

A level Photography

Introduction – an outline of the course

Photography is a tough, but rewarding course. If you love Photography, and want to practise a lot, you will succeed! You will find your own style as a photographer, and will grow and flourish in this style as the course progresses.

Photography will enable you to develop your practical and creative abilities as fully as possible whilst encouraging a critical appreciation of existing photographers' work and technical skills. You will develop your own ideas through the skill of photography and postproduction using image editing software. You will be encouraged to take inspiration from a wide range of sources to develop and create work that is both technically proficient and individual.

As you may know, 60% of your assessment is your "Personal Investigation" which means you can choose to study anything you want within Photography, with guidance from your teachers and peers. You will start this investigation at the end of Y12.

40% is your exam, and much like your GCSE, you will get starting points to choose from and then a controlled assessment at the end.

What will we be studying in the first half term?

In September you will start with in depth study of the camera settings, especially what we call the exposure triangle. This includes shutter speed, aperture and ISO. You will learn to use these confidently and proficiently, before starting a Still Life unit in the first half term. You will also have an introduction to film photography, and you will be fully briefed on the use of the dark room for developing your photographs.

What can I do that will help me prepare for A level Photography?

One of the important ways that you can prepare is to immerse yourself in the practise of Photography. Make Photography an everyday task. Photograph things you would never normally think to and make the ordinary extra ordinary! Try unusual vantage points, look for strange textures or try your hand at street photography (always get permission of anyone you photograph!)

You can also visit galleries to look at the work of other photographers. We have The Impressions Gallery in Bradford, which is a dedicated Photography gallery. There are also excellent photographers on show in Salt's Mill, Cartwright Hall and Leeds City Art Gallery.

You may wish to use some of your summer to carry out some background reading and preparation. We strongly recommend a look at the Tate website and ArtUK, or simply find some Photography books to look through and read. We have plenty in the department and we are happy to lend them out!

There are also programmes such as The Great British Photography Challenge available on Guiseley School Streams (some swearing, but the programme is fantastic and will give you lots of creative ideas!)

Summer Gap Task

The best way to prepare for your A level in Photography is to complete the summer gap task that has been set.

If you complete the tasks over the summer, then you will be using the skills that you have developed during GCSE Photography (if you did it). We are mostly keen, however, to see your personal responses. What do you want to say with your Photography? Show us something about yourself, your life, your opinions and ideas. All of the information is in the task PowerPoint.

On the [school website](#), if you click on Sixth Form and follow the list until you see Year 11 into 12 Gap Tasks. Click on this and find the Photography task.

You don't have to complete this work in one go, in fact we strongly recommend chunking it and completing it over a long time to get to a better, more refined outcome, and build your skills. As a documentary photographer, the project should take a long time to complete, so start early and build up the portfolio over a few weeks.

We are really looking forward to seeing you in September and working with you so that you achieve your goals and aspirations.