

Faculty: Art & Design
Subject Area: Photography



A LEVEL – PHOTOGRAPHY

01. Introductory project – Understanding your camera

Introductory project – Understanding your camera and workshops
 Students are introduced to both digital and traditional photography, learning how to use camera settings like aperture, shutter speed, ISO, and exposure. Students are introduced to darkroom processes and experiment with photograms and chemigrams using light-sensitive paper and everyday materials.

02. Portraits – Physical & Digital Manipulation

Students learn about portraits and different styles of portrait photography. They practice lighting techniques such as high key and low key. Students research relevant photographers who use these lighting styles and plan their own photoshoots based on this research. Students plan and create portrait outcomes, showing what they have learned about photography and image editing through physical and digital manipulation.

03. Component 1: Personal Investigation (60% of A Level)

Students complete a major body of work based on a theme of their choice, spanning Part 1 across Years 12 and part 2 and 3 over year 13. Students research artists and movements relevant to their theme, experiment with a variety of techniques and media, and develop personal ideas. The focus is on fostering creativity, technical skill, and critical thinking. By the end of the unit, students produce a final piece that demonstrates their conceptual understanding, skill development, and ability to articulate a personal artistic response. Key skills developed include visual analysis, experimentation with materials, idea development, and reflective practice.

Component 1: Personal Investigation (60% of A Level)

In year 13 students continue develop one major body of work based on a self-chosen theme, spanning research, experimentation, and idea development.

Students explore relevant artists and movements, experiment with diverse techniques and media, and refine their personal creative style. Students also produce a written essay (1,000–3,000 words) that critically analyses their theme, research, and artistic process. Key skills developed include visual analysis, creative experimentation, technical proficiency, reflective practice, and critical writing. The unit culminates in a final piece demonstrating both conceptual understanding and artistic skill.

Externally Set Assignment (40% of Final Grade)

In this unit, students respond to a theme set by AQA, developing a focused project within a limited timeframe.

They research relevant artists, explore a range of techniques and media, and develop personal ideas leading to a final resolved piece. The unit develops skills in time management, independent research, experimentation, problem-solving, and critical reflection, while refining technical ability and personal artistic expression.

Review and refine coursework

Remaining time will be for review and revisit Supporting evidence and Sustained Project work ahead of final submission and moderation.