



Encouraging
and promoting
the best in art
and framing

Fine Art Trade Guild Four Levels of Framing 2021

LEVEL 1 (Ultimate level)

Ultimate protection using conservation methods and the best quality conservation materials.

Level 1 (Ultimate level) framing is the Guild's highest level, so this framing solution will preserve and protect artwork for future generations. The techniques, materials and procedures detailed are all of the highest specification and may be used at any of the Guild's other framing levels. The Framer's Technical Advice line and FrameTalk forum are available to help framers who need advice on work which may be unfamiliar. Any restoration or conservation treatment should be carried out by a professional conservator before framing.

Objective	To visually enhance the artwork and provide the highest possible level of protection from physical and mechanical damage, airborne pollution and acids emanating from framing materials. Assuming the framed artwork is kept within the Guild's normal conditions, this level of protection should last for in excess of 35 years. This is also assuming that the artwork is not damaged, foxed, stained or stuck down onto acidic board. Customers should be advised that lifetimes given assume that artwork is not inherently unstable. Ideally the framer or a conservator should inspect frames every five years and there should be a label advising this on the back of the frame.
Suitable for	Artwork that is to be preserved for future generations, including high value items and artwork of potential, historical or sentimental value. Processes must be fully reversible.
Frame/ moulding	This may involve a decision between re-using an existing frame and selecting a new one. Whether an old or new frame is used, the following considerations apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chosen moulding must be strong enough and its rebate deep enough to hold and support the whole package of glazing, windowmount or fillets, artwork/object, undermount and backboard. An old frame will sometimes need modification to meet these criteria. • The mitres are to be accurately cut, glued and joined tightly. The corners should be touched up so that no unfinished moulding is visible. • In addition, the moulding must be free from blemishes and care must be taken to ensure that all pieces match. If the artwork is likely to touch wooden moulding or slips then those parts should be sealed with Level 1 (100% Cotton) board or aluminium foil sealing tape. Re-using old frames: If an old frame is to be re-used, it should be carefully cleaned and repaired, preserving all inscriptions and framing labels. The frame, mount and glass may be of historical significance. Old decorative mounts such as Victorian gilt mounts can sometimes be re-used with an internal lining. Fixings need to be secured and weakened cord or wire should be replaced.
The mount package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A conservation mount comprises of a windowmount and undermount. • The purpose is to provide adequate physical and environmental protection to the artwork/object. The boards should be hinged along one of the longest sides, either the top or left side, using either gummed white cotton paper tape or linen tape. Generally, because they are prone to failure, self adhesive tapes in any form are not acceptable at this level. • To help keep out dust and insects, it is recommended that the glazing, windowmount, artwork and undermount are sealed together with any conservation quality paper tape before being fitted into the frame.
Windowmount	Because the artwork is in direct contact with the windowmount, it is crucial that the correct standard of mountboard is selected. At this level of framing only Level 1 (100% Cotton) mountboard is applicable. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For framing valued original artwork. Only Level 1 (100% Cotton) board with a minimum thickness of 1100 microns and conforming to Guild standards is to be used. Double windowmounts should be joined using starch paste, MC (methyl cellulose) SCMC (sodium carboxyl methylcellulose) or EVA adhesive, not double sided ATG type tape. The undermount should be of the same or equivalent quality as the windowmount – minimum thickness 1100 microns. • Mounting photographs. Old, traditionally processed or irreplaceable photographs are a special case because some types may be affected by alkalinity. Therefore they should not come into contact with alkaline buffered boards. Level 1 (100% Cotton) unbuffered boards are available for these special cases. This applies only to those boards that are in direct contact with the photograph. General: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A windowmount or slip should normally be used to visually enhance the artwork and distance it from the glazing. Where slip moulding is used this must be accurately cut and should not touch the artwork. • If close framing is required there should be a spacer between the artwork and glazing. This should be made from Level 1 (100% Cotton) quality mountboard. • The corners of the window mount aperture must be cleanly cut, with no over-cuts. The mountboard must be free from blemishes, and to allow for possible expansion, there should be a clearance of 1-3mm inside the frame's rebate, depending on the size of mount.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple mounts or deep spacers (at least 5-6mm) must be used to frame works of art with migrant or delicate pigments, such as pastel drawings, or artwork with a cockled surface. It is not acceptable for a framer to use any form of fixative on artwork with either migrant or delicate pigments. • The window mount should, where necessary, project 5mm over the edge of the artwork, thereby holding it firmly in place.
Attaching Artwork	<p>Artwork should be hinged to the undermount using T-hinges along the top edge, or a similarly reversible process. Hinges should allow the artwork to hang safely and should be weaker than, or of a similar weight to, the artwork, never heavier. This is so that under duress, the hinge will fail before damaging the artwork. Hinges should be made from lignin-free, pH neutral paper such as Japanese Rice paper, Mulberry paper or gummed Cotton tape. Adhesive must be starch paste, MC (methyl cellulose) SCMC (sodium carboxyl methylcellulose), or HPC (hydroxypropyl cellulose). Generally, because they are prone to failure, self-adhesive tapes in any form are not acceptable for hinging at this level. However there may be circumstances under which the use of a self-adhesive, water reversible, white conservation paper tape is necessary. Hinges should be attached to the back of the artwork with the minimum overlap necessary to provide adequate support. A suitable overlap is generally considered to be 5mm - 8mm. Artwork must be properly centred and free from distortion caused by the mounting</p>
Glazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works on paper need to be distanced from the glazing to allow for air circulation and movement. • Pastels and chalk drawings should be spaced at least 5-6mm from the glazing. If a picture is 'close framed' it should be held away from the glazing with a small slip, spacer or fillets tucked under the frame's rebate. • Glazing must be free from blemishes, an appropriate thickness for the size of the frame and cut to allow sufficient clearance inside the rebate of the frame. • Glass with a UV protective filter should be used where appropriate. For items that are to be hung in public areas, laminated or acrylic glazing should be considered. • Do not clean glazing with cream or abrasive cleaners, they can leave a film or create swirls. For best results an evaporative spirit-based cleaner and a clean, lint free cloth should be used.
Backboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backboard needs to be strong, rigid and flat. It's purpose is to protect the artwork from damage. Whilst pH neutral boards are preferred, other boards of at least 1500microns may be used. The thickness of the backboard required is dependant up on the overall size of the mount package/ frame aperture. In order to provide further protection from migrating acidity it would be necessary to include a barrier layer of Melinex or similar material between the undermount and backboard. Backboard must be cut to allow sufficient clearance for possible expansion within the frame rebate. • The frame back must be secured with framers' points, tacks or better. Because they are weaker by design, flexible tabs are not acceptable.
Hanging	<p>The chosen hanging fittings or system must be sufficiently strong to support the weight of the complete frame package.</p>
Finish	<p>Dust and dirt must be removed and the glass must be cleaned and polished without smears. Because it is prone to failure, it is not acceptable to seal the back with self-adhesive tape. When using a backboard in the frame, gummed paper tape must be used and this must be carefully applied. Full back dust covers are also acceptable, providing they stop the ingress of dust and insects. These should be sufficiently strong to resist damage. Pads or buffers which are at least 3mm thick should be applied to the two lower corners on the back of the frame. Where practical, a label giving the date and the framer's name should also be adhered to the back. Note: any existing labels should be preserved as they can provide provenance for the artwork.</p>

