



QUALIFICATION: A-LEVEL

Awarding Body:

AQA

Length of Course:

2 Years

The setup of the AS and A2 Photography is very similar to a GCSE course in an Art subject. Students who have this prior knowledge often find it easier to manage time and commitments as they have learned from the GCSE expectations.

The department aims to undertake a continental tour as often as is practical to allow students to view work in some of the greatest galleries in Europe and to be inspired by the places they visit. In recent years we have visited Amsterdam, London, Paris, Barcelona and Venice.

Year 12

AS

This course is made up of 3 units which comprise of:

Coursework Portfolio (60% of AS mark)

- Students produce a portfolio of work from school set starting points, topics and themes. Currently these themes are 'Camera Settings and Techniques' and 'Portraits.' Both topics allow students a vast degree of individuality and creativity whilst enabling them to explore a range of processes relevant to their personal intentions. The main focus of this is the inclusion of work that shows exploration, research, acquisition of techniques and skills whilst working towards a series of personalised outcomes.
- Students produce and select for submission a body of work which reflects their best photographic practice while simultaneously answering the grading criteria of the course. Staff facilitate this learning by guiding students and highlighting areas within their portfolio which may need strengthening, ultimately assisting each student to achieve a high level of work which can be examined.
- The Portfolio is assessed holistically through all of the four assessment objectives. Students are given a range of opportunities to respond to these objectives in personally creative ways, open to their own artistic interpretation. Completion of the portfolio is at the end of January ready for the start of students AS exam.

Exam - Externally Set Task (40% of AS marks)

- This is set and guided by the exam board and is given to all students on 1st Feb or the nearest opportunity after this point. This takes the form of another project, very similar to that explored by students in their coursework module. There are a series of 'open' questions which students can respond to. They select one question from the series. This choice allows them to gear their exam to an area of study which they are particularly adept at and work to their strengths.
- Students have a limited preparatory period between 1st Feb and the end of April to work on their exam module. This includes class time as well as any study time and at home. At the end of April students are given two full days off timetable in which to complete a series of final outcomes for their selected exam question. This constitutes the 10 hours supervised time set by the exam board. At the end of these two days their exam work is complete and may not be worked on. This is saved in the department ready for assessment and moderation.
- During the first two weeks of May students may look back into their coursework and complete any outstanding areas of work. After this point work is assessed internally within the department and a visiting moderator verifies these marks. The visit of the moderator signifies the formal end of students AS course and the A2 course begins instantaneously.
- All work produced is digital and saved/presented in a digital format.

Year 13

A2

Personal Investigation (60% of marks)

- Students submit one major project that has personal significance to them. They decide this topic in conversation with their subject teacher, after the completion of their year 12 studies. This topic is heavily personalised and acts as a portfolio in

which students can explore a theme related directly to a university course or area of study in further education, for example, Photo-journalism. The subsequent portfolio produced can then accompany students to university interviews to demonstrate their high ability and level of creative work using manipulation software and camera skills and techniques.

- Their Personal Investigation is also accompanied by a piece of related critical writing. This draws upon significant photographers or periods in Photographic or Graphic Design history which relate to their chosen theme. The essay should be between 3000 and 3500 words and can be submitted as a separate digital document, for example, a PowerPoint Presentation. This assignment acts as an academic accompaniment to the creative characteristics addressed in their portfolio. It is assessed as part of their whole coursework under the umbrella of assessment objective one.

Exam - Externally Set Task (40% of marks)

- The format of the exam is identical to that studied at AS level. Students select one starting point from a question paper set by the board and are given a set period of preparatory time in which to complete it. This begins on 1st Feb or at the nearest point after this date. Between February and April they work on their preparatory work in class time, study periods and any gained time at home.
- At the end of the exam period students are given 15 hours of controlled time to realise their ideas into a final series of outcomes. This takes the form of three days off timetable, normally at the end of April.
- The end of the 15 hours exam time signifies the end of the entire A level course. Some changes and additions may be added to students coursework modules but assessment of work begins in the middle of May internally within the department and subsequently this is moderated.

Relevance to Further Studies and Careers

We believe this AQA course to be the most challenging and rewarding for all students wishing to embark upon a creative career path. Its breadth and depth have significant impact across a multitude of further education subject areas and establishments. This is reflected in the university entries and submissions in recent years. We have had students apply to study at a range of both local and UK based universities and the growing popularity of digital based creative work also allows students to embark upon more hands on apprenticeships and vocational pathways.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

No formal requirements

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SIXTH FORM VISIT

GIRLS' SCHOOL VISIT

BOYS' SCHOOL VISIT