

Photography

Awarding Body: AQA

Level: A-Level

Introduction

At its core photography is the 'art of capturing light with a camera, usually via a digital sensor or film, to create an image'. Beyond this definition is where the magic starts!

Photography has become the default method of communication in our contemporary world. We use our phones to take, send, manipulate and archive imagery. A digital camera brings the additional bonus of more control over how you compose your imagery and a higher resolution.

With your camera in hand you will be able to access a whole multitude of genres such as candid, landscape, documentary, product, portrait, fashion and travel photography. With these genres in mind then a career as a fashion photographer, journalist, forensics or web design are all possibilities.

Photography can be studio based where by the organising and preparation of camera technology is a skill in itself. Photography can also be location-based whereby you will have to battle with changeable weather, light conditions and the random nature of the outside world.

The A-Level Photography course is a perfect place to start if any of the above interests you.

Year one content – Foundation course and Themes

Foundation course - The first term in year 12 is a composed of a foundation course. Students are required to identify the different components of a digital camera, for example, the aperture, ISO settings and shutter speeds. Students are then asked to illustrate the purpose of these components through the taking and production of photographs.

Themes – A series of contemporary themes (to include concepts of identity, time, hybridity and deconstruction) will be introduced via a series of workshops. Students are introduced to a series of photographers, which will not only help explore the theme but also provide a variety of genres and concepts used in the creation of digital imagery. Thereafter a period of idea development will conclude with the opportunity for students to create their own interpretations of the theme.

Year two content and assessment

Component One - Personal Investigation

Students will be given the opportunity to produce a comprehensive body of work on a theme or photographer/artist based upon the results of their year 12 coursework. As well as practical work, the Personal Investigation is also supported by a written study of 1,000 words.

Component Two - Externally Set Assignment/Exam

During the Spring Term students will produce a project based on an externally set theme created by Edexcel. Over eight weeks students will be given the opportunity to personalise the theme, giving the student the opportunity to use any appropriate materials to produce an ambitious personal response within fifteen hours of supervised time.

What qualifications are required?

At least a grade 4 in GCSE Art & Design or a grade 4 in a Technology subject or a grade 4 in Media Studies. A good working knowledge of Photoshop is required if you have not studied Art at GCSE.

Career and further study

Photography develops pupils' skills in creativity and enables students to become independent learners. It is an essential requirement for creative courses at art colleges and universities. There are many opportunities in our design-conscious world for careers using the skills you will develop. These professions can include graphic design, product design, fashion, fine artist, curator, journalism, forensics, advertising, web design etc. just to name a few!

Trips and other costs

All students must have a digital camera prior to beginning the course, details for this will be provided on induction day.