

Higher Photography

The Higher Photography course is a blend of creative, practical and academic experiences which offer pupils a great deal of autonomy to plan and carry out their own assignments and projects.

The course itself combines learning about photographic theory and principles with the development and application of practical & creative photographic skills. In addition, the production of planning, research, analytical and evaluative work to engage with the creative process will also be taught.

Course Entry

There is no requirement for pupils to have prior photographic experience, or for them to own their own equipment, although both would be advantageous. It would be beneficial for pupils to have some prior experience of study within an Art based course although, again, this is not mandatory.

Course Overview

The Higher Photography qualification aims to develop a range of skills, knowledge and understanding in the following areas

- Applied knowledge and understanding of the properties of light and image formation.
- Applied manual use of camera controls and a range of photographic techniques and processes.
- Investigation and analysis of the major historical, scientific, social and cultural factors influencing photographers and their work.
- The ability to produce investigative research for photography and to plan, shoot, print and present photographs.
- Exploration and experimentation with a range of photographic media, manipulation techniques and processes.
- Producing creative and technically proficient photographs.
- Effective management and storage of photographic images.
- Critical analysis and evaluation of their own work and the photographic work of others.

Course Structure & Assessment

The course requires that pupils pass two internally assessed units which are graded on a pass or fail basis. Following this, pupils must complete the externally marked course assessment known as the **Higher Project** which includes three sections outlined below. The higher project is the only component of the course which contributes to the grading of their final course award. As a result pupils must be aware that there are significant demands in terms of both the volume and quality of the work contained in the project.

Unit 1: Photography: Image Making

This unit focuses on analysing the historical, scientific, social and cultural factors that influence photographers' work. Pupils are expected to analyse the impact of these factors and express justified personal opinions on the work of selected photographers.

In addition pupils will be instructed in the theory and skills of practical photography, review and evaluation of their own work and file management. This knowledge will be used to plan and produce a set of technically proficient images as evidence.

Unit 2: Photography: Contextual Imagery

Pupils will explore the selection and use of photographic processes and techniques for creative effect, producing a range of contextually appropriate images in a variety of styles and genres. They will then be required to analyse their own use of creative techniques, application of technical skills and evaluate their own imagery, identifying strength and opportunities for improvement in their work.

Course Assessment: Higher Project

Section 1: Research & Investigation – 25 marks

Section 2: Development & Production – 60 marks

Section 3: Evaluation – 15 marks

Total - 100 marks

The theme and aims of the project are decided by the pupil and submitted at the outset within a project proposal which also details how they plan to approach the task. This allows pupils to take creative control of the project and pursue a theme which they are genuinely interested in.

Pupils will go on to carry out a significant body of research and development work focussing on the work of existing photographers, techniques and equipment. This will culminate in carrying out approximately twelve planned photo shoots.

The images produced during these photo shoots will be analysed and evaluated. This will lead to twelve final images being selected in response to the theme set out in the project proposal.

All evidence from this process will be documented in a presentation book and the pupil will be responsible for organising and presenting the final twelve images.

Finally a written evaluation of this process will be completed in “open book” exam conditions.

Beyond School

Photography is a wonderful hobby to pursue simply as a creative outlet or a means of documenting the people, places and events encountered throughout life. However there are also more pragmatic reasons to pursue this course.

This qualification would be specifically relevant for any pupil considering a career within the photographic industry itself where they may specialise in a variety of areas, some examples are given below.

- Portrait Photography
- Fashion Photography
- Wedding & Events Photography
- Photojournalism
- Fine Art Photography
- Architectural & Interior Photography
- Scientific Photography
- Astrophotography
- Archival Photography
- Sports Photography
- Advertising & Commercial Photography
- Product Photography

It will also be directly beneficial to pupils who are considering further study or careers in the following areas (amongst others).

- Advertising
- Archaeology
- Art
- Animation
- Events
- Fashion
- Film & Media
- Forensics
- Graphic Design
- Journalism
- Marketing
- Product Design
- Science
- Travel & Tourism

In a more general sense, given the increasing importance of the internet to businesses, photography is often viewed as a valuable skill within small to medium sized companies which have a strong online presence requiring photographs to be produced regularly for websites, blogs and social media.