LONDON
METROPOLITAN
UNIVERSITY

Artwork Guide

Print Services

This guide provides a summary to assist users in preparing print-ready artwork to send to the print centre.

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Contents

Before sending us your artwork, have you?

- Checked the paper size is correct?
- Colours are set to CMYK?
- Made sure your images are 300dpi?
- Added a 3mm bleed and crop marks?
- Embedded your fonts?
- Saved your artwork as a PDF?
- Proofread your document?

Paper Sizes and Stocks

When you set up your artwork files, make sure you use the right dimensions for the paper size you want to print, and consider the type and weight of your paper too. Texture, coatings, lamination and paper colour will all have an impact on your final print.

Because toner and inks are transparent, the type and colour of the paper you chose for your job may affect the final printed colour of the job itself. So, if your job is printed on an off-white paper for example, your colours could look slightly darker than you expected. They might also look different if you print them on coated and uncoated paper. So, if you ask us to print full-colour posters on 120gsm bond (uncoated) and full-colour flyers on 400gsm silk (coated), any common colours may appear different on the final print. Gloss and matt lamination will have a noticeable effect on your printed colours, so please bear this in mind when you're designing. Ask us if you're not sure what the effect will be. We're always happy to help.

A1 = 841mm x 594mm
A2 = 594mm x 420mm
A3 = 297mm x 420mm

A4 = 210mm x 297mm
A5 = 148.5mm x 210mm
A6 = 105mm x 148.5mm

CMYK Colour

CMYK is a colour setup that stands for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Key (Key stands for black). It is important that your artwork is set to CMYK so that it matches the printing machines, as their inks are made up of these four colours. This will make the best possible colour match.

If your job is full colour, please ensure that you work entirely in CMYK. Do not use RGB, Pantone or colours which are specific to the program you are using. Similarly, if your job is spot colour, only use those spot colours. You cannot rely on screen representation of colours instead refer to printed CMYK or Pantone sheets for colour selection. There is no need for you to apply any colour profiles to images as these will almost certainly not match those required for the printing presses. If your program does not support CMYK or Pantone, the printer will convert the colours before printing. When selecting a programme to create your artwork do note that some programs (e.g. Microsoft Word and PowerPoint) do not support CMYK or professional Spot Colour choices and this will affect the final output. If you are concerned about specific colour matching for colour logo, for example, please discuss this with us.

High-Resolution Images

Unlike on-screen applications, your images for printing need to be much larger and higher resolution. All this means is that within an inch square there are more dots making up the image. The golden number is 300dpi (dots per inch), that way you'll guarantee pin sharp images when we print them.

The lower the dpi the worse your image(s) will look when printed, so please bear this in mind when scanning, manipulating or sourcing images for your project. Images and logos saved from websites are most likely to be between 72- 96dpi and are therefore unsuitable for printing. We always recommend trying to use the most professional images that you can get hold of, as low quality images can only downgrade your designs.

Bleed and Crop Marks

If you require colour or images to go right to the edge of the page you must provide 3mm of additional artwork to all sides, this is called bleed. Otherwise you risk a white edge appearing at the edges. Crop marks show us where the edge of your artwork is so that we know exactly where to trim it.

So, please ensure all jobs have 3mm bleed and crop marks especially when images, colour or text go right to the edge of your page. To create a bleed simply extend your image(s), colour(s) or text 3mm over the edge of the page. When creating a PDF for print, please ensure your PDF page size is large enough to incorporate the bleed i.e. if your flyer is A5 with bleed, make your PDF page size A4.

Fonts and Embedding

When sending artwork to print, the fonts used must be embedded into the PDF document for the printer to understand them correctly. This used to be quite complicated, but nowadays it is relatively simple to create a PDF as it automatically 'embeds' the fonts used, assuming that they are the correct format of font.

For PDFs, ensure you embed all fonts when making your PDF. For EPS's ensure you convert all fonts to outlines when making your EPS. Your minimum font size is best set to 5pt. For text between 5 and 7pt, it is best to use 100% black.

Supplying a Booklet

Creating a booklet is a relatively straight forward process as long as a few basic rules are followed. Your booklet pagination should be in multiples of 4 only, so 4, 8, 12 and so on. The cover is always page 1 and we require one PDF containing all pages.

The page total of your booklet will be divisible by 4; we understand that not every booklet will contain an even number of pages that matches this and we may be required to add a blank page or two to make it work. The most common places for blank pages are on the inside of the covers and at the back of the booklet - if you would prefer them elsewhere you can add them to your PDF as blank pages. Please supply your booklets in single page format running in the correct order from start to finish i.e. a 20 page booklet will run from pages 1-20, page 1 being the front cover and page 20 being the back cover. The closer you get to the centre pages of a booklet, the more has to be trimmed from the page edges. Our imposition software does make allowances for this. However, it is recommended that you do not have text, page numbers or images closer than 5mm to all edges. Please do not supply your files imposed as printers pairs or spreads; instead supply work 1-up and we will impose the work before printing.

Create a PDF

PDFs are, in most cases, the best format for you to provide your artwork in. The file sizes are relatively small and the printer understands PDFs. As long as you make sure images are 300dpi and all colours are in CMYK, of course.

We request all your artwork to be supplied as high resolution, 300dpi or greater. When faced with the various options these are best for commercial printing:
- Resolution should be set to High Resolution
- Compression Settings for both colour and greyscale should be set to 300dpi
- Auto-compression set as maximum
- You should embed all fonts
- Create your PDF with 3mm of bleed and crop marks

If you have the opportunity, view your PDF with Output Preview open before submitting it for print as this gives the most accurate representation of how the file will look once printed, and may flag up errors that aren't visible without Output

Preview open. If you are using Adobe Acrobat Pro X you can find Outlook Preview by following: Tools> Print Production> Output Preview (for other versions of Adobe Acrobat instructions may vary).

Proof Read
One of the most overlooked part of the process, making it look good is one thing, checking for spelling mistakes is another.

Although we pay close attention to detail when supplying print ready files it is your responsibility to ensure spelling, grammar and contact details are correct before sending them to us for printing. Reprints are liable to charges.

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