



PASSPORT PHOTO PROCESS GUIDE

UNDERSTANDING ID STATION & PASSPORT PHOTOS



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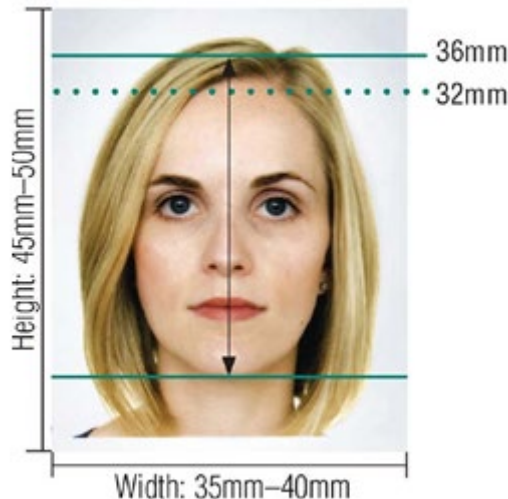
Introduction

This document is a follow through guide for using the Photomatic software and the understanding of the passport photos. There is brief discussion on various topics related to software and passport photos. All the information given in this document is collected from real-time queries. The main objective of this document is to provide an understanding on the key concepts of the ID Station Online and day to day operations of taking passport photos. The information provided is subject to change and may vary from client to client.

Understanding passport photos

Before taking the photo, let's understand the passport photos.

You can do a post photo check in relation to the government guidelines, if the photo does not look like meeting the criteria, please consider re-taking the photo.



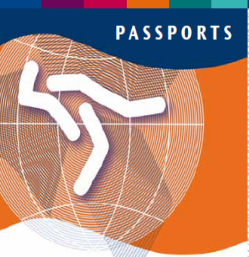
<https://www.passports.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-04/brochure-photo-guidelines.pdf>

As per guidelines these aspects should be considered during the process of taking the photo. Moreover, it also highlights the certain example where photos may not be accepted and given the reason why it is not. For more information on Australian Passport Photo guidelines, please visit the link below.

<https://www.passports.gov.au/PhotoGuidelines>

Government Guideline

Government guidelines given below indicates the do's and don'ts for a Australian passport photo.




Photograph guidelines

Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Your passport photos

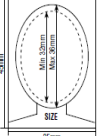
WARNING: Unacceptable photos will delay the processing of your application.

You must provide two recent identical colour photographs of yourself with your completed passport application. One of these photographs must be endorsed by your guarantor with the words "this is a true photo of (insert name)" unless you are submitting an application for a passport renewal using form PC7.



Photographs must be no more than six months old.

The following guidelines will help you provide suitable photographs, so that your application is not delayed by having to submit new photographs in the required format.





The basics:


- 35-40mm wide and 45-50 mm high
- good quality colour on high quality paper, with no ink or marks on the image
- plain, light-coloured background (e.g. cream or pale blue but not white)
- appropriate brightness and contrast and show your skin tones naturally
- uniform lighting (no shadows across or behind the face), sharp focus and clear


The photograph must:


- be of your head and top of your shoulders
- show your shoulders square on (not portrait style with your looking over one shoulder)
- show your face square on (both edges of the face should be visible)


too close 


too far away 


too dark 


too light 


ink marked/formed 


washed out colour 


pixilated 


flash reflection on skin 

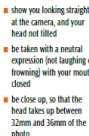
not a neutral expression 

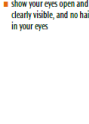
show you looking straight at the camera, and your head not tilted 


be taken with a neutral expression (not laughing or frowning) with your mouth closed 


be close up, so that the head takes up between 22mm and 35mm of the photo 

show your eyes open and clearly visible, and no hair in your eyes 

hair across eyes/face 

eyes closed 

not looking at the camera 

head tilted/portrait style 

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Head coverings

- show you without any hat or other head covering
- If you wear a head covering for religious reasons we will accept a photograph of you wearing it, but your facial features from bottom of chin to top of forehead and both edges of your face must be clearly shown.



wearing a hat



sunglasses on head



face edges not visible



full face not visible

Glasses

If you usually wear glasses, you do not have to wear them for your passport photograph, but if you do:

- they must show your eyes clearly
- no flash reflection off the glasses
- no tinted lenses
- if possible avoid heavy framed glasses
- frames should not cover any part of your eyes
- lighter framed glasses are preferable (if you have them)



lenses too dark



flash reflection on lenses



frames covering eyes



heavy frames

Children and babies

- show the baby or child awake, looking straight at the camera with mouth closed and no pacifier.
- show both edges of the face clearly (no toys, blankets, chair backs or other people visible) and no hair across the eyes.



shows another person



child's toy visible



hair across eyes



shadows behind head



parent's hand visible



dark background



eyes closed



mouth open/face covered

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Remember to safeguard your passport at all times. Store it in the wallet provided to prevent deterioration. Additional fees apply to replace a lost or stolen passport.

Further information

For further information visit our website www.passports.gov.au or call 131 232 in Australia.

If you are overseas, contact an Australian diplomatic or consular mission.

April 2008

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Understanding Photomatic software

Photomatic is binary software which will assist you in processing the photo as per the selected country's requirements and print it once everything is checked. The software is connected to ID Station Online server in the backend where it performs a compliance check on every selected photo and assists you printing the passport photo.

Basically, the Photomatic software works like this:

