



The Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies

National Exhibition – Advice to Exhibitors

Revised December 2012

Why Exhibit?

Competitive exhibiting is an activity which takes place at a variety of levels within philately and exhibitors require a markedly different approach to that of the collector whose interest is primarily focused on the acquisition and arrangement of stamps and other philatelic material.

Many collectors never aspire to becoming exhibitors but will nevertheless display their material to local or specialist societies. This is arguably the first rung on the exhibiting ladder as any display given should be presentable and give a good story.

There are many reasons why you may choose to exhibit. However, you must bear in mind four principles:

- Do you have the necessary material with which to create an exhibit which conforms to competition rules?
- Are you prepared to put the effort into presenting your exhibit in a way that optimizes the chances of success?
- Are you prepared to subject your exhibit to external evaluation?
- Are you prepared to live with the disappointment that may follow if the opinion of those judging your exhibit does not coincide with your own?

If you can answer yes to each of these questions then exhibiting may be suitable for you. Exhibiting develops both the understanding of the philatelic material involved but also develops your skill in presenting it to its best advantage with a coherent story that can be readily followed by those viewing the exhibit, despite you not being present. Furthermore, exhibiting competitively brings you into contact with other exhibitors and judges, allowing you to improve your own philatelic knowledge and exhibition skills.

Advice to Exhibitors

Having decided that you wish to exhibit, this advice has been produced to explain the requirements of the various classes, their marking schedules and also give some advice in the form of dos and don'ts.

Exhibiting at Federation Level

Advice to Exhibitors introduces the ideas and standards associated with exhibiting at federation level **and should be read with great care.**

The Association of British Philatelic Societies (ABPS) recognizes competitive exhibiting at local, federation, national and international levels. As the ASPS exists as federation within ABPS it is fitting that we adopt both the federation marking structure and the level of marks awarded in making the medal awards. Basically, the federation level favours personal knowledge and presentation of your material over the possession of rare items. This should encourage you to enter and then to advance through the various degrees of our Exhibition until you take the next step and advance to National and International Exhibitions.

Entry Classes

Traditional

Entries can be either in Great Britain, Non Great Britain (pre-1900), and Non Great Britain (post-1900).

Material can be specialized or non-specialized and can include studies, proofs and essays. It can also include fiscal, revenue and other non postal stamps, (experimental, locals, telegraphs etc.). For the purposes of this competition these latter items are defined as material not recognized for the international transmission of mail but accepted as being used locally or generally for the transmission of messages and packages, e.g. local, railway or telegraph or for the collection of non-postal revenue.

Postal History

Entries can be either Postal History or Scottish Postal History.

Entries in this class include items on rates and routes and studies of markings and marcophily. It is not normally advisable to include unused adhesives or postal stationery.

Aerophilatelic

This class is for exhibits which are based on the study of philately prepared for and conveyed by airmail, whether official or unofficial. Exhibits which consist solely of airmail stamps will also be judged in this class rather than under Traditional.

Social Philately

This class enables exhibitors to enter exhibits which do not readily conform to the requirements for evaluation in the other classes. While the same basic judging criteria will be applied, the normal constraints relating to exhibits in the other classes are relaxed. This class relies upon the exhibit being based upon a theme. **A maximum of 50% of non-philatelic material is allowed.** Note that postcards (other than the postal markings on them) are not regarded as philatelic material. Exhibitors who exceed this threshold are liable to lose a substantial number of marks.

Entry Classes (cont'd)

Thematic

This class is for entries based on a theme or a subject which is developed according to a logical plan related to the subject chosen rather than the philatelic material. The theme is then illustrated using as wide a variety of philatelic material as possible.

Literature

This class is sub-divided into two sections:

Section One:

Handbooks, Monographs and Catalogues; including specialised works and studies not more than five years old at the date of the exhibition.

Section Two:

Articles; published by individual philatelists, Philatelic Societies or other organisations with a philatelic connection. Articles cannot be entered more frequently than once in three years.

All entries in the Literature Class must have been published in English.

Cinderella

May include local stamps, telegraph stamps, railway stamps, revenues/fiscals, forgeries, bogus and phantom issues. Christmas, Red Cross, TB and other charity seals, registration labels, advertisement and exhibition labels etc.

However, things such as trade, cigarette and telephone cards (unless the image of a stamp is incorporated in the design), matchbox or cheese labels, aerial propaganda leaflets, and other forms of ephemera like emergency money are not considered as Cinderella items for this purpose.

