



Southern Counties Photographic Federation

Clubs Judging Seminar

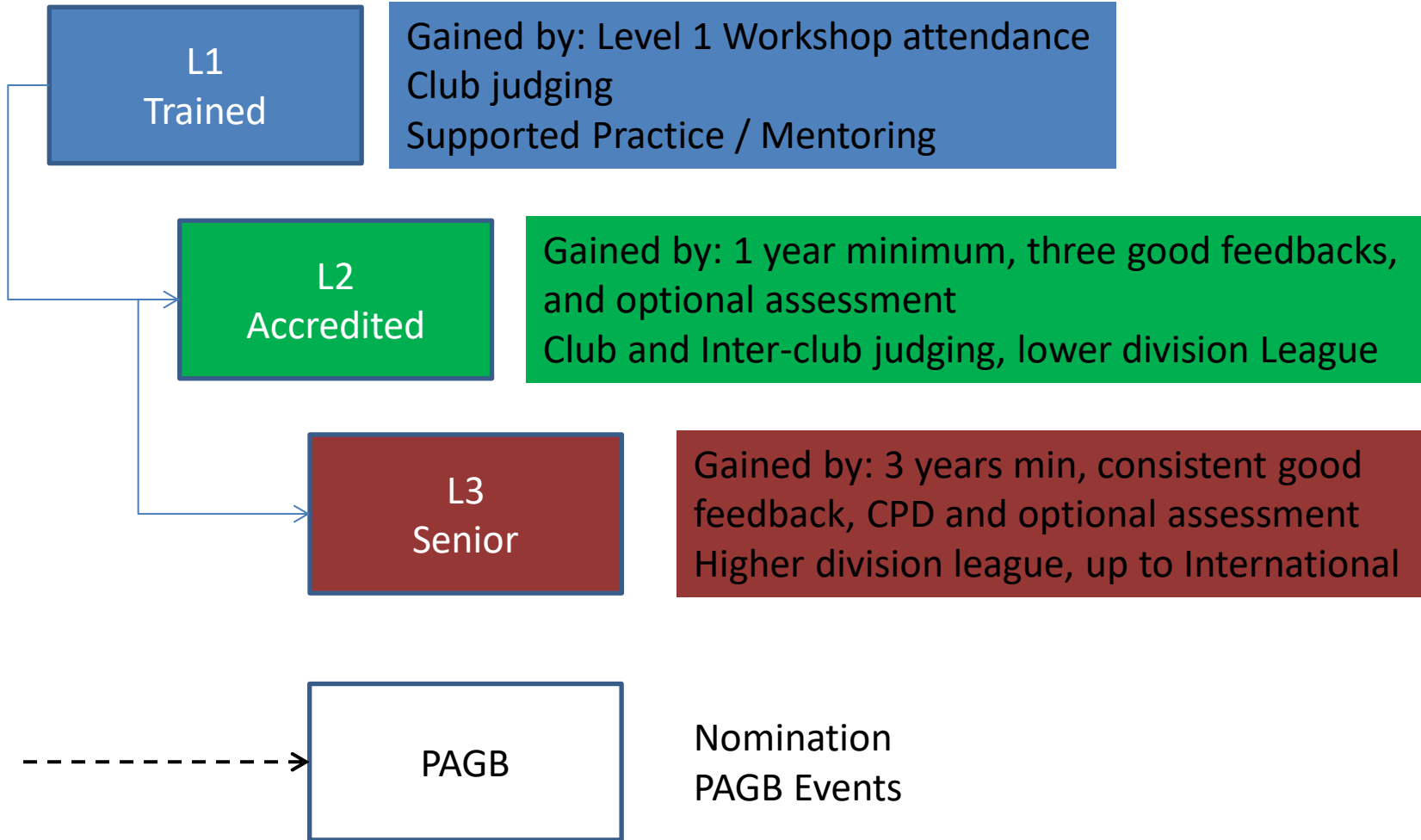
3rd February 2019

SCPF Taking A Lead

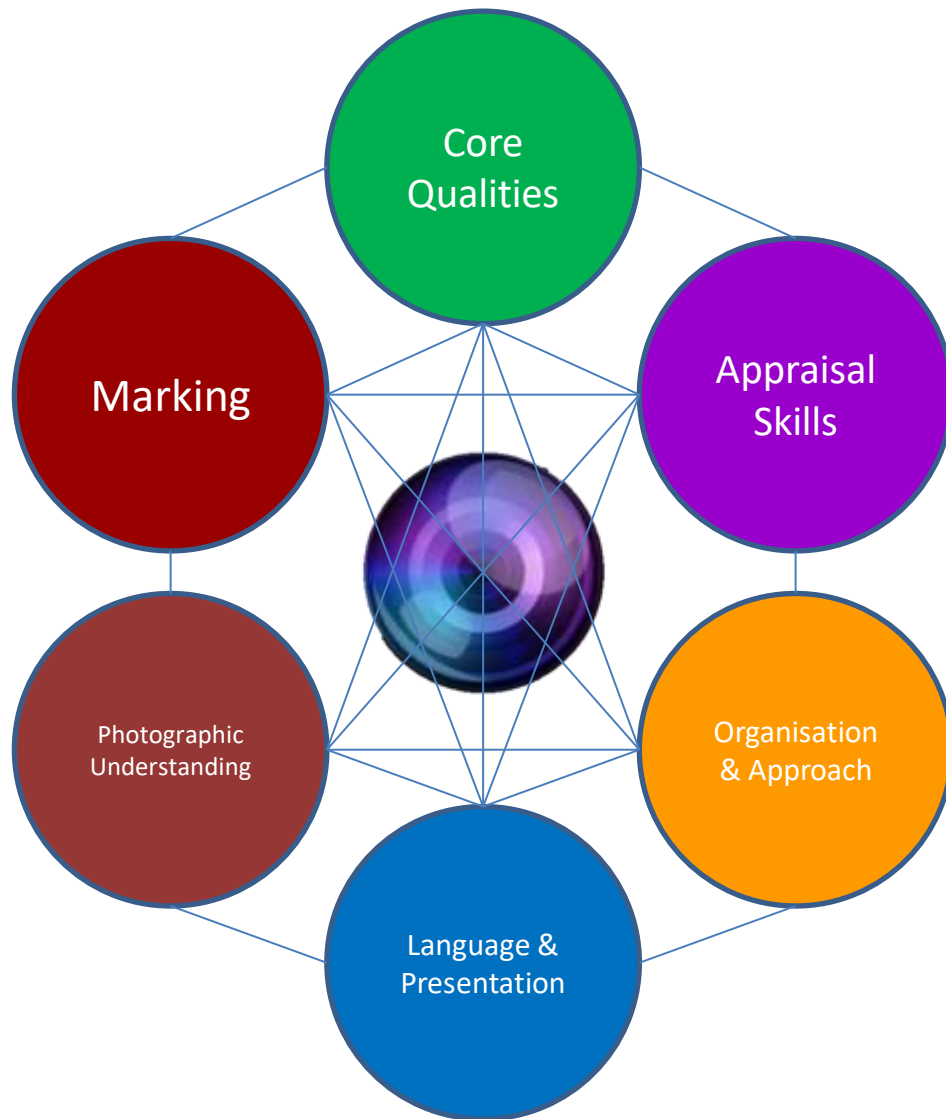


- SCPF completely redesigned Judging Training in 2012
- Aims
 - To redefine our role
 - To change the perception of judging
- Structured, professional training
 - Integrated process
 - Supported practice
 - Regular feedback
 - Continuing development and progression
- Ongoing Implementation since 2012
 - 64 new Level 1 judges
 - 35 still practising
 - Three Development Conferences