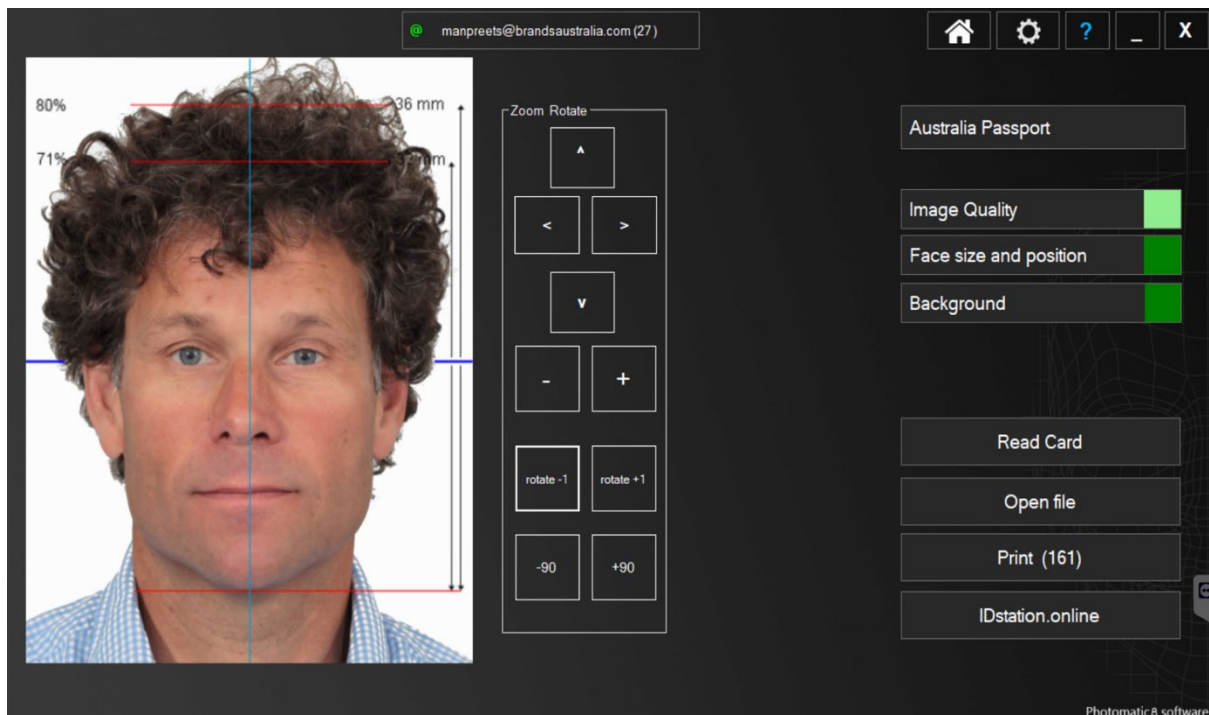
- You take a couple of photos of a customer.
- You import the photos into the software and select one of them for processing.
- The Photomatic software automatically processes that photo into a passport photo and runs an ICAO photo test to verify the passport photo is fully compliant and can be used to apply for a new passport, Visa or driving license.
- You inspect the resulting passport photo and the ICAO photo test results. You then must decide to:
 - **retake** the photo if the photo test fails or if you are unhappy with the result, or
 - **print** the passport photo, or
 - **upload** the passport photo **to IDstation.online** in case the customer needs a digital passport photo.

Understanding Image quality

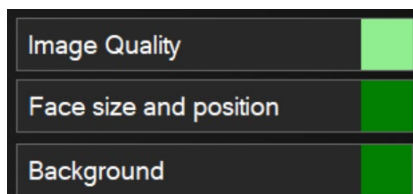
The Photomatic software will auto-process the photo into a passport photo according to the predefined country template. This means in short that the photo will be cropped to a format and face size and position exactly as required by the **selected country template**.

Then the ICAO photo tool will check the photo to see if the photo quality matches the official requirements as specified by the ICAO. Some countries have additional requirements, all of which are inside this country template.

When the software is done processing the selected photo you will see this:



Once the photo has been processed into a passport photo to be used for applying a Australia Passport. The photo has passed the ICAO quality test as you can see by the three **green** square “lights”:







Click this button to see the details of the ICAO photo test on image quality and biometrics.

Click this button to see the details of the ICAO photo test on face size and position.

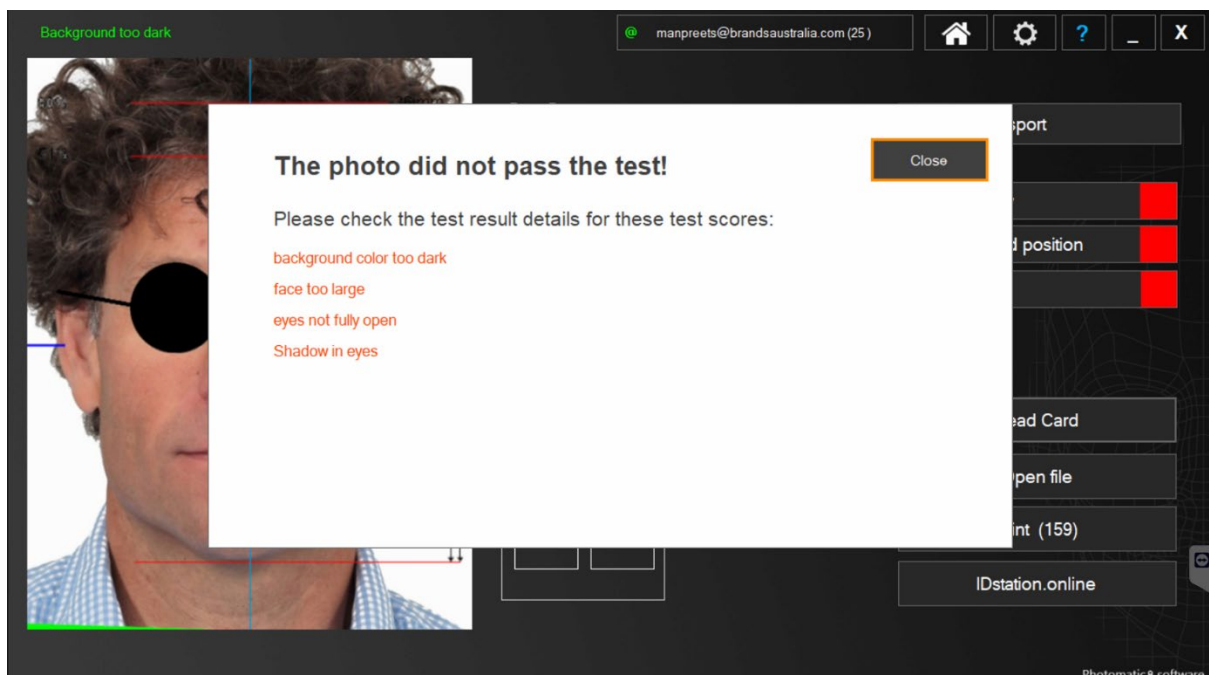
Click this button to see the details of the ICAO photo test on the background. This also provides a nice feature to improve the background

The squares can have the following color:

-  **Red:** test failed. Photo must be rejected and consider retaking the photo.
-  **Orange:** very poor test result. Photo must be carefully examined and preferably taken again.
-  **Light green:** average test result.
-  **Green:** good test result.

Note: In some cases, like face disability, a baby or any other genuine reason the ICAO test can be bypassed for printing the photos, please contact Brands Australia's Tech Support Team.

Here's an example of a photo that should be rejected:



In this case the ICAO photo test reports that the photo was rejected. For obvious reasons.