Note: For art on paper stuck down on acidic board or requiring cleaning or restoration, a list of qualified paper conservators can be obtained from ICON (The Institute of Conservation), icon.org.uk.

For oil paintings that require cleaning or restoration a list of qualified conservators may be obtained from: ICON, as above, or The British Association of Paintings Conservator-Restorers, bapcr.org.uk.

Notes on framing fabric, canvases and objects – at Level 1 (Ultimate level)

Fabric should be squared if necessary. It is not acceptable for fabric to be stuck down or stapled or to use any other process which may damage the fabric. It should either be hand sewn onto a backing cloth or Level 1 board with the appropriate thread, or should be laced over a suitable Level 1 (100% Cotton) support board, or similarly reversible methods should be used. Unseen problems, such as knots or travelling stitches, must be concealed where possible. If fabric touches wooden stretcher bars, these must be sealed using appropriate conservation quality material. To prevent damage to the fabric the use of nylon tag guns is not acceptable.

Canvas must not sag, bow, tear or distort. Stretchers must be squared and sufficiently strong to stand the test of time. There are methods of tensioning stretcher bars which don't use wedges. If wooden wedges are used, they must be held in place with thread or wire. The frame size must be around 3 to 6mm larger than the stretcher bars, to allow for future retensioning of the canvas.

Objects must not be held in place with adhesive or silicon sealer, but must be secured using methods of support which are fully reversible and do no damage.



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LEVEL 2 (High level)

High level protection using conservation methods and conservation materials.