Progression Through the Levels



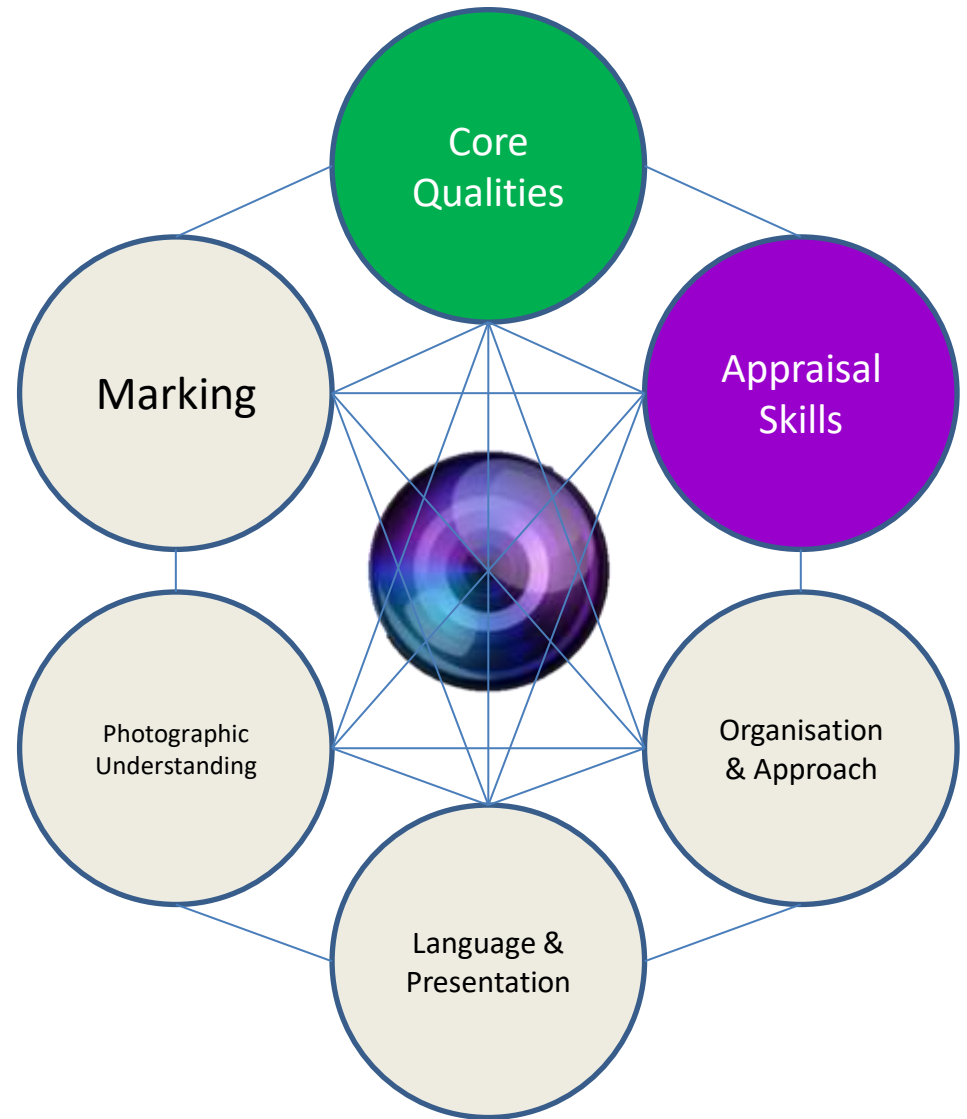
Our Competency Areas



- Understanding
- Awareness
- Practice

What is the Role of a Club
“Judge”

SESSION 1



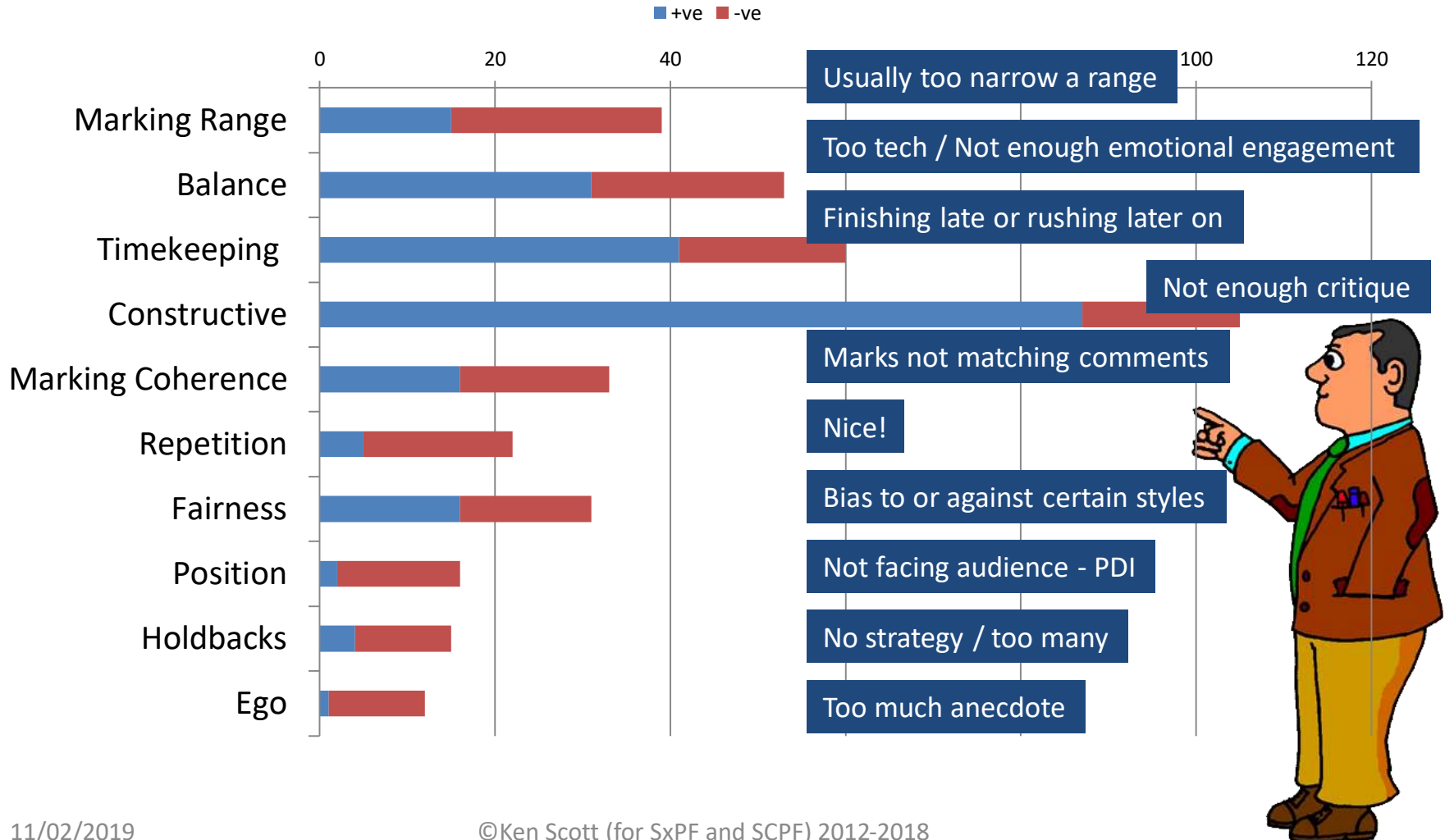
Questions

1. What things do judges say and do that really irritate you?
2. What is the Role of a club appraiser?
What Qualities do we need?