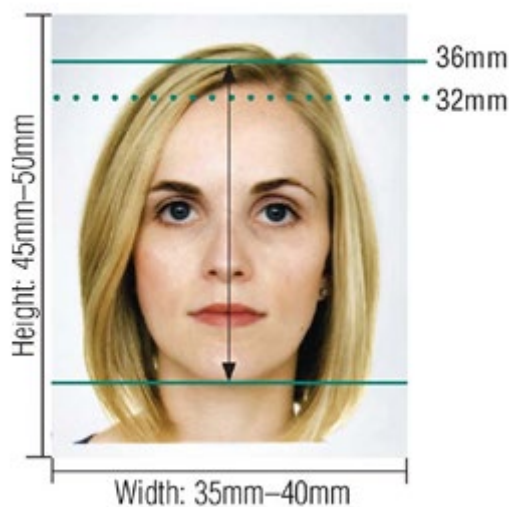
Clicking on these buttons will help determine why a photo is rejected or why there is a warning to check the image. Example of details of the ICAO photo test on Image Quality and biometrics:

Image measurements		Image Quality measurements	
Input Image Size	600 x 771	Sharpness	98
ID photo data	546 x 703	Motion Blur	96
Measurement Confidence	100	Contrast	43
General Image Quality	59	Artefacts	70
		Noise	70
		Compression	70
Biometric measurements		Lighting measurements	
	Pixels x Pixels	Under Exposed	66
Position Eye 1	213 x 374	Over Exposed	66
Position Eye 2	383 x 376	Natural Skin Color	83
Horizontal eye alignment angle	0	Hotspots/Hair in face	67
Inter Eye Distance	170	Uniform Lighting	61
Pose	86	Shadow in Eyes	13
Face Biometrics detectable	28	Shadow in Face	96
Eye Details detectable	55	Eyes red	no
Biometrical details in Image	29	Glasses	yes!
Eyes open	24	Age estimate	57
Sunglasses/Darkness around eyes	22	Gender	Male
Glare from Glasses	36		
Neutral Expression	-1		
Mouth closed	80		
Smiling	-1		

Understanding face size and positioning

Face size and positioning holds a great significance in a passport photo. Whenever any photo is processed, it must be made sure that face of the person is between the overlay lines. For example, chin line is touching the chin, and the top crown line is touching the top of the crown.

Note: Regardless of getting overall perfect score of Image quality if the face is not positioned correctly then the photo can be subject to rejection.



Understanding Background

Background is another vital aspect of a passport/visa photo. Every country has a specific requirement for the background colour for instance for Australia it is **white** and for New Zealand it is **grey**.

For more details and tutorial on adjusting the background colour and changing the background colour, follow the link below:

<https://idstation.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/How-to-Use-Background-Tool-in-Photomatic.pdf>

Understanding regular applications and online applications

Regular applications are basically the paper applications where customers require a physical print of their passport photo whereas, in online applications customers required a digital version of their passport photo.

For instance, for Australian passport application a physical print of photo is needed while for New Zealand passport a digital photo is required.

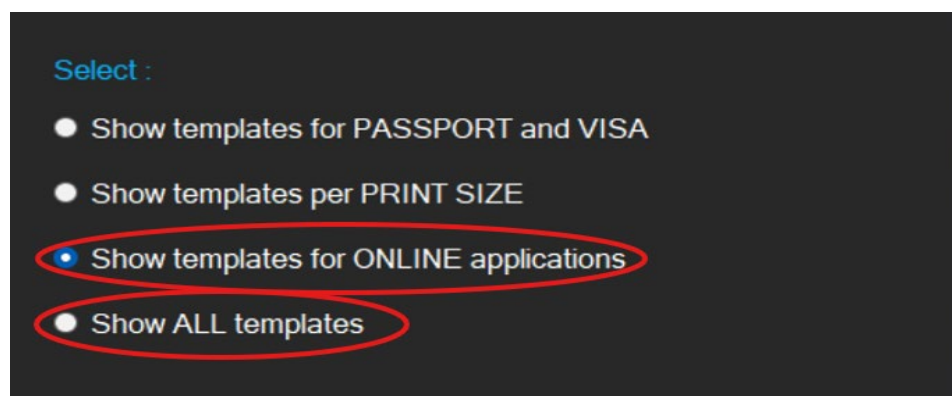
It totally depends on the countries what are their requirements for the passport applications.

Understanding digital uploads

Some countries require a digital photo for their passport either for renewing it or even applying for new one. In this case you have been provided with the special **Online Templates** which will assist you in creating the digital photo.

It is important to understand that for any digital photo it's "pixel size" and "file size" are the key elements. Therefore, it is essential to select **Online Templates** if digital photos are requested by customers.

Online Templates are in both lists of templates as below:

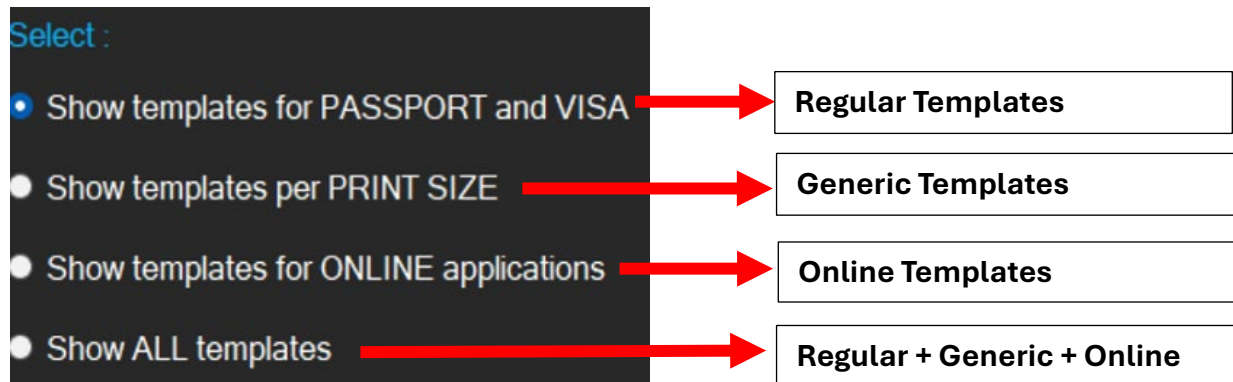


Note: Before doing digital upload confirm with customers whether they are doing online application or paper application.

If the answer is online application, then look for the Online template is available for that specific country or not. If template is available, then use that template and if not then use the regular template for uploading the photo.

Understanding template selection

In Photomatic there are 4 categories for the selecting the templates which are as below:



“Show templates for PASSPORT and VISA”: This list has the templates for printing physical copies of the photos for Passport or Visa.

“Show templates per PRINT SIZE”: This list has templates of generic sizes which can be used for printing the photo of available sizes. However, if there is no template available for any country then these generic templates can be used as replacement.

