

A' Level Photography - Course Outline - AQA

8 Hours of lessons over the 2 week timetable.

5 - 8 Hours Homework and independent study.

1 Set of photos per week is the expected work rate.

Students should be introduced to a variety of experiences that explore a range of photographic media, techniques and processes. They should be made aware of both traditional and new technologies.

Students should 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 should be integral to the investigating and making processes. Students' responses to these examples must be shown through practical and critical activities that demonstrate their understanding of different styles, genres and traditions.

Students should 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 should 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.

Areas of study

Students are required to work in **one or more** area(s) of Photography, such as those listed below. They may explore overlapping areas and combinations of areas:

- portraiture
- landscape photography (working from the urban, rural and/or coastal environment)
- still life photography (working from objects or from the natural world)
- documentary photography, photojournalism
- fashion photography

- experimental imagery
- multimedia
- photographic installation
- moving image (video, film, animation).

Skills and techniques

Students will be expected to demonstrate skills, as defined in [Overarching knowledge, understanding and skills](#), in the context of their chosen area(s) of Photography. Students will be required to demonstrate skills in all of the following:

- the ability to explore elements of visual language, line, form, colour, pattern and texture in the context of Photography
- awareness of intended audience or purpose for their chosen area(s) of Photography
- the ability to respond to an issue, theme, concept or idea, or work to a brief or answer a need in Photography
- appreciation of viewpoint, composition, aperture, depth of field, shutter speed and movement
- appropriate use of the camera, film, lenses, filters and lighting for work in their chosen area(s) of Photography
- understanding of techniques related to the production of photographic images and, where appropriate, presentation and layout.

Knowledge and understanding

Students must show knowledge and understanding of:

- relevant materials, processes, technologies and resources
- how ideas, feelings and meanings can be conveyed and interpreted in images and artefacts created in their chosen area(s) of Photography
- historical and contemporary developments and different styles and genres
- how images and artefacts relate to social, environmental, cultural and/or ethical contexts, and to the time and place in which they were created
- continuity and change in different styles, genres and traditions relevant to Photography

- a working vocabulary and specialist terminology that is relevant to their chosen area(s) of Photography.

Assessments

Component 1: Personal investigation	+ Component 2: Externally set assignment
<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Personal investigation – 7201/C, 7202/C, 7203/C, 7204/C, 7205/C, 7206/C</p> <p>Assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No time limit • 96 marks • 60% of A-level <p>Non-exam assessment (NEA) set and marked by the centre and moderated by AQA during a visit to the centre. Visits will normally take place in June.</p>	<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Response to an externally set assignment – 7201/X, 7202/X, 7203/X, 7204/X, 7205/X, 7206/X</p> <p>Assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparatory period + 15 hours supervised time • 96 marks • 40% of A-level <p>Non-exam assessment (NEA) set by AQA, marked by the centre and moderated by AQA during a visit to the centre. Visits will normally take place in June.</p>

Component details

Component 1 Personal investigation

This is a practical investigation supported by written material.

Students are required to conduct a practical investigation, into an idea, issue, concept or theme, supported by written material. The focus of the investigation must be identified independently by the student and must lead to a finished outcome or a series of related finished outcomes.

The investigation should be a coherent, in-depth study that demonstrates the student's ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning from an initial starting point to a final realisation.

The investigation must show clear development from initial intentions to the final outcome or outcomes. It must include evidence of the student's ability to research and develop ideas and relate their work in meaningful ways to relevant critical/contextual materials.

The investigation must be informed by an aspect of contemporary or past practice of artists, photographers, designers or craftspeople.

The written material must confirm understanding of creative decisions, providing evidence of all four assessment objectives by:

- clarifying the focus of the investigation
- demonstrating critical understanding of contextual and other sources
- substantiating decisions leading to the development and refinement of ideas
- recording ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions by reflecting critically on practical work
- making meaningful connections between, visual, written and other elements.

The written material must:

- be a coherent and logically structured extended response of between 1000 and 3000 words of continuous prose.
- include specialist vocabulary appropriate to the subject matter
- include a bibliography that, identifies contextual references from sources such as: books, journals, websites, through studies of others' work made during a residency, or on a site, museum or gallery visit
- be legible with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar so that meaning is clear.

Annotation must not be included in the word count for the written material.

Students can present the written material as a single passage of continuous prose or as a series of shorter discrete, but linked, passages of continuous prose incorporated within the practical work.

There is no restriction on the scale of practical work produced. Students should carefully select, organise and present their work for their Personal investigation to ensure it is well structured and provides evidence that meets the requirements of all four assessment objectives.

The personal investigation will be assessed as a whole. Evidence of meeting the requirements of all four assessment objectives must be provided in both the practical and written material. Please refer to Assessing the Personal investigation of the specification for more information on how to assess the Personal investigation.

Students must identify and acknowledge sources which are not their own.

Component 2 Externally set assignment

Separate question papers will be provided for each title. Each question paper will consist of a choice of eight questions to be used as starting points. Students are required to select one. Students will be provided with examination papers on 1 February, or as soon as possible after that date.