Top Ten Things People Dislike

By volume of negative criticism from feedback comments

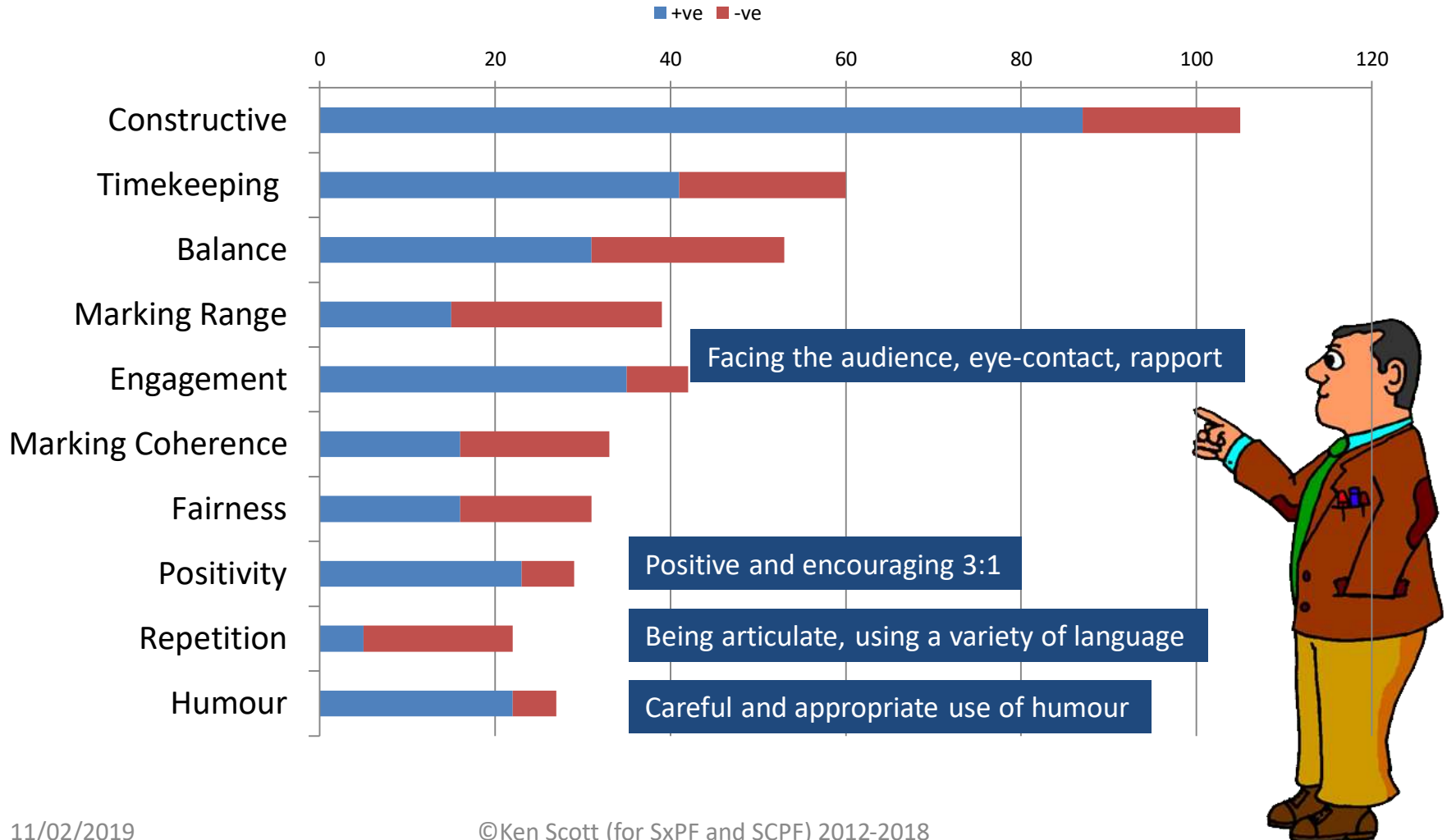




We will not be like them!

Top Ten Most Important Aspects

By volume of comment from feedback, both positive and negative

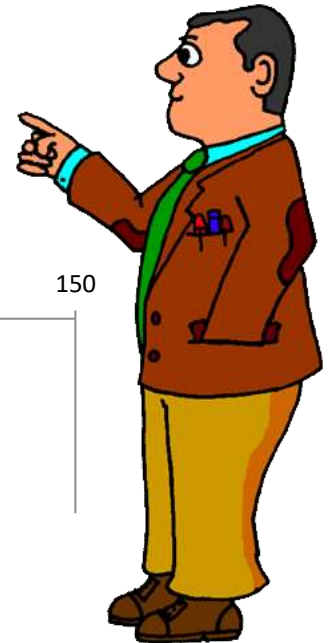
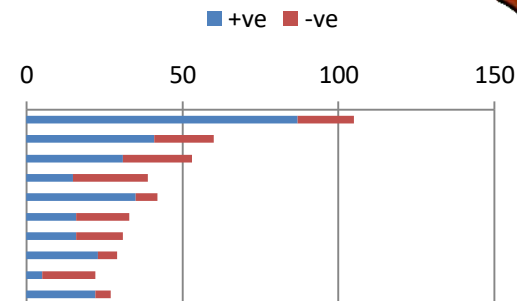


Which means ...

Giving a constructive, positive, knowledgeable and engaging critique, balanced and fair to all styles, using a series of marks that differentiates and reflects the critique, all in about a minute, having only just seen the image, knowing that the photographer is listening!

