



GCSE Photography

Key contacts: Ms H Leyman and Mrs S Elston
Exam Board: AQA

Overview of the course:

If students opt for Photography, they will need a camera and they should understand that the course is an art-based course and students will be expected to work in a range of materials to develop their ideas creatively. Students will also be required to research and write about photographers and analyse their own images.

The course develops skills of investigation and making through exploration and experimentation and aims to gradually allow students greater independence in developing their work and ideas.

What will you study?

The GCSE Photography course encourages an adventurous and enquiring approach to Photography. Successful students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of past and contemporary Photographic practice and be able to produce a personal response that embraces a range of ideas.

Key Features

Students focus on the conventions of photographic practice and the integration of theory, knowledge and understanding to reach a personal response. Students are set a range of theme-based projects.

Students will be able to work in a variety of the areas listed below:

- Photography: digital, documentary, experimental and darkroom work
- ICT and computer image manipulation
- Fine Art approaches and extensions to photography including drawing, collage, printmaking and low relief work

You will need your own digital camera to start the course. The department has a bank of manual SLR cameras for black and white work. You do not need to buy an expensive Digital SLR camera to learn about photography. Compact cameras can be very high quality and allow you to develop your photographic skills. The important features are a minimum of 12 megapixels to allow for photographs to be printed to a large scale effectively, an optical zoom feature and a macro mode. Please contact the department if you wish to discuss this further.

Assessment

The GCSE Assessment criteria for Photography requires that not only practical skills and abilities should be developed but also the study of Photography and its various contexts should inform students' own work. Photography is not just taking photographs – it is so much more! You do not take photographs, you make them!

Coursework - 60% of the marks.

This includes all work produced in Year 10 and the first term of Year 11. Coursework comprises a body of work that is derived from modules of theme-based work. A coursework unit should include sketchbooks and final outcomes. All assessment objectives must be met in the coursework as a whole.

Examination "Controlled Test" - Ten hours - 40% of the marks.

Commences in the January of Year 11, students must respond to one starting point provided by the examination board and produce a sketchbook of preparatory work. A response to all assessment objectives is required. Students will sit a practical examination of ten hours, supervised time and the end of the preparatory period. Students must produce a final piece or pieces based upon preparatory studies and research.

Possible career path:

Most students who follow a photography route specialise in one of the following areas: portrait, fashion, commercial, wildlife, fine arts, scientific and medical, press or sports. Typical employers include media organisations such as newspapers, magazines, film and television, wedding photographers or high street photography companies, large organisations such as universities, hospitals or airports, cruise liners, holiday companies and theme parks, the police – for 'scene of the crime' photography and advertising companies. A large number of photographers are self-employed and work in a freelance capacity. Many photography graduates choose to use their creative skills in related areas such as marketing, advertising, web design and digital marketing, where opportunities exist with a range of businesses and consultancies.