

A Level Photography Transition Booklet



This pack contains information about A Level Photography and a programme of activities and resources to prepare you for this course in September.



Please note the compulsory summer work which starts on page 3

About the course: The specification we teach is produced by AQA. The unit code is 7206 (A level) and a full copy of this specification and other useful information is available at:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/as-and-a-level/art-and-design/subject-content/photography>

The course consists of two core units:

Component 1: Personal investigation- within this unit you will develop work based on an idea, issue, concept or theme leading to a finished outcome or a series of related finished outcomes. Practical elements should make connections with some aspect of contemporary or past practice of artist(s), designer(s), photographers or craftspeople and include written work of no less than 1000 and no more than 3000 words which supports the practical work.

Component 2: Externally set assignment- within this unit you will respond to a stimulus, provided by AQA, to produce work which provides evidence of your ability to work independently within specified time constraints, developing a personal and meaningful response which addresses all the assessment objectives and leads to a finished outcome or a series of related finished outcomes. You will sit this unit in January of Year 13, and complete the formal exam over 15 hours in May of Year 13.

This course will encourage you to develop:

- intellectual, imaginative, creative and intuitive capabilities
- investigative, analytical, experimental, practical, technical and expressive skills, aesthetic understanding and critical judgement
- independence of mind in developing, refining and communicating your own ideas, your own intentions and your own personal outcomes
- an interest in, enthusiasm for and enjoyment of photography and film.
- the experience of working with a broad range of media
- an understanding of the interrelationships between art and the design processes and an awareness of the contexts in which they operate
- knowledge and experience of real-world contexts and links to the creative industries
- knowledge and understanding of art, design and media and technologies in contemporary and past societies and cultures
- an awareness of different roles, functions, audiences and consumers of photography.

Compulsory Summer Work

Project title: Identity

* Please note that you cannot use your GCSE work for these tasks as it is considered malpractice by the exam board.

Part 1: Record ideas, observations and insights (Assessment Objective 3)

Task 1: Create a mind map of ideas surrounding this theme, and a mood board of secondary resources (found images). Consider the following possible starting points

- The 'selfie' (close-ups, facial features, facial expressions)
- Nostalgia (objects from your childhood)
- Family life (eating dinner, playing games, on the sofa)
- Social life (music, fashion, meeting friends, parties)
- Cultural identity (patterns, textiles, objects and artefacts)

Task 2: Support your project research by taking a series of at least 20 photographs related to your interpretation of the theme "identity".

Consider unconventional ways of viewing the world around you. For example, does a portrait have to be a picture of a person? Could it be a hand? A shadow? A distorted reflection? Experiment with composition, angles and lighting in order to create a creative but aesthetically pleasing response.

Use the resources listed below to support you with this task.

Part 2: Contextual analysis (Assessment Objective 1)

In this section, you will explore higher levels of independence and autonomy over your project by identifying and investigating photographers of your choice.

Task 3: Identify two photographers whose work links to your interpretation of the theme "identity". Compare and contrast two photographs (one from each photographer) using the example linked below to structure your response.

<http://tiaphotographyalevel.blogspot.com/2015/12/photo-analysis-as-a2.html>

Written analysis should be at least 600 words and cover photographic techniques, context and concept of the image and personal response to the work.

Task 4: Create a set of 20 photographs inspired by one of the photographs which you have explored in Task 3. Think about the photographic techniques you have identified in your analysis and the how the concept of the photographer's work links to your own. There should be a clear correlation between your work and that of the photographer you are studying.

Possible summer activities and trips (this is not compulsory; however, we would highly recommend that you engage with the opportunity to extend your experiences in readiness for this course)

Extension task:

Identify an art gallery from the list on page 6. You can either choose to visit the art gallery (preferred), or visit the relevant gallery website. Visiting an art gallery can be fun, stimulating and thought-provoking. However, it can also be perplexing and alienating, making you feel unsure about what you are looking at. This extension task aims to help you to engage with galleries and the inspiration they can bring to your own work.

- 1- Make yourself stop in front of individual artworks and really observe the exhibit. Use the questions below to support your exploration of the piece. Choose the most interesting exhibit from your trip and write a review using what you have explored or discussed in relation to the headings below. This will help you look at the art in an active and engaged frame of mind. Think about:
 - The subject: Describe what you see. This includes the scene, people, colours and/or shapes depicted and how they are arranged into a composition.
 - The techniques: How was the photograph taken? What style of composition was used and how does this effect how the viewer reads the image? How does the lighting work and how does this contribute to the atmosphere?
 - The photographer: Who were they? At what point in their lives did they make this work? Why might they have made it? What might they want to reveal to the viewer or make the viewer feel?
 - The context: When was the photograph created? What was it made for? What social and/or historical agenda might it be a part of or responding to?
 - The success of the work: Depending on the work's subject and your answers to the previous categories, decide whether you find the art compelling, powerful, beautiful, moving, entertaining, suggestive, illustrative, experimental, educational, or anything else that might be appropriate. Does it work for you? Does it do what the photographer intended? You do not have to like everything you see, and sometimes thinking about why a piece of art does not convince you can be productive for forming your own opinions and knowledge about art. Art is in galleries for us to enjoy, but it can also be something to think with, and to think about critically.