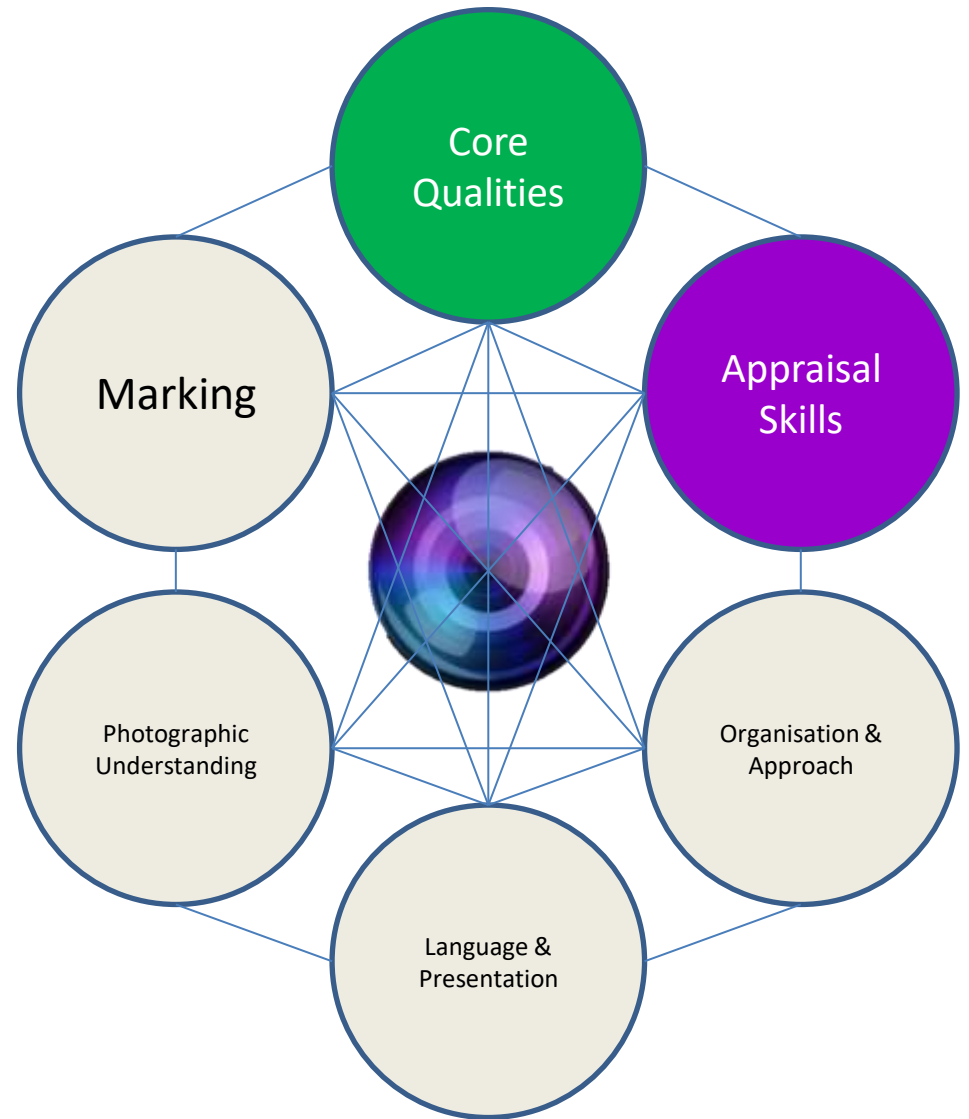
And to be entertaining and finish on time

Simples!



Core Qualities
Structuring an Appraisal

SESSION 2



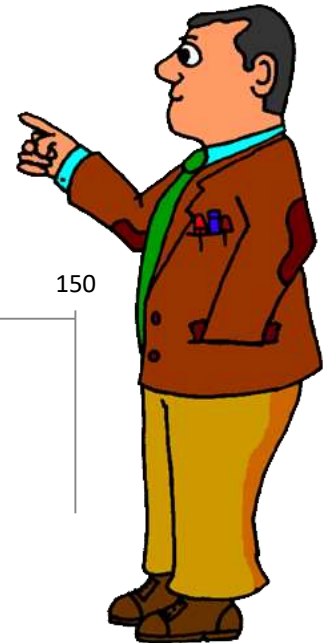
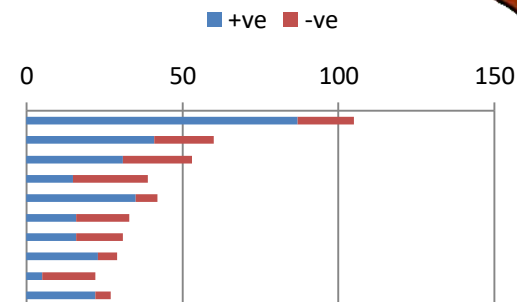
Aims

Most club photographers want to

- a) Understand how to improve their photography*
- b) Gain recognition for their photography*

It is our role to help them

*Our aim is to promote growth through
valuable critique and appraisal*



Is 'Judging' the right word?

◎ A JUDGE

- Sits in authority
- Applies rules
- Criticises (often negatively)
- Makes final decisions
- Encourages conformity (perhaps unwittingly)

◎ A COACH

- Is usually a peer
- Opens up options
- Encourages and motivates
- Makes suggestions
- Encourages self-expression and individuality

99% of what we do in club appraisal is to coach:
promoting growth, self-confidence and expression

1% of what we do is to “judge”:
when we give a mark or decide the “winner”

Giving and Receiving Critique



<https://davidduchemin.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5XnebHYPzw>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptrgWll_DEQ

Promoting Growth - 1



- EMPATHY
- Understand the photographer's intent
 - Why the photographer was motivated to make this image even if you would not have done so

It is not YOUR image!

Our Core Qualities

- Empathy
- Congruence
- Respect for the photographer at all times
- Enthusiasm and Motivation

Promoting Growth - 2



- CONGRUENCE
- Understand what you see and how you feel about it
 - Owning your opinion
 - Using 'I' language

Promoting Growth - 3



- RESPECT
- Respect and encourage the photographer
 - No matter the quality of the image
 - Recognise all the positives

Promoting Growth - 4



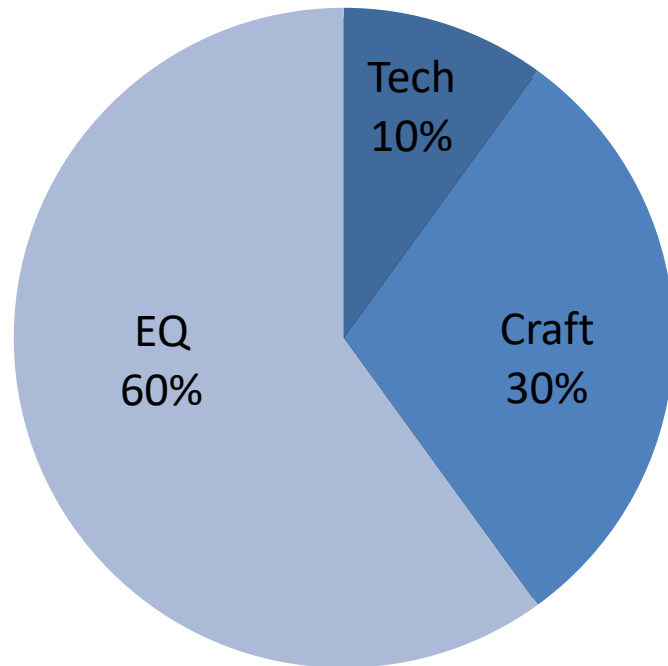
- Enthusiasm and Motivation
- Make suggestions for improvement
 - Better expression
 - Better craft
 - Better technicality
 - leave everyone motivated, encouraged, recognised ... and wanting to do better next time

Questions

1. What aspects should appraisers take into account when assessing our images?



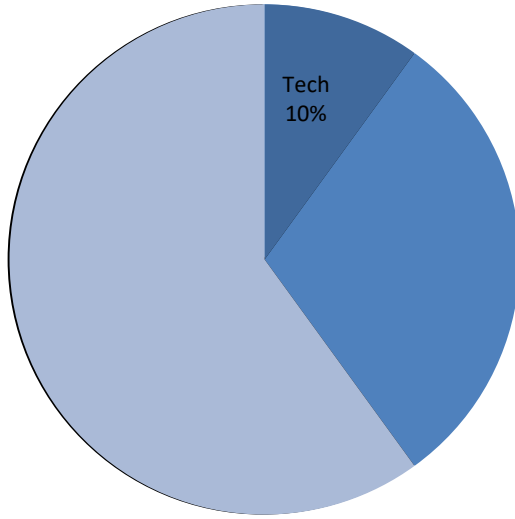
Appraisal Structure and Balance



◉ What weights of importance would you give to:

- Technical?
- Craft and Content?
- Expressive Quality?

