

Guidelines for Photographic Studios on producing photographs suitable for United Kingdom Passports

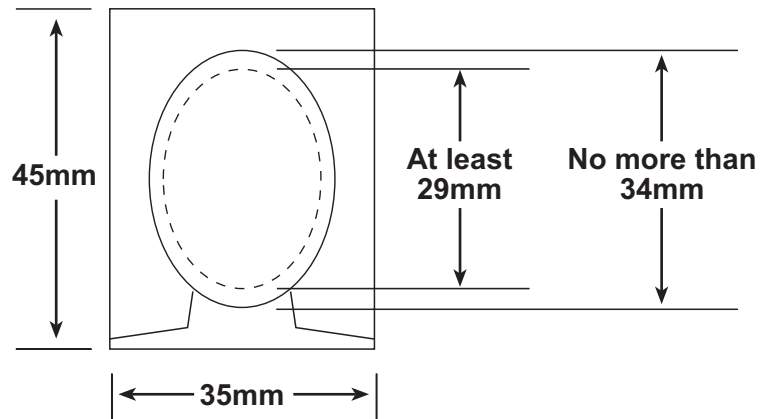
New photograph standards announced by the United Kingdom Passport Service in August 2004 and fully implemented in September 2005, are designed to ensure that photographs submitted with passport applications are suitable for the new biometrically enabled passports (known as ePassports). These new passports meet the requirements set out by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO, the governing body that recommends standards for travel documents).

These standards require a facial biometric, which can be captured from the photograph submitted. To capture this biometric, we have installed new scanning equipment in our passport issuing system, which scans photographs to a much higher resolution than before whilst retaining all the additional functionality such as ICR, OCR, extraction of signatures etc. These technological advances mean not only that the customer has to ensure their pose is correct, but there are specific technical requirements of the photograph. The information on these pages is designed to help you ensure that:

- Customers are accurately represented and
- Photos are free of common defects that can cause delays

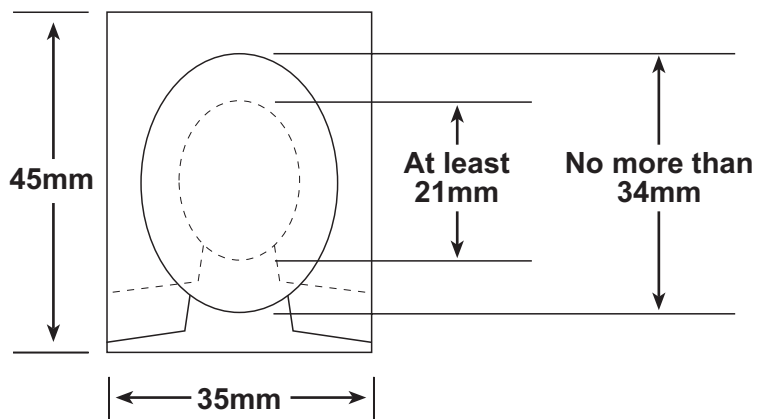
The Basics:

For adults: show head and top of shoulders close up, so the measurement of the face from the bottom of the chin to the crown (i.e. the top of the head, not the top of the hair) is between 29mm and 34mm.



For children: show head and top of shoulders close up, so the measurement of the face from the bottom of the chin to the crown (i.e. the top of the head, not the top of the hair) is between 21mm and 34mm.

These measurements ensure that key points on the face are of a sufficient clarity for the software to capture the key biometric features and that there is space between the head and edge of the photo after scanning.



