

GCSE Photography

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Course Outline:

The course is divided into two components – a coursework portfolio and an externally set task. Both of these units of work will offer the opportunity to explore different genres within Photography, such as portraiture and still life, and to render these in a range of techniques and processes. In the early part of Year 10, we will aim to build up each learner's skill base, primarily within digital photographic practice, using Photoshop to facilitate this. As the course progresses, an increasingly independent and refined technical and conceptual response will be encouraged.

Skills/attributes developed/required:

Creativity, and individual responses to tasks, recording a range of subject matter photographically. Understanding of composition and digital manipulation of imagery. Technical skills with Photographic processes, such as Photoshop manipulation, darkroom printing, camera control (shutter speed, aperture etc) and use of angles, lighting and vantage points. Appreciation of art contexts (genres, artists, socio-cultural-economic factors).

Additional considerations:

There is the opportunity to attend a trip to London, to view the collections of several major galleries, in the October of Year 11. Also, we sell a Photography Kit, which provides a range of digital storage and photographic materials, which are essential for the course. The price for this kit is £20.

Examination Information

Exam Board: OCR

Exam: 60% Coursework (portfolio) / 40% Exam

Course outline: Coursework Portfolio - 60%. The Portfolio is made up of practical work, which explores the skills, knowledge and understanding in the learner's chosen practical area within photography. This is usually digital, but can also include light-based and / or video work. The coursework submission will include digital workbooks, and final prints.

Exam (externally set) - 40%. Offers learners the opportunity to respond to a choice of themes, written and visual starting points and stimuli. The early release paper will be issued in early January and will provide learners with five themes, each with a range of written and visual starting points and stimuli. Learners will have up to 10 hours (two school days) in which to independently realise their response(s) through the production of one or more personal outcome(s) – a photograph, or sequence of photographs.

Where can it take me?

Next Steps: AS / A level, Higher Education, Further Education, training or employment. It also aims to support those learners who will study subjects or take up careers for which a photography background is relevant. At Nailsea School, A Level Photography is the direct progression route.

Future career opportunities that this subject may lead to: Photographer; Advertising; Branding; Photojournalist; Wildlife, Fashion, Events, Sports Photographer, Animator; Web Designer; Illustrator; Film Editor/Director.

What do Year 10 and 11 say about Photography?

"We learn a lot of photographic techniques. We use the Macs and there is a bit of writing to do."

"You should have the ability to work in a group, but also independently. You have to be able to manage your time, because there is a lot of coursework."

"It will help me to think creatively and to develop better ideas—this could help me in lots of careers."