Technical Quality

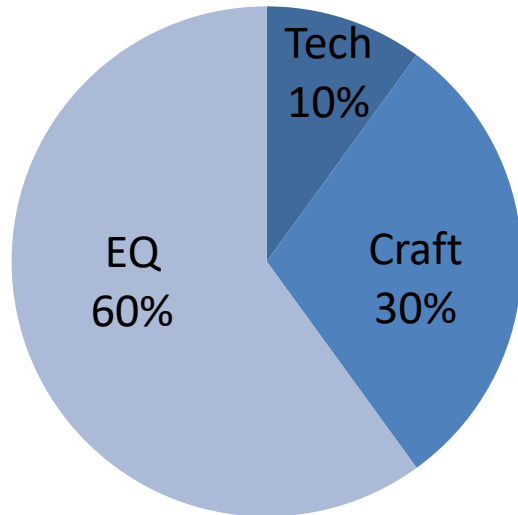


"There is nothing worse than a sharp image of a fuzzy concept!"

Ansel Adams

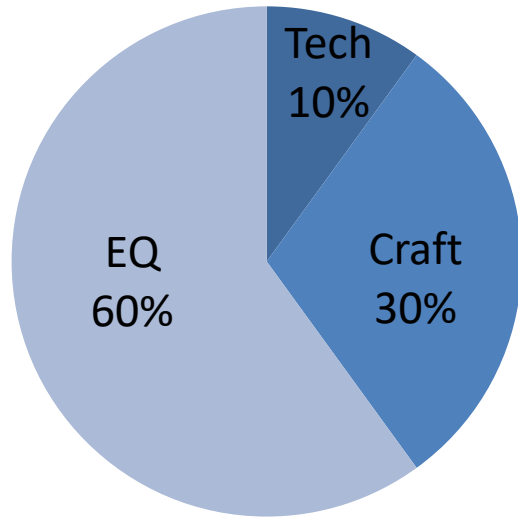
- 10-15% - Objective
- How well has the image been produced?
 - Tonal range and colour saturation
 - Exposure and contrast
 - Sharpness
 - Handling of digital production
 - noise / compression / sharpening / cloning / layering / ...
 - Quality of printing

Content / Craft



- 30-35% - Subjective
- How has technique contributed to the overall effect of the image?
 - Composition, design and balance
 - Choice and control of lighting
 - Use of lenses / POV and perspective
 - DoF / focus point
 - Timing / 'the decisive moment'
 - Use of colour ... or monochrome
 - Appropriate use of styles, treatments and effects
 - Format - portrait or landscape
 - Presentation

Expressive Quality – “It Speaks to Me”



*“A photograph is usually looked at -
seldom looked into.”*

Ansel Adams

- 55-60% - Highly subjective
- How does the image engage you?
 - Does it engage you emotionally?
 - Does it invoke a strong reaction positive or negative?
 - Does it show individuality / originality / photographer input?
 - Is it especially beautiful / ugly / subtle / dramatic
 - Does it convey an idea or information?
 - Does it keep your interest?
 - Does it ask questions / create intrigue or curiosity?
 - Does it show relationships?
 - Does it make you think?

The Bottom Line

If an image really speaks, the technicalities will hardly be noticed

If you have to talk primarily about craft and technicality, chances are the image doesn't have high expressive quality



Top: Robert Capa's 1944 image of landings on Omaha Beach, Normandy



Bottom: Nick Ut's Pulitzer Prize-winning image of children fleeing a napalm attack, Vietnam, 1972

Variations by Genre

Dr. Sethna's "weights" might vary by genre



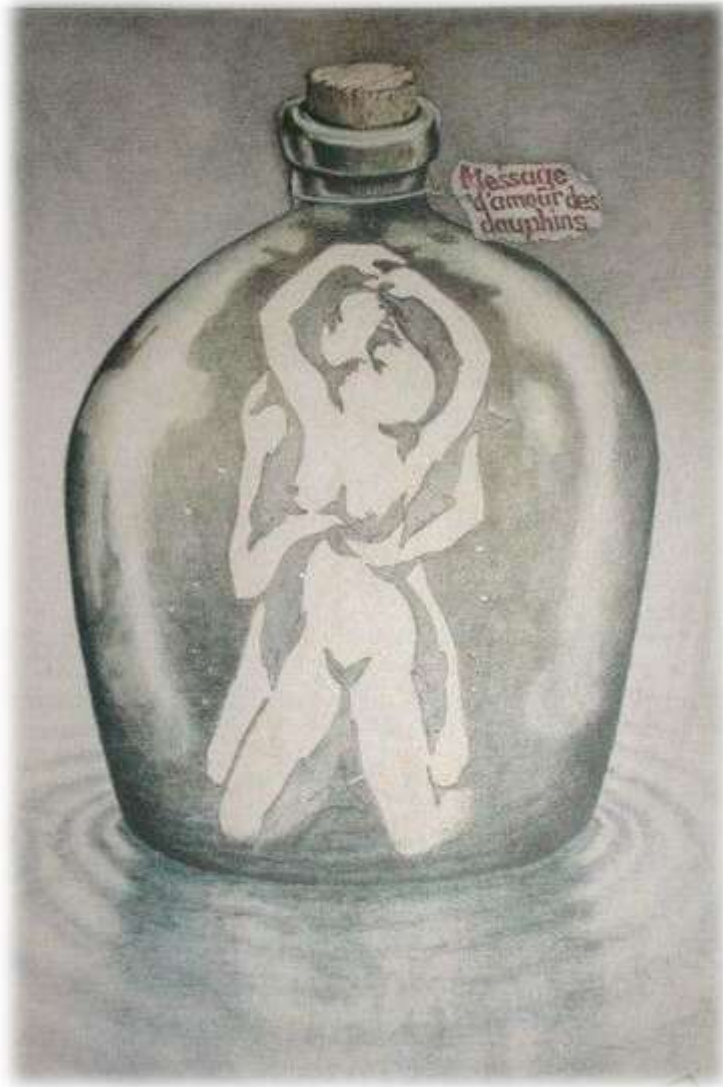
⦿ Abstracts

- Highly expressive in an artistic way
- Highly subjective
- More dependent on message and interpretation



⦿ Nature / Documentary

- Highly expressive in an informative way
- More Objective
- More dependent on technical quality

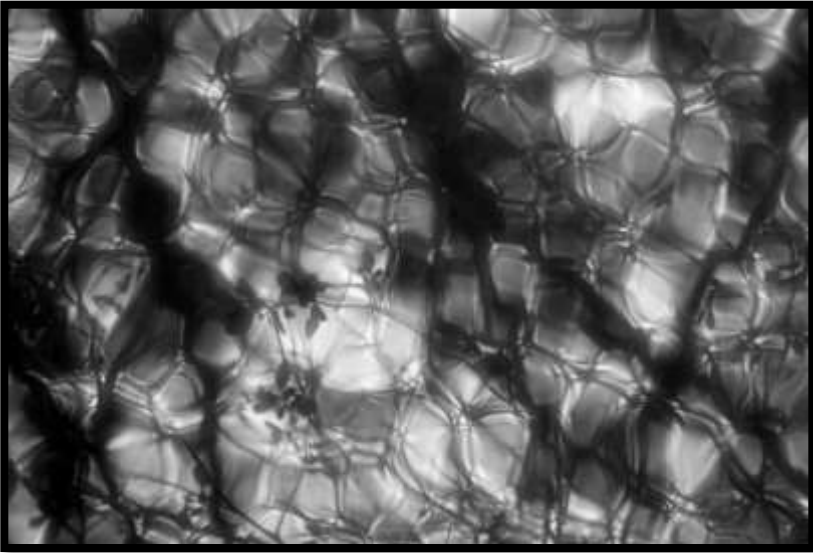


Original image by Sandro Del-Prete

About Subjectivity

- What we see (or not) is conditioned by our values, experiences and priorities
- Expressive quality in a photograph exists differently in the mind of every viewer
- It is important to seek the photographer's intent but not to find it; it is your personal response that matters most
- Objectivity is impossible