Suggested Reading List

Below are the links to materials we would encourage you engage with throughout the two-year course:

Art Communities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://artuk.org Art UK is the online home for every public art collection in the UK.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.thisiscolossal.com Nicknamed “the tate modern of the internet” Colossal is an international platform for contemporary art.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.lensculture.com a platform dedicated to discovering and sharing the best of contemporary photography. One of the most comprehensive collections available.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://photographywithmisswilson.weebly.com/ a wealth of information and example material related the AQA A Level course.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://photographyproject.uk/a-level/ Blog dedicated to photography education of all levels with A Level specific articles.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.studentartguide.com/ A really useful site which compiles new ideas, best practice and helpful learning strategies for Art students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.photopedagogy.com/student-sketchbooks.html features excellent examples of student a level sketchbooks.

Social Media:

Social Media is an excellent way of exploring contemporary photography and finding inspiration.

A **Pinterest** account is highly recommended in order to research and organise ideas.

Tumblr, **Flicker** and **Behance** house a wealth of personal online portfolios of photographic work and are a great source of inspiration.

Youtube can be an invaluable learning resource specific videos can be found on DSLR camera techniques, lighting, composition and photoshop tutorials all of which will help to inform your practice and improve your skills.

Using **Instagram/ TikTok/ Facebook** etc to follow hashtags that relate to your project is a great way of gathering ideas.

Netflix has recently developed content specific to photography and the creative process. The following shows are valuable viewing.



Tales by Light – Looks at the practice of successful photographers from around the world covering a variety of genres and styles.

Abstract (The Art of Design) – Series exploring artists from a wide variety of disciplines and their approach to the creative process. Provides insight to working within the creative sector.

Art Galleries:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The V&A - https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/introducing-the-photography-collection
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Tate Gallery London: https://www.tate.org.uk/
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The National Gallery London: https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Royal Academy London: https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Photographers Gallery - https://thephotographersgallery.org.uk/viewpoints/photography-and-landscape
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hamiltons Gallery - https://www.hamiltonsgallery.com/
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Michael Hopping Gallery - https://www.michaelhoppengallery.com/exhibitions/current-forthcoming
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Iconic Images Gallery - https://www.iconicimagesgallery.net/artists
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Atlas Gallery - https://www.atlasgallery.com/exhibitions/online

Journals and magazines are a good way of keeping up to date. You can subscribe for a year or buy individual editions. We recommend:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aesthetica: Aesthetica is a worldwide destination for art and culture. In-depth features foreground today’s most innovative practitioners across art, design, photography, architecture, music and film. https://aestheticamagazine.com/
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Review: one of the world's leading international contemporary art magazines https://artreview.com/
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Forum: Artforum is an international monthly magazine specializing in contemporary art. https://www.artforum.com/
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frieze Magazine: a leading magazine of contemporary art and culture. https://www.frieze.com/
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tate Etc. Tate's art magazine, published three times a year https://www.tate.org.uk/tate-etc
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source: A photographic magazine published in Belfast, Northern Ireland https://www.source.ie/index.php
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1984 – The British Journal of Photography – Worlds longest running and most influential photography publication https://www.1854.photography/

These will help you to be aware of contemporary artists and issues which can have a great impact on your studies

Recommended Reading: Photography

Author	Title	Publisher
Berger, J (2013)	Understanding a Photograph	Penguin
Clarke, G (1997)	The Photography: A Visual and Cultural History	Oxford University Press, Oxford
Farrell, I (2011)	A Complete Guide to Digital Photography	Quercus
Golden, R (2001)	20th Century Photography: A complete guide to the greatest artists of the photographic age	Carlton Books Ltd
Jaeger, A - C	Image Makers Image Takers	Thames & Hudson

Author	Title	Publisher
Jeffrey, I & Phaidon (2000)	The Photography Book	Phaidon
Koetzle, H M (2002)	Photo 2 (Icons)	Taschen
Langford, M (1998 edition)	Story of Photography - For technical skills see Michael Longford's series of books	Focal Press, Oxford
Lenman, R (editor) (2005)	The Oxford Companion to Photography	Oxford University Press, Oxford
Modrak, Rebekah (2010)	Reframing Photography: Theory and Practice	Routledge
Mulligan, T and Wooters, D (2005)	A History of Photography from: 1839 to present	Taschen
Parr, M and Badger, G (2006)	The Photo Book History V2	Phaidon Press

Expectations and Workload

We are delighted you have chosen to study Photography. You will explore a diverse range of methods, materials and techniques under the guidance of subject specialists. In return we expect you to fully engage with all of the studio sessions with an open mind and an eagerness to explore all that is made available to you. It is expected that you will make use of your private study sessions in order to independently extend your learning, and that you will dedicate sustained periods of time outside of school, to your sketchbooks and larger scaled pieces. **Your final outcome will be the culmination of 2 years' consistent application of effort and independent determination.** The work you do outside of your lessons will have a very significant impact on your results.