“Show templates for ONLINE application”: This list has the templates for online applications.

“Show ALL templates”: This list has all the templates in alphabetical order. It is highly recommended to use this list to avoid any confusion to choose which template is correct.

Difference between Regular, Generic & Online Templates

Regular template	Generic template	Online template
Normal print- yes	Normal print- yes	Normal print- no
Digital upload- yes	Digital upload- yes	Digital upload- yes
Photo size unit- mm	Photo size unit- mm	Photo size unit- pixels

Why correct template selection is important

Please refer to the example below which will illustrate why correct template selection is important.

If Online Template is selected:

Digital IDphoto information

Selected template: **China eVISA online**

Format (aspect ratio): Format3to4

Picture size: 359 x 478 Pixels

Jpeg file size: 110 Kb

Change size

Min: 40 Kb Max: 120 Kb

Detailed description: This screenshot shows a configuration interface for a digital ID photo. The 'Selected template' is 'China eVISA online'. The 'Format (aspect ratio)' is 'Format3to4'. The 'Picture size' is 359 x 478 Pixels. The 'Jpeg file size' is 110 Kb. A 'Change size' button is visible, along with 'Min' and 'Max' file size options of 40 Kb and 120 Kb respectively. Red circles highlight the template name, the file size, and the 'Change size' button.

If Regular Template is selected:

Digital IDphoto information

Selected template: **China VISA**

Format (aspect ratio): Format33to48

Picture size: 368 x 535 Pixels

Jpeg file size: 136 Kb

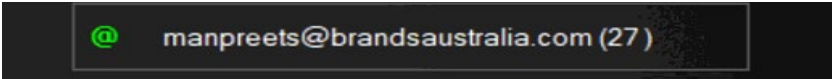
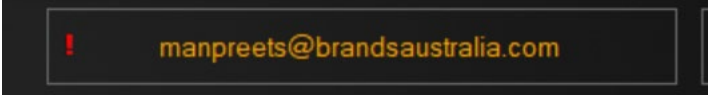
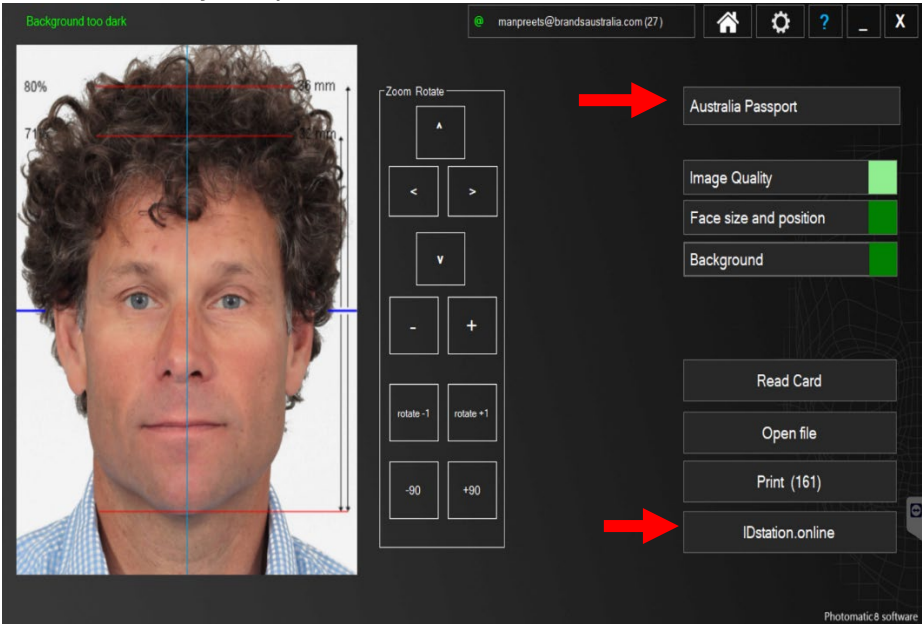
Change size

Detailed description: This screenshot shows a configuration interface for a digital ID photo. The 'Selected template' is 'China VISA'. The 'Format (aspect ratio)' is 'Format33to48'. The 'Picture size' is 368 x 535 Pixels. The 'Jpeg file size' is 136 Kb. A 'Change size' button is visible. Red circles highlight the template name and the file size.

So, it important to select the correct template when doing digital passport/visa photos.

How to upload passport photo

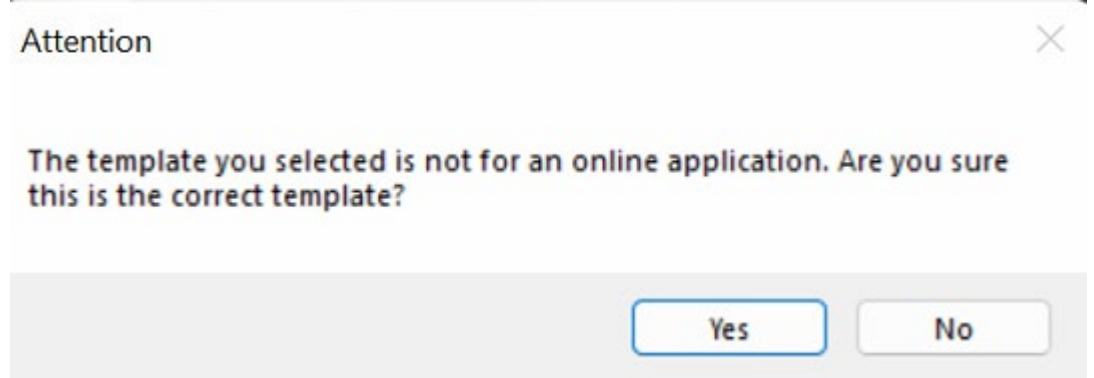
Following are the steps for sending photos online to ID Station Online:

Step	Action
Additional Information	Please note Photos are no longer emailed to the customer, they are uploaded to a much more secure cloud, the customer then takes the code they are given to access their photo from IDstation.online
Additional Information	An ID photo is usually printed. There are many new applications for ID photos which require digital ID photos: This is when you upload them to the IDstation.online cloud
Step 1	<p>Check you are online by looking at your login at the top of the screen- the green @ shows you that you are connected to the IDstation.online server. Tap on your email and press the login button, then close</p>  <p>If you are not online the email address will see red !. Ensure you are connected to the internet.</p> 
Step 2	<p>Take the photo and follow the normal process and make sure you select the correct country template. Press the IDstation.online button.</p> 

Step 3

If you selected a regular template for uploading the photo then the following prompt will appear, please select **YES**.

