A Level Art and Design - Photography

Exam Board: AQA

The main purpose of any course in Photography and design is to develop your ability to appreciate the visual world, respond in a personal and creative way and perhaps even contribute for the benefit of everyone. The skills you will develop will be varied. Among them, you will develop a working knowledge of materials, practices and technology within Photography.

You will develop the skills to interpret and convey your ideas and feelings using photography and design. You will develop your imaginative and creative powers and your experimental, analytical and documenting skills. You will also develop a specialist vocabulary and the knowledge and understanding of the place of Photography and design in History and in contemporary society.

Course Overview:

Students will be introduced to a variety of experiences that explore a range of photographic media, techniques and processes. They will be made aware of both traditional and new technologies. Students will explore relevant images, artefacts and resources relating to a range of art, craft and design, from the past and from recent times, including European and non-European examples. This will be integral to the investigating and making processes.

Students' responses to these examples will be shown through practical and critical activities that demonstrate their understanding of different styles, genres and traditions. Students will use sketchbooks/workbooks/journals to underpin their work where appropriate. They may wish to develop their drawing skills in order to produce storyboards, thumbnail sketches and/or diagrams, where appropriate.

Students may use traditional methods and/or digital techniques to produce images. Students will be aware of the four assessment objectives to be demonstrated in the context of the content and skills presented and of the importance of process as well as product.

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Assessment:
Unit 1: Personal Investigation 60% of A-level Portfolio of skills. Foundation style course in a variety of disciplines. You are required to submit written work in support of your practical project of approximately1,000 – 3,000 words. The quality of written communication will be assessed in this unit.

Unit 2: Externally Set Assignment 40% of A-level: Preparatory Period (from 1 February) + 15 hours supervised time. Set by AQA.
Entry requirements:
Grade 5 or above in GCSE Photography (if taken). This is not always a requirement and staff will consider each applicant at interview. However, A-level photography is not an easy option and you should be prepared to work hard at developing your abilities.

Additional course information:
The purchase of photographic materials of approximately £30 per term – students can buy subsidised materials and sketchbooks from school. Financial support is available through the sixth form bursary scheme.

Who is the course for?
• Students who wish to undertake further studies in Art, Craft and Design, usually at art college or further education college.
• Students who are looking to take up careers for which an Art background is relevant; advertising, publishing, architecture, museums, theatres, galleries, journalism etc.
• Individuals who have an interest in and aptitude for the subject, but who do not intend to take the subject beyond A-level and will use UCAS entry points for other courses.

Career pathways:
There are many careers in Photography, Art, Craft and Design. Most of these require further study at an art school, further education college or university. If you are unsure about whether to make a career of the subject, the best thing to do is to speak to your teacher who will know more about the courses on offer.

"Studying photography was most exciting when I began experimenting in the darkroom. I recently graduated with a first-class honours BA in photography and am working as a Gallery Assistant while creating my own practice. Working in the creative industry is where ideas can blossom and become reality."