Objective	To visually enhance the artwork and provide a high level of protection from physical and mechanical damage, airborne pollution and acids emanating from framing materials. Assuming the framed artwork is kept within the Guild's normal conditions, this level of protection should last for in excess of 20 years. This is also assuming that the artwork is not damaged, foxed, stained or stuck down onto acidic board. Customers should be advised that lifetimes given assume that artwork is not inherently unstable. Ideally the framer or a conservator should inspect frames every five years and there should be a label advising this on the back of the frame.
Suitable for	To visually enhance Artwork that is to be preserved for future generations, including high value item and artwork of potential, historical or sentimental value. Processes must be fully reversible.
Frame/ moulding	<p>This may involve a decision between re-using an existing frame and selecting a new one. Whether an old or new frame is used, the following considerations apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chosen moulding must be strong enough and its rebate deep enough to hold and support the whole package of glazing, windowmount or fillets, artwork/object, undermount and backboard. An old frame will sometimes need modification to meet these criteria. • The mitres are to be accurately cut, glued and joined tightly. The corners should be touched up so that no unfinished moulding is visible. • In addition, the moulding must be free from blemishes and care must be taken to ensure that all pieces match. If the artwork is likely to touch wooden moulding or slips then those parts should be sealed with Level 2 (Alpha Cellulose) board or better, or aluminium foil sealing tape. <p>Re-using old frames: If an old frame is to be re-used, it should be carefully cleaned and repaired, preserving all inscriptions and framing labels. The frame, mount and glass may be of historical significance. Old decorative mounts such as Victorian gilt mounts can sometimes be re-used with an internal lining. Fixings need to be secured and weakened cord or wire should be replaced.</p>
The mount package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A conservation mount comprises of a windowmount and undermount. • The purpose is to provide adequate physical and environmental protection to the artwork/object. The boards should be hinged along one of the longest sides, either the top or left side, using either gummed white paper tape or better. Self adhesive tapes in any form are not acceptable for this task at this level. • To help keep out dust and insects, it is recommended that the glazing, windowmount, artwork and undermount are sealed together with any conservation quality paper tape before being fitted into the frame.
Windowmount	<p>Because the artwork is in direct contact with the windowmount, it is crucial that the correct standard of mountboard is selected. At this level of framing only Level 2 (Alpha Cellulose) mountboard, which must contain at least 84% alpha cellulose (TAPPI T 509), or better is applicable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For framing valued artwork. Only Level 2 (Alpha Cellulose) board or better with a minimum thickness of 1100 microns and conforming to Guild standards is to be used. Double windowmounts can be joined using starch paste, MC (methyl cellulose) SCMC (sodium carboxyl methylcellulose) or EVA adhesive, or double sided ATG type tape. ATG tape, if used, should be no less than 12mm from the bevel edge of the mount. The undermount should be of the same or equivalent quality as the windowmount – minimum thickness 1100 microns. • Mounting photographs. Old, traditionally processed or irreplaceable photographs are a special case because some types may be affected by alkalinity. Therefore they should not come into contact with alkaline buffered boards. Level 1 (100% Cotton) unbuffered boards are available for these special cases. This applies only to those boards that are in direct contact with the photograph. <p>General:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A windowmount or slip should normally be used to visually enhance the artwork and distance it from the glazing. Where slip moulding is used this must be accurately cut and should not touch the artwork. • If close framing is required there should be a spacer between the artwork and glazing. This should be made from Level 2 (Alpha Cellulose) quality mountboard or better. • The corners of the window mount aperture must be cleanly cut, with no over-cuts. The mountboard must be free from blemishes, and to allow for possible expansion, there should be a clearance of 1-3mm inside the frame's rebate, depending on the size of mount. • Multiple mounts or deep spacers must be used to frame works of art with migrant or delicate pigments, such as pastel drawings, or artwork with a cockled surface. It is not acceptable for a framer to use any form of fixative on artwork with either migrant or delicate pigments.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The windowmount should, where necessary, project 5mm over the edge of the artwork, thereby holding it firmly in place.
Attaching Artwork	<p>Artwork should be hinged to the undermount using T-hinges along the top edge, or a similarly reversible process. Hinges should allow the artwork to hang safely and should be weaker than, or of a similar weight to, the artwork, never heavier. This is so that under duress, the hinge will fail before damaging the artwork. Hinges should be made from lignin-free, pH neutral paper such as Japanese Rice paper, Mulberry paper or gummed Cotton tape. Adhesive must be starch paste, MC (methyl cellulose) or SCMC (sodium carboxyl methylcellulose). Generally, because they are prone to failure, self-adhesive tapes in any form are not acceptable for hinging at this level. However there may be circumstances under which the use of a self-adhesive, water reversible, white conservation paper tape is necessary. Hinges should be attached to the back of the artwork with the minimum overlap (space required) necessary to provide adequate support. A suitable overlap is generally considered to be 5mm - 8mm. Artwork must be properly centred and free from distortion caused by the mounting process.</p>
Glazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works on paper need to be distanced from the glazing to allow for air circulation and movement. • Pastels and chalk drawings should be spaced at least 5-6mm from the glazing. If a picture is 'close framed' it should be held away from the glazing with a small slip, spacer or fillets tucked under the frame's rebate. • Glazing must be free from blemishes, an appropriate thickness for the size of the frame and cut to allow sufficient clearance inside the rebate of the frame. • Glass with a UV protective filter should be used where appropriate. For items that are to be hung in public areas, laminated or acrylic glazing should be considered. • Do not clean glazing with cream or abrasive cleaners, they can leave a film or create swirls. For best results an evaporative spirit-based cleaner and a clean, lint free cloth should be used.
Backboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backboard needs to be strong, rigid and flat. It's purpose is to protect the artwork from damage. Whilst pH neutral boards are preferred, other boards of at least 1500microns may be used. The thickness of the backboard required is dependant up on the overall size of the mount package/frame aperture. In order to provide further protection from migrating acidity it would be advisable to include a barrier layer of Melinex or similar material between the undermount and backboard. Backboard must be cut to allow sufficient clearance for possible expansion within the frame rebate. • The frame must be secured with framers' points, tacks or better. Because they are weaker by design, flexible tabs are not acceptable.
Hanging	<p>The chosen hanging fittings or system must be sufficiently strong to support the weight of the complete frame package.</p>
Finish	<p>Dust and dirt must be removed and the glass must be cleaned and polished without smears. Because it is prone to failure, it is not acceptable to seal the back with self-adhesive tape. When using a backboard in the frame, gummed paper tape must be used and this must be carefully applied. Full back dust covers are also acceptable, providing they stop the ingress of dust and insects. These should be sufficiently strong to resist damage. Pads or buffers which are at least 3mm thick should be applied to the two lower corners on the back of the frame. Where practical, a label giving the date and the framer's name should also be adhered to the back. Note: any existing labels should be preserved as they can provide provenance for the artwork.</p>