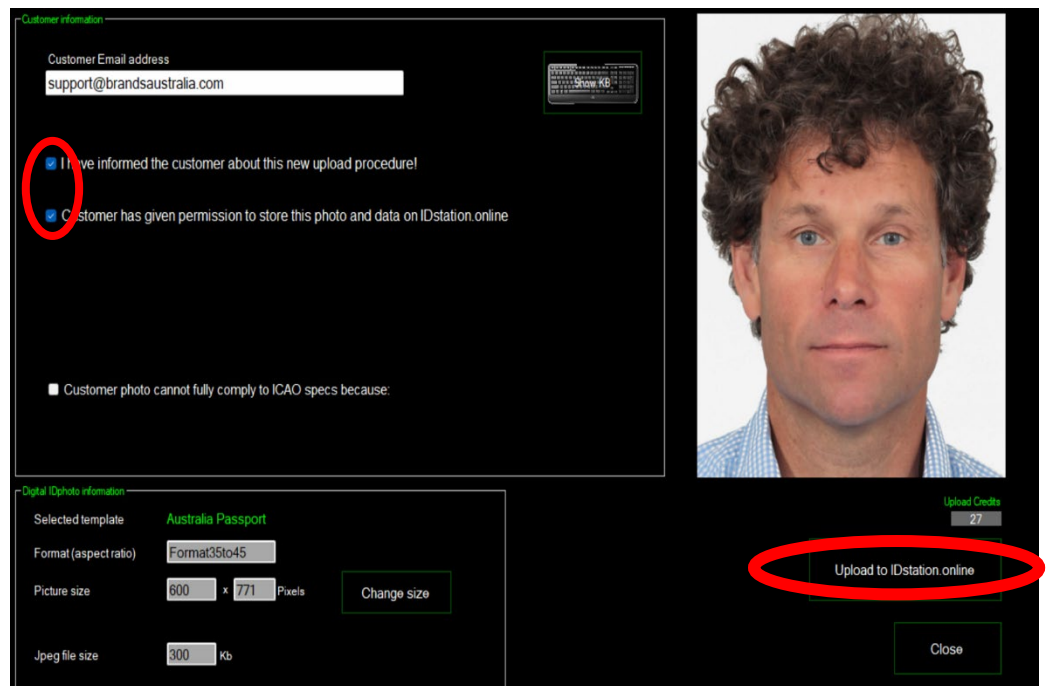
Note: Not every country has an online template, so in that case you can use regular templates for uploading to IDstation.online



Step 4

Enter the customers email address and tick the boxes to:

- Confirm that you have informed the customer about this procedure
- Confirm that the customer has agreed to upload their digital passport photo.



Additional information

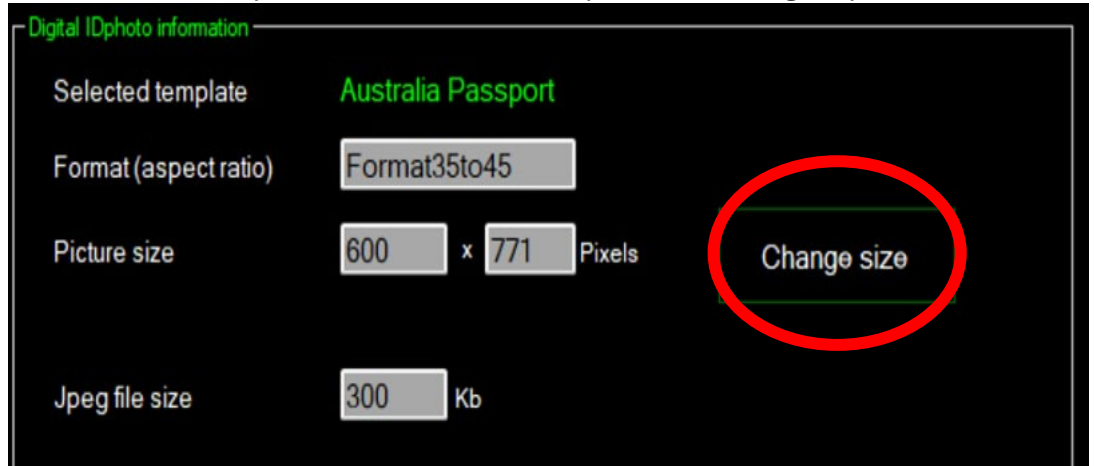
If the photo does not comply with ICAO standards i.e. the Image Quality is red as subject is a baby or has disability. You can tick the following box and can select a valid reason to state that why photo is not in compliance with ICAO standards.

Step 5

Click the upload button and wait for a while as photo uploads to IDstation.online servers. Once photo is uploaded a code along with photo will appear on you screen and it will be ready to print.

Additional information

If customer requests specific file size for digital photo, you can always increase and decrease the pixel size to meet the requirement of digital photo file size.



Preferred Camera settings

Below are the **preferred** camera settings for M mode.



Make sure the camera is in M mode.



If any of the values in the box are changed, press **Q** button and select the box with changed value and revert to as show in image.

Below are the preferred settings for P mode:



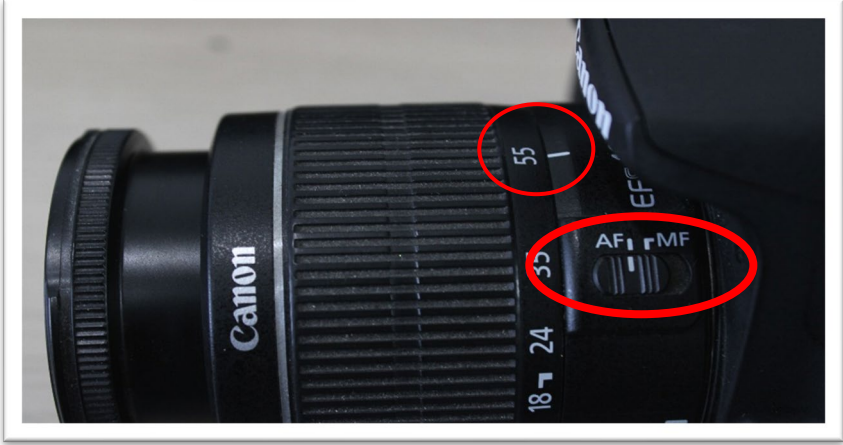

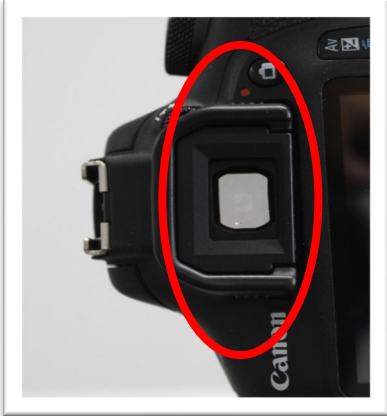
If your camera is in P mode, then make sure the home screen matches the picture below:



If any of the values in the box are changed, press **Q** button and select the box with changed value and revert to as show in image.