The Complete Appraisal



Empathise

Own your opinions

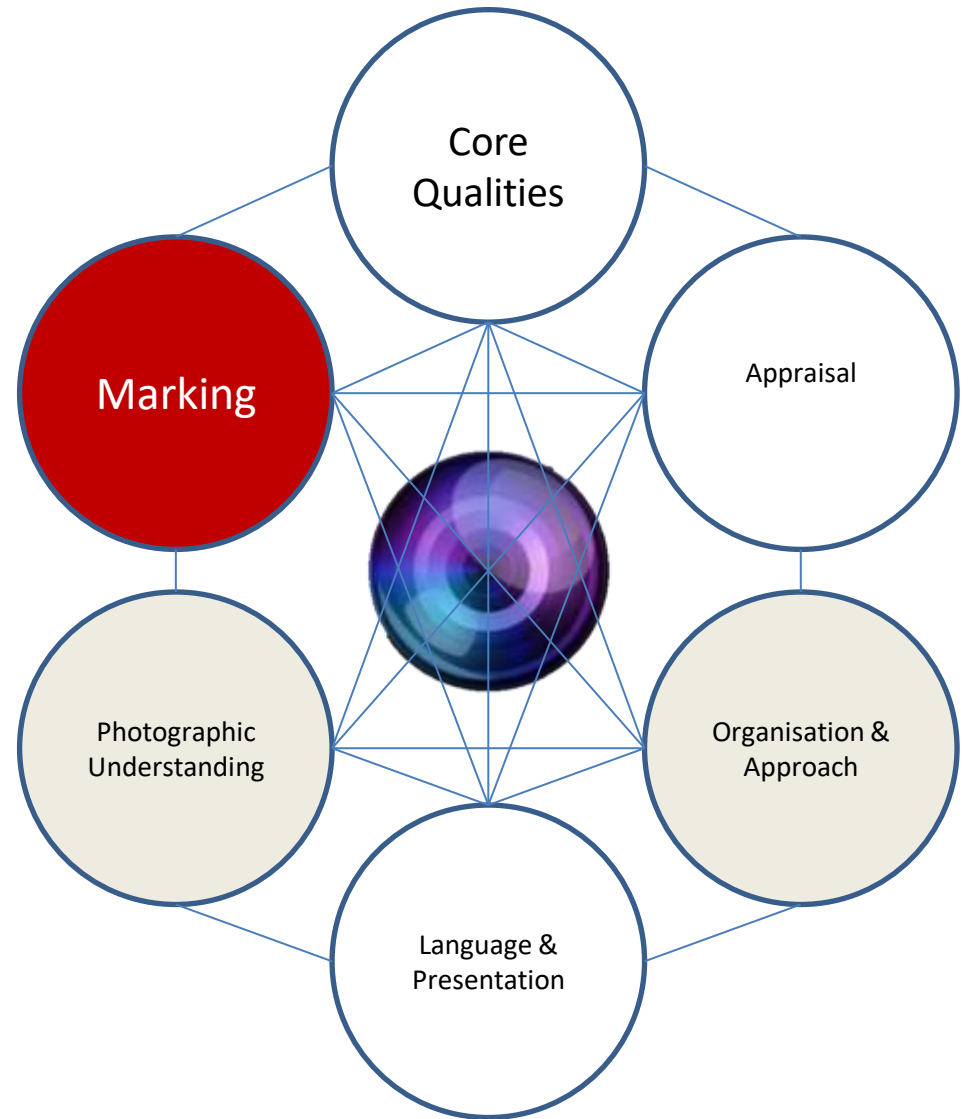
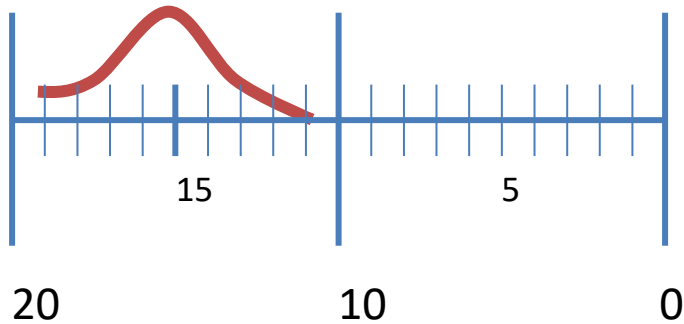
Be respectful

Motivate - 3:1 positives

- Consider what you're seeing
 - The image as a whole
 - What is the image about?
- What does it say to you?
 - How do you feel about it?
- Discuss the image
 - How do you feel?
 - What does it communicate to you?
 - Look under the surface
 - Is EQ enhanced or hindered by craft and technical quality?
- Suggest improvements
 - Be specific
 - How to use craft to enhance the EQ, not to make a different image
- Finish on a positive note ...

Marking

SESSION 3



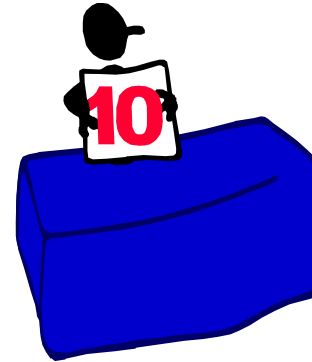
Variability / Polarised Images

MARKING DISCUSSION

Marking Schemes

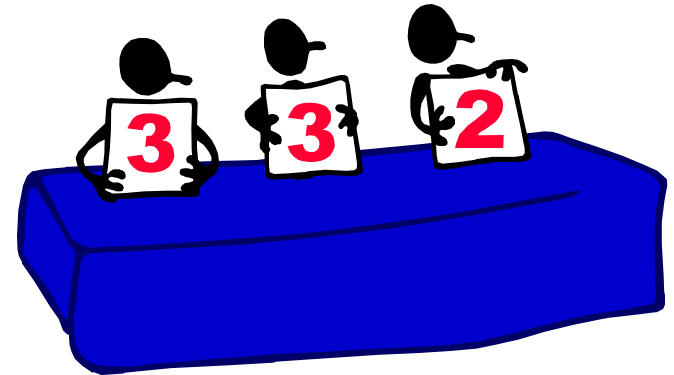
⦿ At Club Level

- Marks out of 10 / 20
- Gold / Silver / Bronze
- 1,2,3 and HCs
- Marks out of 5



⦿ Exhibitions and Championships

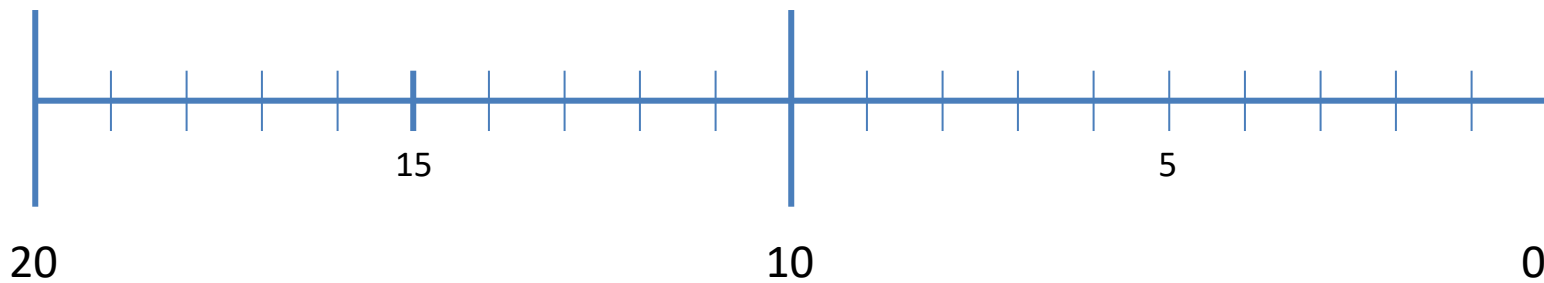
- Marks out of 5 (with two other judges)
- Winner plus HCs or ribbons from a large entry of high standard