Note: For art on paper stuck down on acidic board or requiring cleaning or restoration, a list of qualified paper conservators can be obtained from ICON (The Institute of Conservation), icon.org.uk.

For oil paintings that require cleaning or restoration a list of qualified conservators may be obtained from: ICON, as above, or The British Association of Paintings Conservator-Restorers, bapcr.org.uk

Notes on framing fabric, canvases and objects – at Level 2 (High level)

Fabric should be squared if necessary. It is not acceptable for fabric to be stuck down or stapled or to use any other process which may damage the fabric. It should either be hand sewn onto a backing cloth or Level 2 (or better) board with the appropriate thread, or should be laced over a suitable Level 2 support board or better, or similarly reversible methods should be used. Unsightly problems, such as knots or travelling stitches, must be concealed where possible. If fabric touches wooden stretcher bars, these must be sealed using appropriate conservation quality material. To prevent damage to the fabric the use of nylon tag guns is not acceptable.

Canvas must not sag, bow, tear or distort. Stretchers must be squared and sufficiently strong to stand the test of time. There are methods of tensioning stretcher bars which don't use wedges. If wooden wedges are used, they must be held in place with thread or wire. The frame size must be around 3 to 6mm larger than the stretcher bars, to allow for future retensioning of the canvas.

Objects must not be held in place with adhesive or silicon sealer, but must be secured using methods of support which are fully reversible and do no damage.



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Fine Art Trade Guild Four Levels of Framing 2021

LEVEL 3 (Mid level)

Mid level protection using good quality materials and methods.

Level 3 (Mid level) framing is the Guild's third highest level, resulting in a framing solution that serves two purposes: to visually enhance the artwork, and to provide a moderate level of protection. Framers should make every effort to use the best possible techniques, materials and procedures (which may be the same as those used at Level 2 (High level) & Level 1 (Ultimate level)). Ideally, GCF framers should view this level as a minimum standard, and should work to Level 2 (High level) where possible.

