

HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH YOUR WORK

Set up

- Place your work against a neutral background. For larger works this should ideally be on an easel or propped against a flat wall. For smaller works it may be possible to lay it on the floor and take your photograph from overhead.
- Harsh lighting can cause glare or shadows so make sure you photograph your work using natural window light or, if photographing outside, in bright overcast conditions. Be sure to switch off your camera's flash and any electric lights in the room.
- If the work is positioned on a table, put some black fabric under the base to avoid colour and light reflections.
- You can include the frame in your photograph. However, if the work is glazed, we recommend removing the frame to avoid reflection. If this is not possible, try using a polarising filter.

Taking your photo

- Make sure the camera does not move: place it on a tripod or a flat surface (e.g. a table).
- Use a self-timer or cable release to take your photo, to ensure that the camera is still for the exposure.
- If your camera is on a tripod, make sure you turn off the image stabilisation or vibration reduction setting to ensure maximum sharpness to the image. Please note that you don't need to have a tripod to take the photograph, you could rest it on a table or simply hold it with the stabilisation setting switched on.
- The lens should be parallel to your work – tilt the camera to match the angle of the work if necessary. The centre of the lens should be pointing directly at the centre of the work.
- To maximise the image resolution, leave only the smallest of margins around the work (you may want to crop this out later). The edges of the work must remain parallel to the camera frame.
- In most cases Auto Focus should be sufficient to take your photograph. Avoid zooming if using a smartphone or tablet, as this will reduce the quality of the photograph.
- Take several shots and keep checking your images so that you can make adjustments. Check that the image is sharp and faithful to the artwork.

Preparing your entry

- Download your images to a computer. Use photo-editing software to crop away the background from your image. We recommend using Photoshop, Picasa (Windows) or iPhoto (Mac) – or search 'photo-editing software' online.
- Zoom in to inspect your image and check carefully for any flaws. Adjust the contrast if necessary, but be careful not to over-edit the image: it should be a true representation of the finished work.

- The image must be saved as a JPG/JPEG and be smaller than 3 MB. The image must also be at least 800 pixels on its shortest side (depending on whether it is portrait or landscape format). To ensure that the image is of the best quality given the file size we recommend saving the file as 72 DPI.