Marking

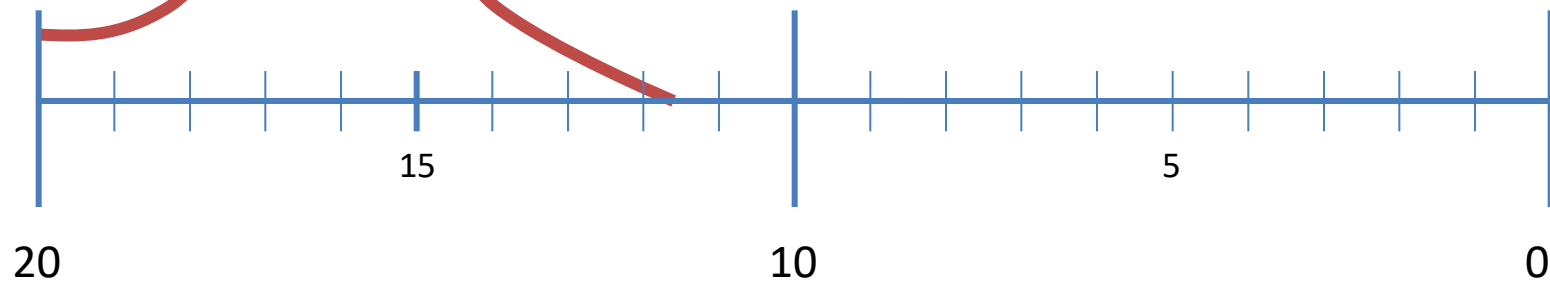


What is an appropriate range?

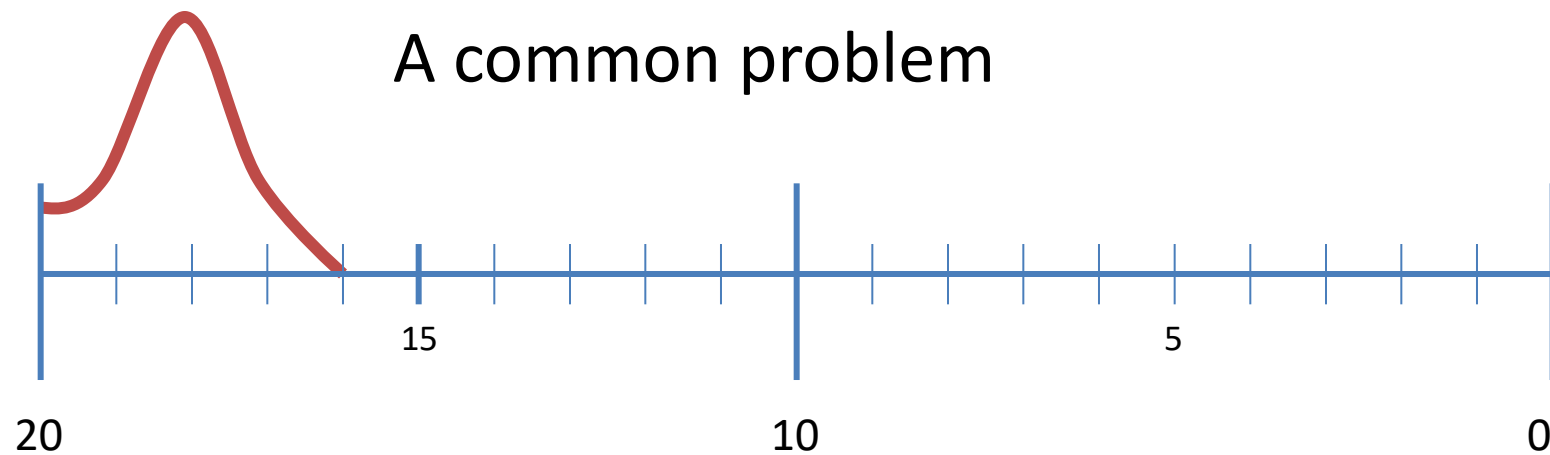


Marking

A normal distribution
16 average ...



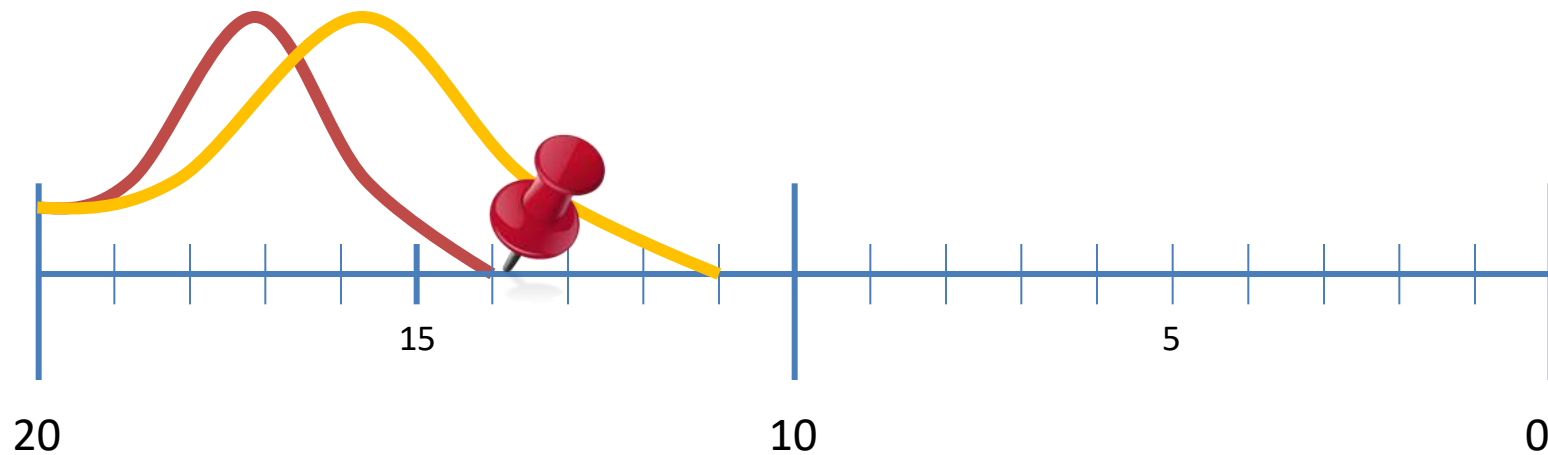
Marking



Ideal Marking Ranges

For beginners: 14-20 (ave 16-17)

For advanced: 11-20 (ave 15-16)