Objective	To visually enhance artwork and to offer a moderate level of protection from airborne pollution, physical and mechanical damage. This level of protection should last for around 5 years in 'normal conditions'
Suitable for	Replaceable artwork of limited commercial value where visual appearance is important. Preferably, processes should be fully reversible.
Frame/ moulding	<p>This may involve a decision between re-using an existing frame and selecting a new one. Whether an old or new frame is used, the following considerations apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chosen moulding must be strong enough and its rebate deep enough to hold and support the whole package of glazing, windowmount or fillets, artwork/object, undermount and backboard. An old frame will sometimes need modification to meet these criteria. • The mitres are to be accurately cut, glued and joined tightly. The corners should be touched up so that no unfinished moulding is visible. • The moulding must be free from blemishes and care must be taken to ensure that all pieces match. If the artwork is likely to touch wooden moulding or slips then those parts should be suitably sealed. <p>Re-using old frames: If an old frame is to be re-used, it should be carefully cleaned and repaired, preserving all inscriptions and framing labels. The frame, mount and glass may be of historical significance. Old decorative mounts such as Victorian gilt mounts can sometimes be re-used with an internal lining. Fixings need to be secured and weakened cord or wire should be replaced.</p>
The mount package	<p>The mount package comprises of a windowmount and undermount.</p> <p>The purpose is to provide adequate physical and environmental protection to the artwork/object. The boards should be hinged along one of the longest sides, either the top or left side, preferably using either gummed white paper tape or better. At this level, however, good quality self-adhesive framing tape may be used for this task, but it is important to ensure good adhesion and longevity. Masking tape, cellophane tape and parcel tape are all designed for temporary adhesion, therefore they are not acceptable.</p>
Windowmount	<p>Because the artwork is in direct contact with the windowmount, it is crucial that the correct standard of mountboard is selected. At this level of framing, Level 3 (Whitecore) mountboard or better of at least 1100 microns and conforming to Guild mountboard standards should be used.</p> <p>General:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A windowmount or slip should normally be used to visually enhance the artwork and distance it from the glazing. Where slip moulding is used this must be accurately cut and should not touch the artwork. • If close framing is required there should be a spacer between the artwork and the glazing. • The corners of the window mount aperture must be cleanly cut, with no over-cuts. The mountboard should be free from blemishes, and to allow for possible expansion, there should be a clearance of 1-3mm inside the frame's rebate depending on the size of mount. • Multiple mounts or deep spacers must be used to frame works of art with migrant or delicate pigments, such as pastel drawings, or artwork with a cockled surface. It is not acceptable for a framer to use any form of fixative on artwork with either migrant or delicate pigments. • The windowmount should, where possible project some 5mm over the edge of the artwork thereby holding it firmly in place.
Attaching artwork	<p>Artwork should preferably be hinged to the undermount using T-hinges along the top edge, or a similarly reversible process. Hinges should allow the artwork to hang safely and should be weaker than, or of a similar weight to, the artwork, never heavier. This is so that under duress, the hinge will fail before damaging the artwork. They should be made, preferably, from conservation quality gummed tape, however, good quality white self adhesive framer's tapes are also acceptable. Hinges should be attached to the back of the artwork with the minimum necessary to provide adequate support. A suitable overlap is generally considered to be 5mm - 8mm.</p> <p>At this level dry or wet mounting is acceptable, providing customers understand that the process is irreversible. Artwork must be properly centred and free from distortion caused by the mounting process.</p>

Glazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works on paper need to be distanced from the glazing to allow for air circulation and movement. • Pastels and chalk drawings should be spaced at least 5-6mm from the glazing. If a picture is 'close framed' it should be held away from the glazing with a small slip, spacer or fillets tucked under the frame's rebate. • Glazing must be free from blemishes, an appropriate thickness for the size of the frame and cut to allow sufficient clearance inside the rebate of the frame. • For items that are to be hung in public areas, laminated or acrylic glazing should be considered. • Do not clean glazing with cream or abrasive cleaners, they can leave a film or create swirls. For best results an evaporative spirit-based cleaner and a clean, lint free cloth should be used. In public areas, laminated or acrylic glazing should be considered.
Backboard	<p>Backboard needs to be strong, rigid and flat. It's purpose is to protect the artwork from damage. Whilst pH neutral boards are preferred, other boards of at least 1500microns may be used. The thickness of the backboard required is dependant up on the overall size of the mount package/ frame aperture. Backboard must be cut to allow sufficient clearance for possible expansion within the frame rebate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The frame must be secured with framers' points, tacks or better. Because they are weaker by design, flexible tabs are not acceptable.
Hanging	<p>The chosen hanging fittings or system must be sufficiently strong to support the weight of the complete frame package.</p>
Finish	<p>Dust and dirt must be removed and the glass must be cleaned and polished without smears. The back of the frame should preferably be sealed using gummed paper tape. At this level, however, good quality self-adhesive framing tape may be used, but it is important to ensure good adhesion and longevity. Masking tape, cellophane tape and parcel tape are all designed for temporary adhesion, therefore they are not acceptable. Full back dust covers are also acceptable, providing they stop the ingress of dust and insects. These should be sufficiently strong to resist damage. Pads or buffers which are at least 3mm thick should be applied to the two lower corners on the back of the frame. Where practical, a label giving the date and the framer's name should also be adhered to the back. Note: any existing labels should be preserved as they can provide provenance for the artwork.</p>

