

**NOTE NO: A 362/04**

Protocol Division of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office presents its compliments to all Diplomatic Missions and has the honour to draw their attention to the introduction of photo visas from 1 September 2004.

In order to meet a European Union requirement for more secure visas, the United Kingdom has introduced a photo visa from 1 September. The newly designed visa incorporates a scanned image of the holder. Applications for new or renewal 'exempt' and other visas from Diplomatic Missions must from now on include a passport-sized photograph of the applicant.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has reviewed the standards set for photographs in preparation for the introduction of photo visas. The standards required are set out below. Photographs not meeting these standards will be rejected:

Photographs should be:

- i. Taken against a light background (white/off-white/cream/light grey etc) so that features are distinguishable and contrast against the background;
- ii. Clear and of good quality;
- iii. Printed on normal photographic paper;
- iv. Unmounted – 45mm x 35mm in size;

- v. Full face (without sunglasses and normally without a hat or other head covering, unless the applicant wears such items because of their religious belief or ethnic background).

Protocol Division of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office avails itself of this opportunity to express to all Diplomatic Missions the assurances of its highest consideration.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE  
LONDON SW1

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