Note: M mode gives you more flexibility in adjusting the camera setting rather than P mode. Please ensure that the camera is always in M mode and if required you can switch to P mode. In both cases make sure the values on the screen are same as shown above.

How to take a passport photo

Step	Action
Step 1	Make sure SD card is in the camera and camera is on M mode.
Step 2	Make the lens is between 50-55mm and on AF (Auto-Focus) mode. 
Step 2	Pop the flash using the button on the top of the camera marked with the lightning bolt symbol. 
Step 3	Hold the camera upright in portrait position and use the View Finder to focus. 
Step 4	Focus on the middle of the subject's face and once you hear the beep sound, take a photo.

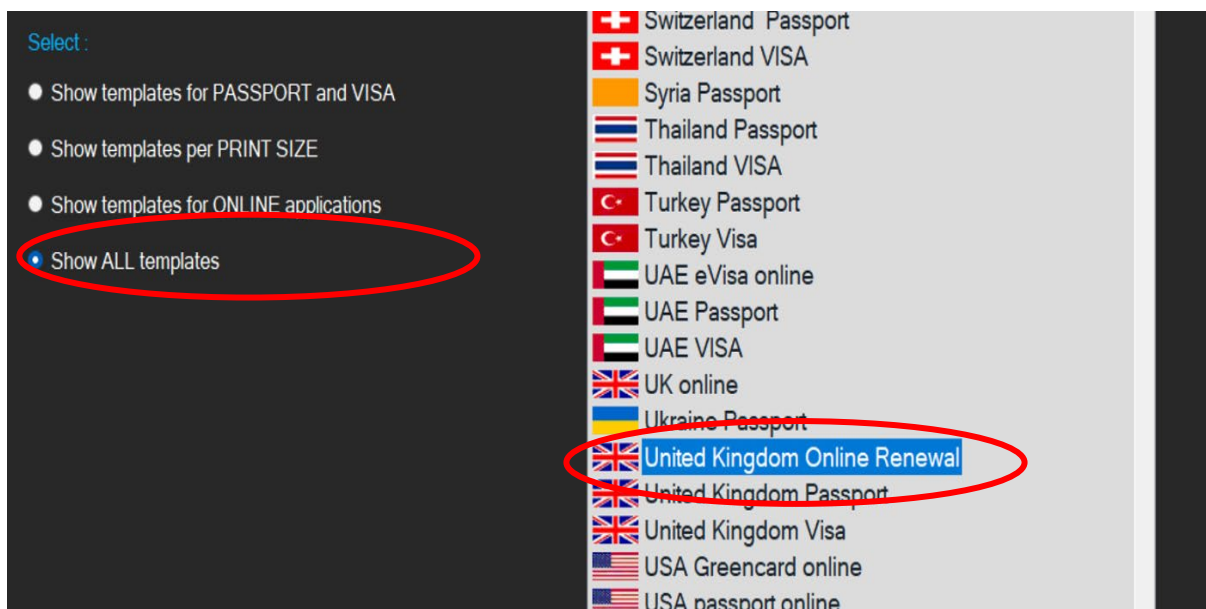
How to Do Ireland & UK Passport Photos special conditions

Ireland & UK passport applications are processed online. Both these applications require a special unique code to access and upload to their respective portals. Below are steps on how to do the passport photos for both country templates.

Step 1 – Click on Country Template Tab (Australia Passport)



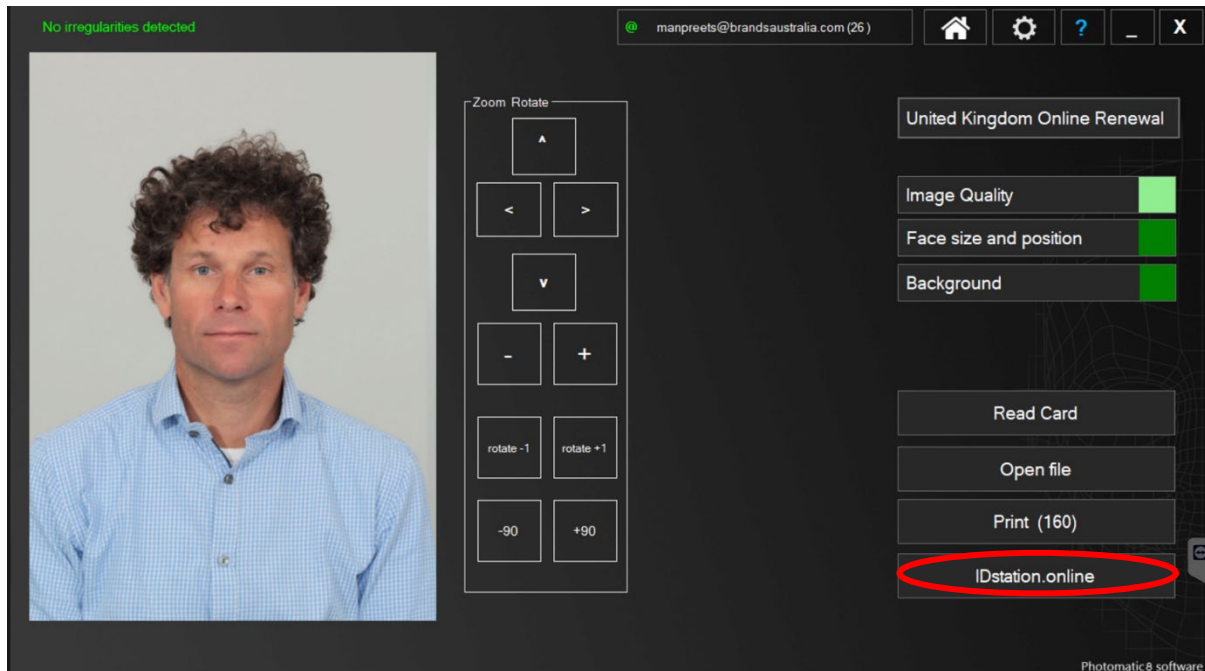
STEP 2 - Select Show All Templates (On the left) -> Scroll to the very bottom -> Select “United Kingdom Online Renewal” Template



NOTE: There are four UK Templates in the list. Choosing any other template will not give the desired code and photo size that is compatible with the UK Passport and Ireland Passport.

United Kingdom Online Renewal Template is to be used for both UK & IRELAND Passport.