Preparatory period – from 1 February

Following receipt of the paper students should consider the starting points and select one. Preparatory work should be presented in any suitable format, such as mounted sheets, design sheets, sketchbooks, workbooks, journals, models and maquettes.

Supervised time – 15 hours

Following the preparatory period, students must complete 15 hours of unaided, supervised time.

The first 3 hours of the supervised time must be consecutive.

In the 15 hours students must produce a finished outcome or a series of related finished outcomes, informed by their preparatory work. Students must stop work on their preparatory work as soon as the first period of supervised time starts.

Students may refer to their preparatory work in the supervised time, but it must not be added to or amended. Preparatory work and the work produced in the supervised time must be kept secure in between sessions of supervised time.

The work produced during the supervised time must be clearly identified as such. Students must identify and acknowledge sources which are not their own. Annotation and/or notes should use appropriate specialist vocabulary and be legible with accurate use of language so that meaning is clear.

At the end of the 15 hours of supervised time all the work submitted for this component must be kept secure. Preparatory work and the work produced during the 15 hours of supervised time will be assessed together, as a whole, against all four assessment objectives.

Students will be assessed on their ability to work independently, working within the specified time constraints, and developing a personal and meaningful response. There is no restriction on the scale of work produced. Students should carefully select, organise and present work to ensure that they provide evidence which meets the requirements of all four assessment objectives.

	Assessment objective 1	Assessment objective 2	Assessment objective 3	Assessment objective 4
Marks	Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding	Explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining ideas as work develops	Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, reflecting critically on work and progress	Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements
24 Convincingly	An exceptional ability to develop ideas through sustained investigations informed by contextual and other sources.	An exceptional ability to explore and select appropriate resources, media, material, techniques and processes.	An exceptional ability to record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions.	An exceptional ability to present a personal and meaningful response.
23 Clearly	Demonstrates exceptional analytical and critical understanding.	Reviews and refines ideas in a confident and purposeful manner as work develops.	Demonstrates an exceptional ability to reflect critically on work and progress.	Demonstrates an exceptional ability to successfully realise intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements.
22 Adequately				
21 Just				
20 Convincingly	A confident and highly developed ability to develop ideas through sustained investigations, informed by contextual and other sources.	A confident and highly developed ability to explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes.	A confident and highly developed ability to record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions.	A confident and highly developed ability to present a personal and meaningful response.
19 Clearly	Demonstrates confident and highly developed analytical and critical understanding.	Reviews and refines ideas in a confident manner as work develops.	Demonstrates a confident and highly developed ability to reflect critically on work and progress.	Demonstrates a highly developed ability to successfully realise intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements.
18 Adequately				
17 Just				
16 Convincingly	A consistent ability to develop ideas through sustained investigations, informed by contextual and other sources.	A consistent ability to explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes.	A consistent ability to record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions.	A consistent ability to present a personal and meaningful response.
15 Clearly	Demonstrates consistent analytical and critical understanding.	Reviews and refines ideas with increasing confidence as work develops.	Demonstrates a consistent ability to reflect critically on work and progress.	Demonstrates a consistent ability to successfully realise intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements.
14 Adequately				
13 Just				

		Assessment objective 1	Assessment objective 2	Assessment objective 3	Assessment objective 4
12	Cvincingly	A reasonably consistent ability to develop ideas through sustained investigations, informed by contextual and other sources.	A reasonably consistent ability to explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and process.	A reasonably consistent ability to record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions.	A reasonably consistent ability to present a personal and meaningful response.
11	Clearly				Demonstrates a reasonably consistent ability to successfully realise intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements.
10	Adequately	Demonstrates reasonably consistent analytical and critical understanding.	Reviews and refines ideas with a degree of success as work develops.	Demonstrates a reasonably consistent ability to reflect critically on work and progress.	
9	Just				
8	Cvincingly	Some ability to develop ideas and sustain investigations, informed by contextual and other sources.	Some ability to explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and process.	Some ability to record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions.	Some ability to present a personal and meaningful response which is uneven.
7	Clearly				Demonstrates some ability to successfully realise intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements.
6	Adequately	Demonstrates some analytical and critical understanding.	Reviews and refines ideas with limited success as work develops.	Demonstrates some ability to reflect critically on work and progress.	
5	Just				
4	Cvincingly	Minimal ability to develop ideas and sustain investigations, informed by contextual and other sources.	Minimal ability to explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and process.	Minimal ability to record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions.	Minimal ability to present a personal and meaningful response, limited by a lack of skill and understanding.
3	Clearly				Demonstrates minimal ability to realise intentions and, where appropriate, make connections between visual and other elements.
2	Adequately	Demonstrates minimal analytical and critical understanding.	Minimal evidence of reviewing and refining ideas as work develops.	Demonstrates minimal ability to reflect critically on work and progress.	
1	Just				
0	No work				