Notes on framing fabric, canvas and objects at Level 3 (Mid level)

Fabric should be squared if necessary. It is not acceptable for fabric to be stapled or to use any other process that may damage the fabric. Fabric should preferably be laced over a Level 3 (White core) support board or better, or similarly reversible methods should be used. Washable fabric art may be stuck at the edges, preferably with a water-reversible adhesive. Dry-mounting may be used on fabric but is not considered satisfactory for stitching that does not lie completely flat at the back. Some attempt should be made to conceal unsightly problems, such as knots or travelling stitches. Use of nylon tag guns is acceptable.

Canvas must not sag, bow, tear or distort. Stretchers must be squared and sufficiently strong to stand the test of time. There are methods of tensioning stretcher bars which don't use wedges. If wooden wedges are used, they must be held in place with thread or wire. The size must be around 3 to 6mm larger than the stretcher bars, to allow for future retensioning of the canvas.

Objects it is acceptable for small blobs of silicone sealer or adhesive to come into contact with non-absorbent objects, such as glass art, although fully reversible non-adhesive techniques are preferable.

Using old frames: If an old frame is to be re-used, it should be carefully cleaned and repaired, preserving all inscriptions and framing labels. The frame, mount and glass may be of historical significance. Old decorative mounts such as Victorian gilt mounts can sometimes be re-used with an internal lining. Fixings need to be secured and weakened cord or wire should be replaced.



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LEVEL 4 (Low level)

Low level protection using basic materials and/or methods.

Objective	To provide a visually acceptable frame at a budget price. The price overrides visual appearance and quality. No pretence is made to protect the artwork or its long-term visual appearance.
Suitable for	Replaceable artwork of no commercial or sentimental value, or for temporary display. An inexpensive ready made product into which customers can insert their own artwork.
Frame/ moulding	No significant blemishes.
Mitres	Accurately cut, and joined tightly. May or may not be glued. Corners to be touched-up so no unfinished moulding is visible.
Windowmount	A windowmount or slip may be used to visually enhance the artwork. The corners of the windowmount must be cleanly cut. The mountboard must be free from obvious blemishes. Level 4 (Cream core) mountboard or better is acceptable. There should be sufficient clearance inside the frame to allow for possible expansion of the mountboard. Slip moulding must be accurately cut and joined.
Undermount	A barrier layer between the artwork and the back board is not necessary.
Attaching artwork	It is acceptable for artwork to be 'slotted' into the frame without fixing or to be stuck down. Artwork must be properly centred and free from distortion caused by the mounting process.
Glazing	Float glass or better, free from obvious blemishes. Must be cut to allow sufficient clearance inside the rebate of the frame. It is acceptable for the glazing to touch the artwork.
Backboard	Pulpboard, cardboard or combination undermount/backboards are acceptable.
Securing the frame	Flexible tabs are acceptable but framers' points or tacks are preferred.
Hanging	Hanging fittings must be sufficiently strong to support the frame.
Finish	Dust and dirt should be removed and the glass should be cleaned and polished without smears. It is acceptable to seal the back with self-adhesive tape.

Notes on framing fabric, canvas and objects at Level 4 (Low level)

Fabric should be squared if necessary. It is acceptable for fabric to be stuck down or stapled. Some attempt should be made to conceal unsightly problems, such as knots or travelling stitches.

Canvas must not sag, bow, tear or distort. Stretchers must be squared.

Objects can be held in place with adhesive.

NB:

The Guild regularly updates standards to take into account current best practise. Please go to www.fineart.co.uk/standards/Four_Levels_of_Framing.aspx