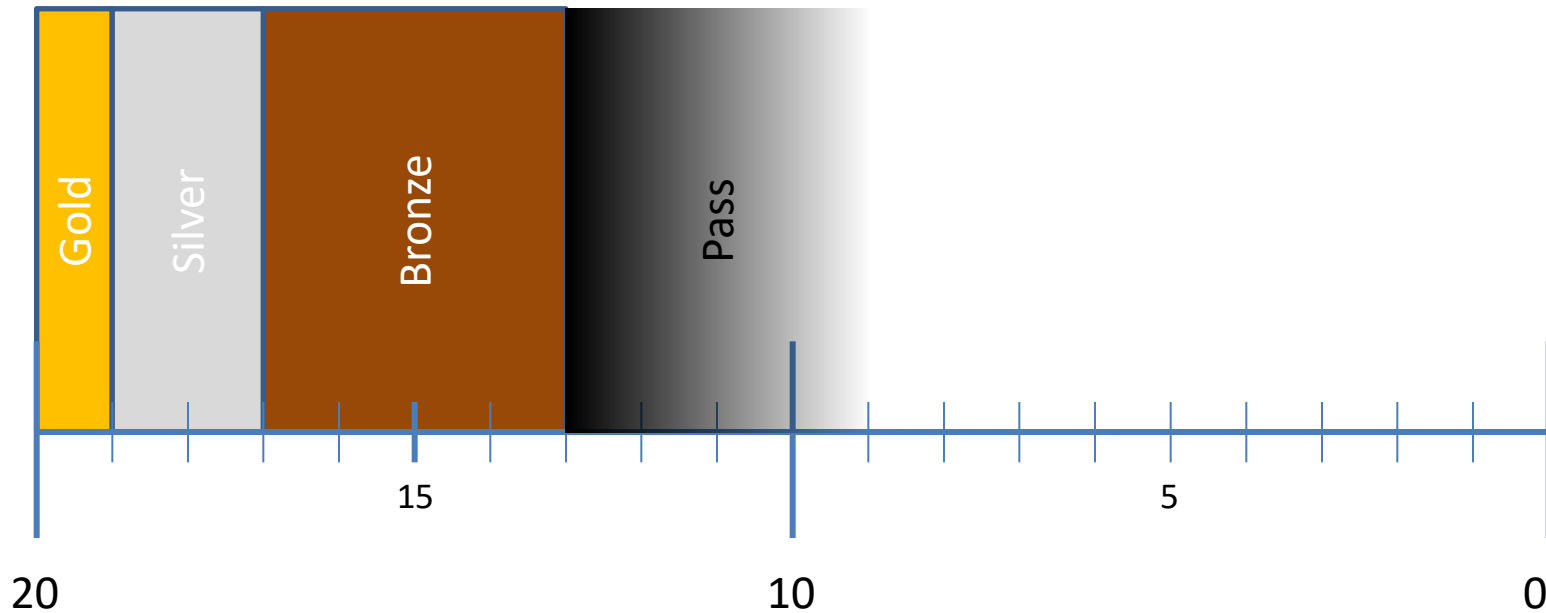


Tip: In your preview look at all the images to pin the lowest mark

Marking at club is typically Relative, not Absolute.

Therefore: use whole range, always the best image scores top mark.

Comparisons



Gold

- Excellent of its type, highly expressive, individual, technically-flawless

Silver

- Very good quality, slightly lower in expressive quality or individuality, minor flaws only

Bronze

- Low in expressive quality or individuality and / or some obvious technical flaws

Pass / Credit

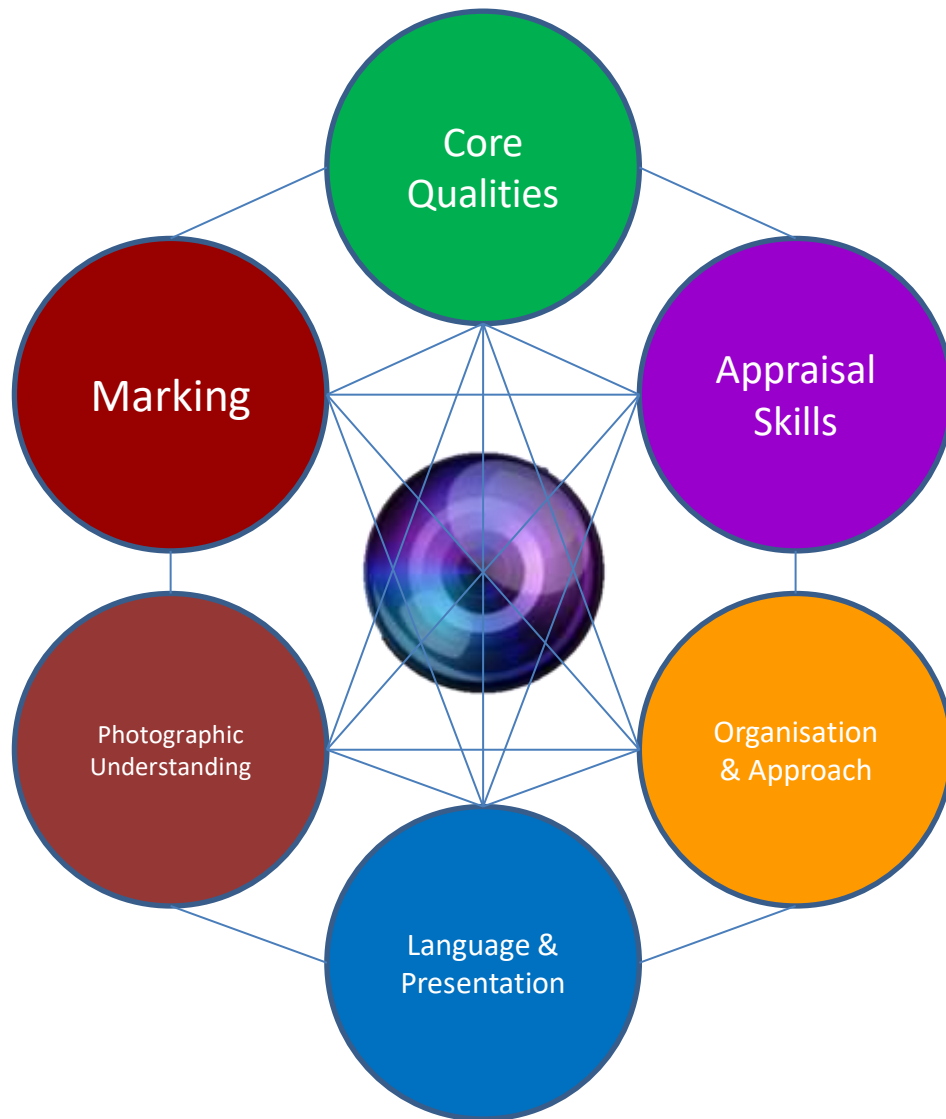
- Little or no expressive quality or individuality, and major technical flaws

Questions

1. What could / would you do at your clubs to ensure that you get the best out of your judges?
2. What are the issues and challenges your club faces with regard to competition and judges?



Competencies Reminder



- Understanding
- Awareness
- Practice

Finally

As appraisers we have a lot of power and a big responsibility.

If we do it well, photographers and club photography will
grow;

We have the power to influence that for good

If we do it poorly, photographers might leave and not return,
and club photography will be left behind;

We have the responsibility to make sure that never happens

Thank you for coming

ON BEHALF OF SCPF