

A Level Photography FAQs



Do I need my own camera?

Ideally yes, although the school does have a number of cameras you can borrow if not. If you are thinking of investing in a new camera then please talk to us first for guidance.

Do I need to have Photography GCSE before I start the course?

It would be an advantage but not necessary, some technical knowledge is assumed but clearly we would expect you to be keen and already making your own photographs.

What sort of IT and software equipment will I need at home?

You will sometimes need to edit your own pictures at home so having access to a laptop or PC is important. In terms of editing software we use Photoshop Elements in school, but are increasingly using Pixlr E for home learning – this is free and web-based so can be accessed on any home computer.

What do lessons look like in Photography?

This is primarily a digital course and lessons will be based in computer rooms most of the time. Most work is presented using Power Point or Slides. Some lessons will focus on practical technique. Making photographs is most likely to happen at home during independent learning time. Photographs are then uploaded onto your school Google Drive account and stored there.

Can I use my mobile phone for making pictures?

This is not something we encourage. However, there is no doubt having your phone as a back-up in case your camera isn't working is really helpful if needed.

How is the course structured?

The course is one of OCR's suite of Art qualifications. It follows the same structure as the Art and Design A Level i.e. 60% coursework / 40% exam. The coursework begins in September of Y12 and is completed by January in Y13. The exam is unlike normal exams – you are given the questions approximately 10 weeks before the exam, you choose which one to work on with teacher support, and then you spend the time before the exam preparing and making your photos – this prep work counts for 75% of your exam mark. The exam itself takes three school days, during which you will edit and present your working process and final pieces.

Useful websites and resources

- OCR Exam Board - <https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-and-a-level/art-and-design-h200-h600-from-2015/>
- The Box - <https://www.theboxplymouth.com/>
- The National Gallery - <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/>
- The National Portrait Gallery – www.npg.org.uk
- Tate Modern - <https://www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-modern>
- Tate Britain - <https://www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-britain>
- The V & A - <https://www.vam.ac.uk/>

Photography Department Contact

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