Marking Structure

The marking structure for all classes is the same with the exception of the Literature, Thematic and Cinderella Classes. Marks are made up as follows:

Literature Class

Personal or collective research	40%
Critical appreciation of the contents	40%
Production	20%
Total	100%

Thematic Class

Treatment	- Plan	15%
	- Development	15%
	- Originality	5%
Knowledge	- Thematic	15%
	- Philatelic	15%
Relative Condition		10%
Rarity		10%
Presentation, Writing up & Arrangement		15%
Total		100%

Cinderella Class

Treatment	20%
Importance	10%
Knowledge	20%
Research and Personal Study	15%
Condition	10%
Rarity	15%
Presentation	10%
Total	100%

All Other Classes

Philatelic & Related Knowledge	25%
Personal Study & Research	10%
Treatment	20%
Originality & Philatelic Importance	5%
Relative Condition	15%
Rarity	10%
Presentation, Writing up & Arrangement	15%
Total	100%

Marking Criteria (Literature)

The literature class also differs in its marking structure to reflect the different requirements. Production includes such considerations as: layout; use of illustrations; and editing. In the event of a tie the submission with more marks in *Critical appreciation of the contents* will be awarded the prize.

Marking Criteria (Thematic)

The thematic class differs in its marking structure to reflect the non-philatelic element of the topic being shown. The entry must have an introductory page and a plan. On smaller exhibits, these may be combined on a single page. Larger exhibits may need separate pages for each.

Marks are awarded in each of the following areas using the criteria given

Treatment – Plan (15%)

The plan defines the structure of the exhibit and its division into parts. It should cover all aspects of the chosen theme and be fully consistent with the title of the entry. The plan should be laid out in accordance with the demands of the theme itself rather than along philatelic lines.

Treatment – Development (15%)

Correct logical and balanced subdivisions of the plan will be evaluated together with its ability to demonstrate the development of the subject. The development of the subject will be evaluated to the degree of completeness. Every item shown should add to the development.

Treatment – Originality (5%)

This emerges from the effective development of the theme, either by the introduction of an uncommon subject or by the novel treatment of a familiar one.

Philatelic Knowledge (15%) & Thematic Knowledge (15%)

This includes personal study in both areas. Exhibits should aim to demonstrate the following:

- A full and accurate appreciation of the subject chosen
- A detailed study of existing information
- Any contribution of new information i.e. original research

Each item in the exhibit must be strictly related to the chosen theme and items must be of a postal nature, not privately produced items. As wide a variety of philatelic material as possible should be included. Non philatelic items should not be included (they may be included in a social philately exhibit instead). Maps, drawings, photographs etc., if felt essential to the development of the theme, should be kept to the absolute minimum.

Relative Condition (10%) & Rarity (10%)

The condition of all items will be assessed on their quality in relation to their scarcity and age, as well as knowledge of the average for that particular issue. The rarity of items is evaluated according to their actual availability (i.e. difficulty of acquisition) and not simply according to monetary value.

Presentation Writing Up and Arrangement (15%)

The entry should have a clear and balanced appearance so that the philatelic material is highlighted. The text must be clear and concise. Writing-up should be kept to a minimum, sufficient only to connect items to the theme. The general appearance of the entry, as well as the readability and effectiveness of the text, will be taken into account. In many exhibits philatelic comments in the writing up are frequently put in a different font, e.g. philatelic knowledge in italics. Avoid the use of multi coloured fonts.

Marking Criteria (All Other Classes)

Marks are awarded in each of the following areas using the criteria given

Philatelic and Related Knowledge (25%)

Personal Study & Research (10%)

Exhibits should aim to demonstrate the following:

- A full and accurate appreciation of the subject chosen
- A detailed study of existing information
- Any contribution of new information i.e. original research

Treatment (20%)

Marks are given for the presence and adequacy of the plan and its consistency with the chosen title. Correct logical and balanced subdivisions of the plan will be evaluated together with its ability to demonstrate the development of the subject. The development of the subject will be evaluated to the degree of completeness. Every item shown should add to the development.