STEP 3 - Select the photograph and click the **ID Station online** button.





Note: There are no overlay lines available for this template so, a complete portrait photo is required.

Step 4 – Complete the steps and a photocard with **unique** code will be printed. Customer will also receive an email with instructions to access their photo.

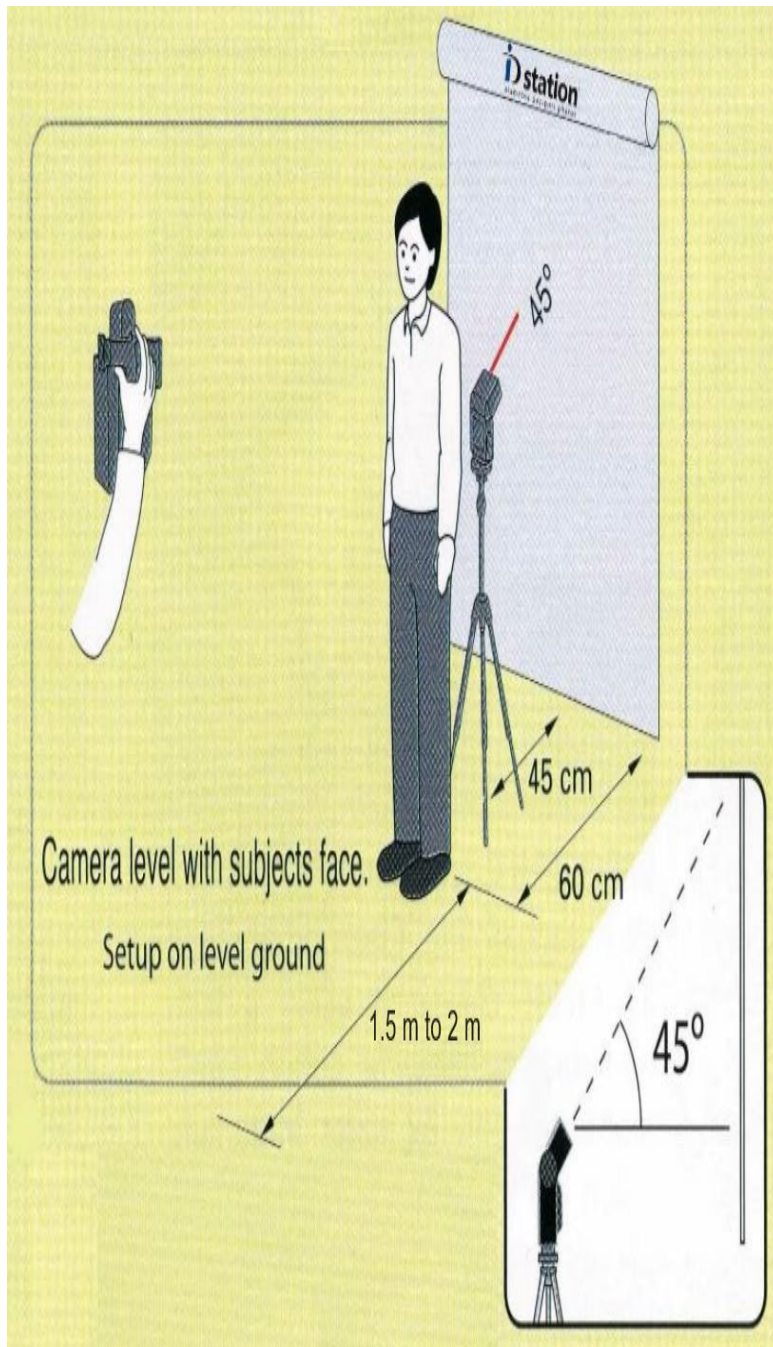


How to set up flash unit

Shadows appearing on your photographs behind the customers ears/neck indicate the flash is not firing or at the correct height.

Step	Action
Step 1	<p>Check settings are S2, the 3rd Bar is lit, and the power light is not flashing.</p> 
Additional information	<p>Still not firing in sync with camera. Follow the steps below</p>
Step 1	<p>Is the power light flashing? If yes, change the batteries- (the best ones are Eneloop batteries) the power light should come on straight away anything longer than 5-10 seconds and batteries are likely to be in the wrong way (VERY COMMON)</p> 
Additional information	<p>Still not firing in sync with camera, please contact Brands Australia.</p>

Follow the diagram below for more clarity:



Flash height
centre of
Subject's back
in between the
shoulder blades.

Possible Rejection Scenarios

The information provided below is obtained on the basis of the rejected photos and the provided resolution will help to improve the quality of taking photos and printing right photos. Resolutions may vary from store to store as every store is subject to different environmental lighting.

Glare/Reflection on Face:

Example:



Cause:

- There can be glare (reflection of environment light or camera flash) on any part of face. It mainly happens in case where individual has oily skin, wearing makeup or bald.
- If person is sitting too close to the background banner or lighting panel it will cast a glare on chins.

Resolutions:

- You can ask the person to move away from the background banner or lighting panel.
- In case of oily skin or makeup you can ask the person to wipe down the face little bit.
- Use camera flash diffuser which diffuses soft light and reduce the chances of glare on face.

Shadows on Face:

Example:



Cause:

- It can be caused if there are the hairs on the forehead.
- It can be caused if the camera is not at the same height as the face of person.
- It can be caused by store lighting as well.

Resolutions:

- You can ask the person to tie up their hair as it will make the biometric aspects of face clearer which will improve Image quality score.
- You can increase the strength of camera flash and add diffuser on top.
- To avoid shadows from store lighting nothing much can be done but you can always try tilting the setup in opposite directions of downlight which is causing shadow.
- Same goes for lighting stand as well.

Shadow in Background:

Example:



Cause:

- You will have a shadow in the background if the back flash unit/lighting panel is not adjusted to right level of brightness.
- It can be if back flash unit if it is not at the right height at the back of person.
- It can be caused if the back flash unit is not firing in sync with the camera flash.

Resolutions:

- Try adjusting the brightness levels of lighting stand/back flash unit to ideal levels.
- Make sure that back flash/lighting stand is firing in sync with camera.
- Make sure you are at ideal distance from person so that it can trigger the flash unit sensor/lighting stand sensor.

Biometric Features of Face are Hidden:

Example:



Cause:

- It can be caused if the eyebrows are not visible due to hairs falling on forehead.
- It can be caused if the ears are hidden beneath the hairs.

Resolutions:

- Make sure the hairs are tied up nicely, so they won't interfere.

Sharpness of Photos

The sharpness of a photo is crucial factor in getting ideal score of Image quality. If the photo is not sharp enough it would look blurred/pixelated.

