

Art and Design - Photography

Why study Art and Design - Photography?

Photography is increasingly popular as an AS and A level choice. It provides the perfect opportunity to learn to produce work at a professional standard, at the same time as encouraging the exploration of photography as an artistic medium. It combines well with more traditional subjects, providing an outlet for creativity. If nothing else Photography will provide students with a skill they can use throughout their lives.

What does the course cover and what is expected of you?

Students will be introduced to the various aspects of Traditional and Digital Photography through a series of workshops, lectures, critiques, seminars and tutorials. A 35 mm single lens camera is supplied in both film and digital format. Lessons take place in the classroom and studio which includes a fully-equipped darkroom. The students will also have access to computers and use the industry standard Adobe Photoshop software to create and manipulate their images as well as use a well-equipped Darkroom and Photographic Studio.

You will be expected to produce some work both of an academic and practical nature in your own time. In addition, you will be expected to attend a tutorial programme to monitor the development of your work. In A-level study you should expect to spend 5-8 hours a week on work outside the classroom. Their experience of other people's work allows students to explore the historical, social and technical aspects of photography, forming a basis for the work journals, which are an integral part of coursework. Students are also expected to take photographs in a variety of settings, including open-air locations. They may be instructed to search out suitable settings /locations for photographs outside the School.

Regular trips will be arranged to both local and national photographic exhibitions. The students may also get an opportunity to exhibit their own work in galleries that have public access. There is the possibility of an international Photographic Study Trip in Year 13.

Where can it take you?

Photography can be a useful addition to a student's portfolio of qualifications and can also help to secure admission to Art College or University. The course could lead to a Foundation Course in Art and Design or HND and degree level courses in Photography, Film, Television or Media Studies.

Entry requirements

Although there is no formal requirement to have studied Photography before embarking on an A level course, it helps to have an informed interest in the subject. You do not need to have studied GCSE Photography to undertake this course, however it will help to have studied an Art & Design subject at GCSE. You must have a willingness to work very hard.

Course assessment

AS

- Component 1 - Portfolio of work (60% of final marks)
- Component 2 - Externally set assignment (40% of final marks)

A Level

- Component 1 - Personal Investigation (60% of final marks)
- Component 2 - Externally set assignment (40% of final marks)

Non-examination assessments set and marked by the centre and moderated by AQA.

Exam Board

AQA

Student View

'Photography is a subject that I have found very interesting. Learning how to develop a film and make black and white prints from it was amazing, I had only seen digital cameras before and this chemical/wet approach was exciting. Seeing how photographic projects can be put together and how they can change direction was all new to me and I didn't know if I would be able to do it, but the more work we covered gave me new ideas and new levels of skill. I can now take photographs and not snap-shots.'

Teachers Tip

Do not think that because you have not done any formal photography before that this is not a subject for you. We have seen students go from knowing nothing about it to making the decision of going to university and study it for a degree.

The most important part of any camera is the photographer behind it. We call this the "photographers' eye", seeing a possible image before taking it. Cameras don't take pictures, photographers do. Cameras are just another artist's tool. Your imagination, ideas and creativity are the most important qualities in this course.