Quantity and Format

- We require applicants to submit two identical photos. These must be produced from the same film or from the same electronic file capturing the digital image. Digital enhancement is not acceptable as this can result in the capture of an inaccurate biometric

Size and Paper

- Photos must measure 45mm by 35mm
- Heavy weight paper is unacceptable, i.e. cardboard
- Photos must be printed on high quality photographic not inkjet paper
- Corrugated paper is not acceptable
- Trademarks or other printing on the reverse can show through when scanned onto our system. We currently accept these provided the photo scans acceptably, but later in 2006 we will not accept back printed photos. We are working with the industry on this issue and will post progress on this page
- Photos must have a backing that allows the countersignatory to certify one of the photos and sign in ink, without smearing

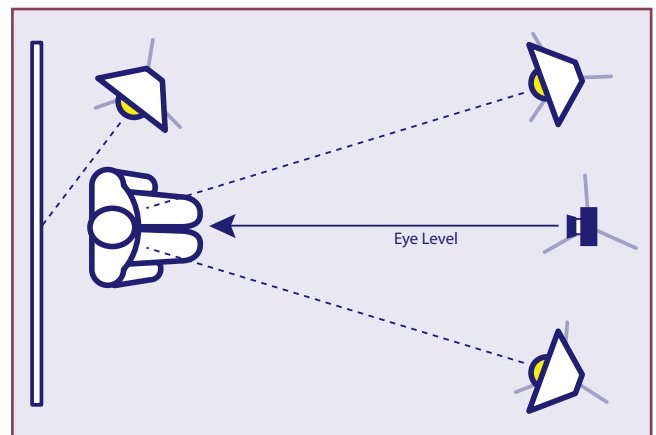
Glasses

Glasses can often show reflection or glare from flash, and the frames can obscure the facial features we need to capture. This can cause problems when trying to capture the biometric. If you are finding glare or flash difficult to avoid, you can recommend that the customer removes their glasses. Whilst this may mean that their passport photo does not show them as they usually appear, their photo will still be a good likeness. The following points should be observed;

- no dark or tinted lenses that obscure the eyes
- no flash reflection off the lenses
- frames should not cover any part of the eyes

General photo requirements

- Eyes must be open and clearly visible, with no flash reflections and no “red eye”
- Facial expression must be neutral (not frowning nor smiling) with the mouth closed
- Photos must show both edges of the face clearly
- Photos must show a full front view of face and shoulders, squared to the camera
- Photos must not show the subject looking over one shoulder (portrait style) or with head tilted to one side or backwards or forwards
- The face and shoulder image must be centred in the photos
- There must be no hair across the eyes
- Photos must reflect/represent natural skin tones
- Photos must be clear, sharp and in focus
- Photos with shadows on the face or background are unacceptable
- Photos must be taken with uniform lighting and not show shadows or flash reflection on the face and head
- Photos must be taken against a plain, uniform, off-white or light-grey background. 5 - 10% grey is recommended
- Hats or head coverings are not permitted except when worn for religious reasons and only if the full facial features are clearly visible
- Black and white or colour photos are acceptable
- Where very young children are being supported, the hands if visible must not be above the shoulder
- Photos must not be manipulated, for example, by removing spots or softening lines



This diagram is only a guide to the optimum positioning of camera and light sources to enable a photo of the required standard to be achieved. Please note that you will need to take into account the specific requirements of your equipment and you should check that the guidance provided by the manufacturers is followed. If there is a divergence between this diagram and the guidance provided by your suppliers, you should follow the latter, as there may be requirements specific to your equipment.

Exceptions to our photo policy

- When photographing infants under the age of 12 months, we only require that the image shows a good likeness. The requirements on head size, eyes open and mouth closed, for example, are waived. Detailed guidance can be found here (PLE04)
- For children aged over 1 and under 6 years, the requirements for mouths to be closed and eyes looking at the camera are waived. Detailed guidance can be found here (PLE04)

Some applicants, because of either physical or mental disability, will find it difficult to meet our requirements. We are able to therefore accept a customer's statement that they cannot meet the requirement because of disability. In these instances we ask that as good an image as possible is captured.

For detailed technical information you can also refer to the ISO Standard on Face Biometrics (including image capture) known as ISO 19794-5 which can be found on the British Standards Website (<http://www.bsonline.bsi-global.com>).

Further help

For further advice, please contact the Passport Adviceline on 0870 521 0410 who if unable to assist will pass your enquiry onto the relevant person.

These pages will be kept up to date to reflect the latest developments, guidance and advice. Therefore, please check here regularly along with the reference code on the bottom of page 1 to ensure you are looking at the current version.