Example:**Cause:**

- It can happen if the camera is on MF (Manual Focus Mode) instead of AF (Auto Focus) mode.
- It can happen if the lens glass has fingerprints on it.
- It can happen if camera has not been focused on the face properly.

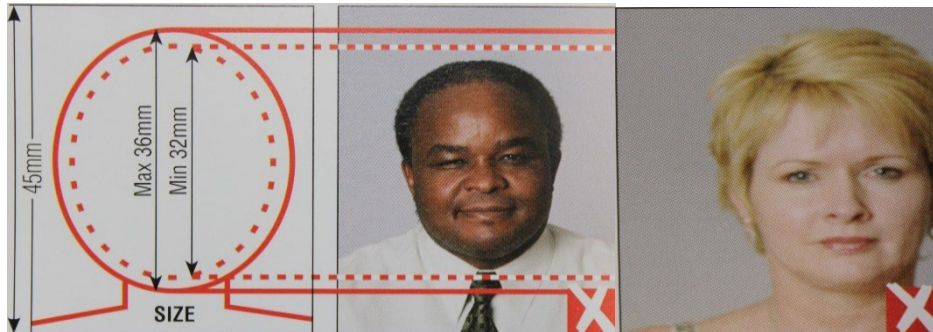
Resolution:

- Regular cleaning of camera lens glass.
- Make sure lens is always on AF mode.
- Make sure lens is always between 50-55mm.
- Make focus is locked on the camera.
- Make sure you can clear see the face of the person in the viewfinder.

Face Size & Positioning:

We have taken a nice photo of someone, and the photo is not subject to any of the possible scenarios mentioned above, but there can be some natural biometric aspects of person's face which can affect the score of Image Quality for instance horizontal eye alignment. We would be able to print the photos in special cases.

Example:



However, there are other cause of face size & positioning causes rejection which are as follow:

- It can be caused if the face of the person is not between crown lines and chin lines.
- It can be caused if the face of the person is not straight, or it tilted on an angle.
- It can be caused if the face is tilted on an angle.
- It can be caused if head is cropped out of the frame.

Resolutions:

- Always check the overlay lines before printing or uploading the photo.
- Always check the printed photos with Face & Position size chart.
- Always make sure the face of person is middle looks symmetrical.
- Always make sure head of the person (especially in case of children) must be between frames.

Use of Incorrect Template:

This is also a prime cause for the rejection of the photos as there are different sorts of templates available which serves specific purpose and have specific criteria in accordance with which photo is checked. For instance, if regular template is used for uploading digital photo where the template for that same country is available for digital upload as well; system might reject the photo.

Note: Not every country has an online template.

Cause:

- It can happen when Online template is not used for sending photo online.

Resolution:

- Make sure you ask the person if they are doing online application or regular application.
- Make sure you select the Online Template for that specific country if available which can be found in “**SHOW ONLINE TEMPLATED**” or “**SHOW ALL TEMPLATES**”.

FAQ

Question	Answer
<p>Can Australia Post Reject Photos?</p>	<p>Yes - The ID Station’s biometric software is state-of-the-art. However, in the unlikely event the system approves an unsatisfactory photo and is rejected by Australia Post:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apologize to the customer and offer a refund/re-shoot 2. Retain the customer’s returned photo 3. Assess the photo, and check the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contains shadows - Appears saturated and washed out - Mouth is slightly open - Chin to Crown measurement is correct - Eyes are clear of hair, head coverings or glasses and can be completely seen 4. If the above is not visible and the photo appears valid, write OW store name, the Australia Post outlet, why they rejected the photo and send via post to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attn Tech Support, Brands Australia. - Unit 6 / 144 Hume Highway, Somerton, Victoria, 3062 <p>Brands Australia will assess the customer’s rejected Passport Photo and provide feedback to the store. If incorrectly rejected by Australia Post, this feedback will be escalated to DFAT, who will address directly with the concerning Australia Post outlet. Brands Australia will then revert to your store with the outcome.</p>
<p>Do we take Passport photos for Babies/Infants?</p>	<p>Yes – Although often challenging, a suggestion for child cooperation during shooting is to advise parents to ensure their child is well fed beforehand and relaxed.</p> <p>Top Tips to taking Baby Passport Photos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The child must be looking at the camera with both ears visible - Neutral expression with eyes open - Background should be white or a light neutral colour - There should be no objects on the child’s face or in the background - Ensure the parent can support the baby’s head

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - • Offer a white sheet or piece of cloth banner material to the parent so they can hold the baby against it. - It can also help to have the parent facing the back screen and the baby over the parent's shoulder as if parent was patting baby of the back.
Can I use Photoshop to edit Passport Photos?	No! – The biometric software is specifically designed to capture a true image of the individual. Passport Photos are in no way to be changed or edited outside of the ID Station's software functionality. If the photo does not meet Government guidelines (including poor background/saturation or colour defects/shadows etc), the individual must be re-taking the photo again correctly using the appropriate measures.
Can I photocopy Passports?	Yes - we recommend adding 10% in size so it can be identified easily as a copy and not an original.
Can I cut passport photos for customers?	If a customer requests for their photos to be trimmed/cut, please do so.
What envelope do I put the passport photos in?	Blank white C6 sized envelopes, can be store expensed from off the shelf. PPS Plainface C6 Envelopes White 500 Pack Officeworks <u>*Please do not use Officeworks branded envelopes, Australia Post is more likely to reject the photos if they know they are from Officeworks.</u>
All images are under- / overexposed	Adjust the camera settings. The camera should be configured using the program setting of the camera. Ensure the camera is in the Manual (M) position on the top dial
I've lost, damaged, or formatted my wireless SD card. What should I do?	Contact your store manager who must authorize the purchase of a new card.

Passport photo checklist

Preparing to take the photo

- The customer was informed about the certificate of compliance.
- A suitable backdrop was chosen to shoot the photo. (e.g., a white wall or satin banner)
- The height of the flash was adjusted correctly. (Between the customer's shoulder blades)
- The flash was correctly positioned behind the customer and facing the backdrop.
- The flash, camera, tablet, and printer were all switched on.
- The camera was set to M mode.

Taking the photo

- The customer was advised to remove all headwear. (e.g., glasses and hats)
- The customer was advised not to smile in the photo.
- The team member, customer and others were always safe (e.g., No trip hazards or electrical hazards were created).
- The photo was taken approximately 2 meters away from the customer.

Printing the photo

- The nationality of the passport photo was confirmed and selected on the tablet.
- The passport photo was printed along with a certificate of compliance.
- The photo was reviewed before printing, to ensure it passed the quality test.