



Southern Counties Photographic Federation

Judging Feedback - Guide Note to Clubs v1.5

Dear Member Club

SCPF operates a feedback process for judges / appraisers.

This scheme has been highly successful since its launch in 2016. Providing feedback is optional, but it provides valuable information for us as a community to know how we're doing. We recognise that judging / appraisal is an important part of your club programme and we are keen to ensure that we are improving continually and that competitions are a positive experience for everyone.

From November 2021, this is being collected by an online form.

The form is live now on Google Forms - <https://forms.gle/NnGygnxjYRwiegR57>

As a reminder, feedback is optional; you do not have to provide feedback every time. Nor do we need feedback if an appraiser's performance is good 'as expected'. But please do so:

- Always when using a Level 1 appraiser
- When either we or an appraiser asks you to support a request for upgrade
- When an appraiser asks you personally for feedback
- When you feel that an appraiser could be helped by providing constructive feedback
- When an appraisal is especially good and you feel praise is due

If you have any questions or suggestions for the process, please contact me, Ken Scott, Judging Advisor, (judging@)

What is 'Feedback'?

Feedback, in this context, is structured information given to another person about their behaviour or performance.

Feedback is often thought of negatively, i.e. provided only when there is something to complain about. That should not be the case. Thoughtful feedback, given in a positive way, is invaluable in helping everyone to do better, whatever their role or profession.

- Feedback should be expressed in a positive way; but it need not be free from criticism.
- Criticism should be constructive, as we would expect a judge to be about our images.
- Feedback should be specific, covering what went well and any areas for improvement.
- Feedback should take into account an appraiser's current level of training and experience.
- Feedback should be written in a way that is respectful and that we would be happy to give personally.

People are most likely to take feedback on board for the long term when there is an optimal ratio of 3:1 - three positive, reinforcing comments to one criticism.



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By contrast, negative feedback – criticism expressed in a negative way – is always destructive. It is often aimed at the person rather than their behaviour, has nothing good to say and no positive intent. When negative feedback is given by appraisers about our photographs, we are understandably upset.

Why is feedback necessary and useful?

Feedback is useful for the SCPF in monitoring how appraisers are performing in general and in helping us to tune the help we provide to our appraisers and the training we provide. However, it is not the main purpose. Feedback is really of most benefit to the appraisers themselves, so that they can work to continually improve.

The feedback process should not replace a letter of thanks sent to a judge after the event as a normal courtesy.

Who can provide feedback?

We will only accept feedback compiled officially on behalf of a club, not from any individual. At least three people should contribute to the process and it must be 'signed' by a named committee member. It should be a club view, not a collection of individual comments (see below).

Completing the Forms

The forms are self-explanatory and include a section for scoring against our competencies and a free comments section. In the free-comment section of the form, please always recognise where you feel the judge did well, as well as highlighting any areas that could be improved.

A couple of points to note:

- The free comment must be curated. Often when individual comments are pasted in, those comments conflict with each other and so cannot be passed on to the appraiser.
- The comment should reflect the scores you have provided, much as you would expect for your images.
- Please do not go into detailed analysis of scores; it is sufficient to say whether the guidelines (ours or yours) were followed.
- It is not necessary to say that "some members disagreed with ..." - it would be rare indeed for there to be unanimity in the audience!

How do we raise a complaint?

If for any reason your club should feel the need to raise a complaint with us, please follow exactly the same procedure and accompany the feedback form with an official letter from your club stating your reasons.

We are unable to deal with complaints via the email grapevine, and we especially urge all clubs to strongly discourage any adverse criticism of judging and judges on social media.



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Where should feedback be sent?

Please send your feedback to me at SCPF only – [judging\(at\)southerncountiespf\(dot\)org\(dot\)uk](mailto:judging@southerncountiespf.org.uk) . We will ensure that the feedback is passed on to the appraiser.

The information is assumed to be allowed under the Data Protection legislation as it is an essential part of the administration of appraisers. Appraisers are entitled to see all such information and so we will ensure that feedback is passed on to them.

Our Appraisal Levels

Level 1 appraisers have been trained and are gaining experience in club competitions. All feedback is valuable learning and clubs can play a vital role in helping them to gain confidence. We ask that you provide feedback every time you welcome a Level 1 Appraiser to your club.

Level 2 appraisers are accredited by SCPF and have gained experience over at least a year in club level competitions. To be accredited, we would expect a judge to be generally competent, showing higher skill levels appropriate to their experience. Some appraisers at this level are highly experienced.

Level 2+ appraisers are pre-approved by SCPF for the higher SCPF league rounds. They may not yet have the breadth of experience to be fully accredited at Level 3 but they have demonstrated good competence over at least three years.

Level 3 appraisers have the highest accreditation from SCPF and have demonstrated over a period of at least five years and / or by assessment that they are confident in dealing with all levels of work in club and inter-club competitions. They are expected to be able to work with the higher standards of regional and national events and to be confident before bigger and more demanding audiences.

In particular, Level 3 appraisers are expected to be competent in all areas, especially the core qualities. We would also expect them to be able to respond articulately to the expressive qualities in a photograph as well as the craft and technical elements.

If you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you for your help and co-operation.

... Ken Scott ARPS

Judging Advisor

judging@southerncountiespf.org.uk