print mounting guidance is readily available in YouTube videos or from experienced club members.

Variant rules for non-league competitions

The rules below are in addition to or variant from the rules and guidance for league competitions.

The Ken Hitch trophy

In the Ken Hitch themed PDI competition, each member may enter two colour and one monochrome PDI. The format and other requirements are the same as for league competitions. There are different themes for the colour and monochrome PDIs. The themes are set by the club committee each season. The themed entries will each be scored out of 20, and the highest aggregate score will be the winner, so members are encouraged to enter all three images.

Themed Panel print competition

The Themed Panel comprises from three to five individually mounted prints, each following the same format and other requirements as for league competitions. The prints may be arranged in any layout (in one, two, or three rows). Prints must be identified on the back according to their position, and a diagram attached to the entry to ensure that they are correctly arranged for the judge. The panels will not be scored out of 20 but will be judged, and a first, second and third place awarded. At their discretion judges may also select one or more panels to be commended or highly commended.

Members may submit only one panel to the competition, with a theme of their choice.

Members Choice competition

The Members Choice competition is held at the end of the season, following the AGM. The competition features both PDI and print sections, where each member will have the opportunity to enter their favourite image. PDI Images or prints may have been entered in a previous competition (regardless of the score given) or be an image not previously entered. This competition will be scored by all club members present on the night of the competition, as follows:

Each club member present will have the opportunity to choose their three favourites in each section from those displayed. When scoring is complete, the votes are added and the PDI and print with the highest number of votes will be declared the winner of that section.

Appendix – EPC deviations from external competition rules

EPC members may wish to enter competition images into external exhibitions or competitions. The rules for EPC competitions may vary from the external requirements, so you are advised to check carefully before entering. Creating your EPC images in compliance with these rules means that it is less likely you will need to create a new file/print to be eligible for the external competition.

These variations are noted here for information only as at March 2026.

The East Anglian Federation of Photographic Societies (EAF) rules specify that PDI entries have the same maximum dimensions as EPC competitions but must also be more than 200 pixels horizontally and 300 pixels vertically.

The East Anglian Federation of Photographic Societies (EAF) rules specify that mounts must be exactly 50cm x 40cm (20" x 16" will be rejected), and that surface mounting is not allowed. The printed area must be between 500cm² and 1500 cm².

The Photographic Alliance of Great Britain (PAGB) 'Masters of Print' rules specify unmounted prints which must be on A3 paper.

PAGB photography competitions have specific rules and definitions for nature and wildlife photographs.