

Bleed and trim marks – what are they?

Aim: To provide information on the printing terms ‘bleed’ and ‘trim marks’ and their use

Bleed is a printing term that is used to describe a document which has images or elements that touch the edge of the page, extending beyond the trim edge and leaving no white margin. When a document has bleed, it must be printed on a larger sheet of paper and then trimmed down. If you do not allow for bleed, any misalignment while cutting will result in the artwork not running to the edge of the page.

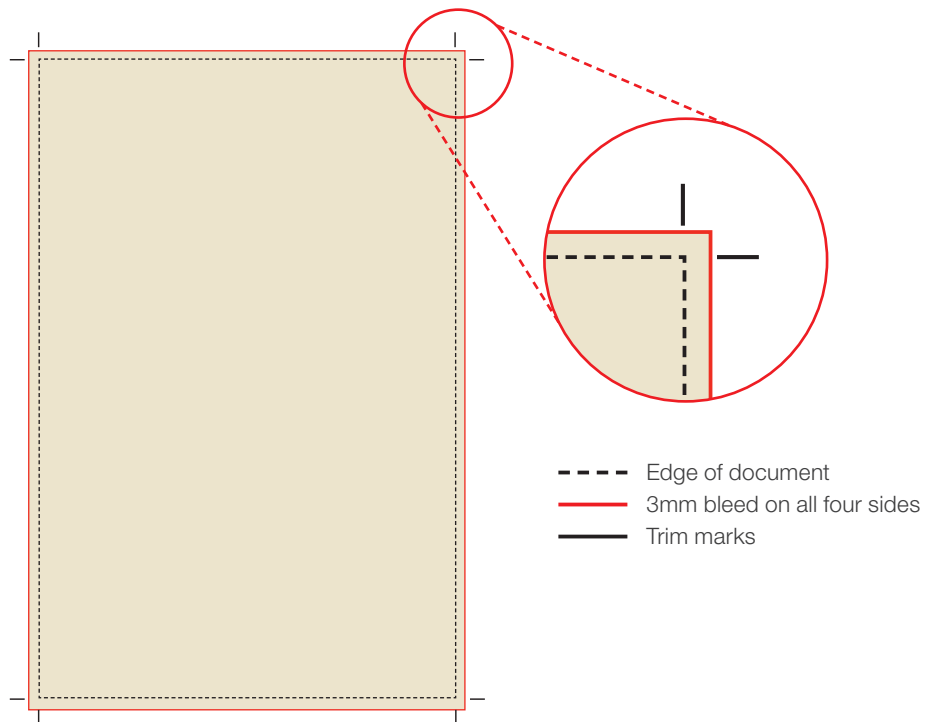
Your document should be set with 3mm bleed. This is the area outside of the trimmed page area which will be cut off once the job is printed and trimmed.

Trim marks, also known as crop marks, are lines printed in the corners of your document to show the printer where to trim the paper. For these trim marks to be printed, they must be included in the artwork supplied to the printer. Trim marks are created by selecting the appropriate print settings when exporting your file to pdf.

If you have been supplied with a pdf that does not include bleed and trim marks, contact the supplier of the artwork and ask them to resupply as a print-ready pdf including 3mm bleed and trim marks.

If you are creating the artwork yourself, allow for bleed in the program you are creating the artwork in. Programs such as Adobe InDesign are ideal for creating artwork as bleed can be selected when setting up the document.

Some programs, such as Microsoft Word, do not allow you to select bleed. While in some instances UniPrint staff may be able to adjust your file to include bleed, generally these programs are not suitable for documents which require bleed. If the program you use does not allow for bleed, consider keeping the artwork within the page margins, not extending to the edge of the page. Your document can then be printed at actual size without the need for bleed or trim marks.



Documents with bleed can include images, elements or colour that extends 3mm past the edge of the document to the bleed area.

When using programs which do not allow for bleed, bring all elements back within the internal margin.

All text and logos should fit within the internal margins and should never be placed at the edge of the document.