Originality and Philatelic Importance (5%)

The factors considered include:

- The degree of advancement and completeness which has been attained *relative* to the subject chosen
- The degree of balance achieved within the exhibit of relating the scope of the subject to the space available
- Originality of approach

Relative Condition (15%) and Rarity (10%)

The condition of all items will be assessed on their quality in relation to their scarcity and age, as well as knowledge of the average for that particular issue. The rarity of items is evaluated according to their actual availability (i.e. difficulty of acquisition) and not simply according to monetary value.

Presentation Writing Up and Arrangement (15%)

The entry should have a clear and balanced appearance so that the philatelic material is highlighted. The text must be clear and concise. The general appearance of the entry, as well as the readability and effectiveness of the text, will be taken into account.

Judging

Judging is carried out to a high standard by ABPS accredited judges and exhibits will qualify for awards according to the marks gained. In addition, there are several trophies. However, these may be held back by the judges if no exhibit is deemed to be of sufficiently high standard.

A Marking Sheet will be returned to you with your exhibit. Inspection of the circled areas will show you at a glance where most of the marks have been gained or lost. The judges try to provide helpful comment on each Marking Sheet. In addition, judges are available at Congress for about one hour at the time announced in the Congress Programme.

Marks Awarded and Class of Medal

Mark	Award (Medals awarded for 50+ marks)
0 – 39	Certificate of Participation
40 – 49	Diploma
50 – 59	Bronze
60 – 69	Bronze Silver
70 – 74	Silver
75 – 79	Small Silver Gilt
80 – 84	Large Silver Gilt
85 +	Gold

Trophies

Traditional (GB)

Traditional (non-GB, Pre 1900)

Traditional (non-GB, Post 1900)

Thematic Class

Postal History

Scottish Postal History

Aerophilately

Social Philately

Literature (1)

Literature (2)

Best Presentation

Best First Time Entrant

Carson Trophy

William Ferris Memorial Trophy

Bridge of Allan Trophy

Scottish Thematic Rose Bowl

Glasgow 800 Cup

Bruce Auckland Centennial Quaich

Aerophilatic Shield

Iain T. Boyle Vase

Robson Lowe Award for Literature

The James S. Merrylees Quaich

Dr. Hirst Bowl

Cowell Salver

Dos and Don'ts of the National Exhibition

The following comments have been provided in consultation with experienced judges to offer additional advice and explanation in respect of philatelic exhibits. To the uninitiated the Rules and Guidelines issued by the various philatelic bodies that govern competitive philately do not often give as much detail as the exhibitor may wish. These additional notes are designed to give the exhibitor guidance as to how the judges interpret the existing rules and guidance and how to avoid falling foul of what experience judges and exhibitors would regard as basic mistakes.

- The first and most important point to bear in mind for any exhibitor is not to treat the judges as all-knowing. Unfortunately, despite wide experience, no single judge or team of judges can be experts on every aspect of every discipline of philately. It is part of the skill of exhibiting to bring to the attention to the judges in the write-up what they should know about the material on display. If an item is unusual / rare or 'only one known' etc; tell them it is. If you know that this was the first flight cover, or a postmark predates the known reference book by e.g. three months, then say so.
- Items used must, in general, be issued by a postal authority. Illustrations on privately produced covers have no philatelic merit and will not gain any marks.
- It is acceptable for a non-philatelic item to appear on the introductory page.
- In thematic exhibits it is not advisable to use used stamps if mint versions are readily available.
- If a postmark is being used to illustrate an item, the full stamp must be shown, even if the item is windowed.
- Blocks of modern stamp are superfluous. Only where there is philatelic rarity should blocks of stamps be used e.g. with older stamps.
- Spelling and grammatical errors/mistakes on computer generated sheets are more likely to lose marks, whereas on hand-written sheets some latitude will be allowed.
- Postal Stationery items should normally be displayed in full. It is acceptable to overlap several items of postal stationery on the same page provided the relevant markings are not obscured.
- Where the exhibitor wishes to show the reverse of an item (perhaps in a thematic entry to show the relevant postal part or in postal history where there are markings on both sides) this may be shown as a photocopy at 75% size. Postmarks may be reproduced at full size.
- In thematic entries, using a different font or script for philatelic comments aids the judges in spotting these items.
- Ensure that your exhibit is on uniform pages of good quality. It is advisable not to mix odd horizontal pages with standard vertical ones. See Rule 5 for the maximum sheet size.
- Make sure all items are securely fastened to the page.
- Ensure that the quality of the protectors does not detract from the appearance of the exhibit.