

Photography Overview – Year 10

The Year 10 Photography course introduces students to the fundamental skills, techniques and creative processes involved in producing high-quality photographic work. Throughout the year, learners explore how photographers communicate ideas through composition, lighting, camera control and visual styling, while developing confidence in both digital editing and physical image manipulation.

	Autumn 1 - Spring 1	Spring 2 - Autumn 2
Topic(s)	Still life: Introduction	Still life: Physical manipulations/ Digital manipulations
Topic Objectives	<p>In this project, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn how photographers use Still Life to communicate ideas through objects, lighting and composition. Study a range of influential photographers and visual artists to understand different styles and approaches. Develop confident camera skills, including how to control lighting, experiment with creative angles and use aperture, shutter speed and ISO effectively. Learn how to compose strong images using principles such as colour theory, contrast, pattern and visual balance. Build digital editing skills by using tools such as layering, filters and colour adjustments to enhance their photographs. Produce bold, high-quality images that show creativity, technical accuracy and growing confidence with industry-standard equipment and software. 	<p>In this project, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn about David Hockney’s “joiner” photography and how artists tell stories using multiple images. Create their own photo collages using simple physical techniques such as cutting, layering and rearranging photographs. Develop flat-lay photography skills by arranging objects neatly and shooting from above to create clean, balanced images. Improve their technical camera skills, including how to control aperture, shutter speed, ISO and focus to take clearer photographs. Explore lighting techniques to reduce shadows and produce brighter, more professional-looking images. Combine both physical and digital methods to produce creative, high-quality final outcomes. Build confidence in planning, experimenting and presenting their photographic ideas.
Acquired Knowledge/Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camera control: Using aperture, shutter speed, ISO, and focus to capture sharp, well-exposed images. Creative camera angles: Experimenting with low-angle, high-angle, close-up, and dynamic viewpoints. Lighting techniques: Using natural and artificial light to create contrast, mood, and clarity. Colour theory in photography: Understanding saturation, contrast, complementary colours, and Pop Art palettes. Composition skills: Rule of thirds, symmetry, pattern, balance, and visual impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical manipulation techniques: Cutting, layering, rearranging, and assembling printed photographs to create new visual outcomes. Understanding Hockney’s joiners: Exploring perspective shifts, fragmentation, and multi-image storytelling. Flat-lay photography: Arranging objects with purpose, shooting from above, and creating clean, balanced compositions. Lighting control for flat-lays: Avoiding shadows, using diffused light, and achieving even illumination. Camera handling: Using aperture, shutter speed, ISO, and white balance to capture crisp, well-lit images. Perspective and viewpoint: Exploring how different angles change meaning and visual impact.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital editing: Layering, filters, colour adjustments, cut-outs, and Pop Art-style effects using industry-relevant software. • Visual research: Studying influential photographers and Pop Art artists to inform their own style. • Creative direction: Planning and shooting images with a clear artistic intention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craftsmanship: Precision cutting, neat assembly, and thoughtful layout when constructing physical collages. • Digital refinement: Editing manipulated images, adjusting colour and contrast, and presenting final outcomes professionally.
Assessments	Students receive ongoing feedback to help them improve their camera skills, lighting, composition and digital editing throughout the Still Life project. Their final assessment is based on a refined photographic outcome and supporting evidence showing how they researched artists, developed ideas and improved their images through controlled shooting and digital editing.	Students receive ongoing feedback through progress-checkers, modelling and peer critique. Their final assessment is based on a completed photographic outcome and a production log demonstrating research, development, experimentation and evaluation.
Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSHE Development: Students build confidence, independence, and resilience by experimenting with creative risk-taking and reflecting on their personal visual style. • Careers Education: The unit introduces students to careers in photography, digital media, advertising, and graphic communication through industry-relevant software and workflows. • Fundamental British Values: Students show respect and tolerance by exploring diverse Still life influences and understanding how different cultural perspectives shape visual communication. • SMSC Development: Learners develop spiritual and cultural awareness by analysing artistic movements and expressing personal ideas through colour, composition, and digital creativity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSHE Development: Students strengthen problem-solving, patience, and self-management as they plan, construct, and refine physically manipulated photographic outcomes. • Careers Education: The unit links to careers in creative industries such as fine art photography, set design, visual merchandising, and editorial photography through hands-on image construction and flat-lay techniques. • Fundamental British Values: Students demonstrate individual liberty and mutual respect by developing unique interpretations of Hockney's work while valuing the creative approaches of others. • SMSC Development: Learners explore cultural and artistic heritage through Hockney's joiners and develop social and moral understanding by collaborating, critiquing, and presenting their photographic ideas.

Photography Overview – Year 11



In Year 11, students work with increased independence to refine their photographic skills and complete their GCSE Portfolio. They deepen research, strengthen shooting and editing techniques, and develop a clear personal style. Learners then respond to the Externally Set Assignment, producing a coherent body of preparatory work leading to a final 10-hour exam outcome.

	Autumn 1 - Spring 1	Spring 2 - Autumn 2
Topic(s)	Component 1: Portfolio Completion (Autumn 1 – Autumn 2)	Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (Spring 1 – Spring 2 / Exam Period)

<p>Topic Objectives</p>	<p>Through a series of increasingly independent tasks, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepen earlier ideas through focused photographer research and visual analysis (AO1). • Strengthen experimentation with studio/location shooting and advanced editing workflows (AO2). • Improve recording through purposeful contact sheets, test shots and annotated refinements (AO3). • Present refined photographic outcomes that clearly communicate personal intentions (AO4). • Organise and sequence evidence; improve annotation clarity and intent. • Prepare the Portfolio for internal assessment/moderation in line with specification guidance. 	<p>Through a structured but increasingly independent preparatory period, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the ESA theme via photographer studies, contextual sources and personal lines of inquiry (AO1). • Produce observational photographs (studio/location/experimental) that evidence purposeful recording (AO3). • Experiment with techniques and editing approaches to refine direction (AO2). • Generate thumbnails and refined edits exploring composition, message and visual style. • Build a coherent preparatory body of work showing progression across AO1–AO4. • Plan a personal, meaningful final outcome for the supervised 10-hour exam and produce it to a high standard (AO4).
<p>Acquired Knowledge/Skills</p>	<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present a complete, coherent portfolio that meets AO1–AO4. • Apply advanced camera/lighting control with consistency. • Analyse photographers’ work and make explicit, relevant connections. • Refine images using selective adjustments, local edits, layer-based workflows and print preparation. • Evidence sustained idea development from research → shoot → edit → outcome. • Communicate intention and evaluate work using specialist photographic vocabulary. 	<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond independently to an externally set theme with a clear personal intent. • Critically evaluate influences and justify technical/creative choices. • Record observations with technical accuracy and visual clarity. • Use iterative editing to develop and finalise ideas. • Curate prep work that logically leads to the final response. • Produce and evaluate a high-quality final photographic piece within exam conditions.
<p>Assessments</p>	<p>Students receive ongoing feedback to help them refine their photographer research, idea development and editing workflows. Throughout the portfolio process, learners are supported in</p>	<p>Students receive ongoing feedback during the preparatory period through progress-checkers, modelling and peer critique. They are guided in strengthening research, refining test shoots, improving editing accuracy and developing coherent ideas in response to the ESA theme.</p>

	<p>improving their annotation clarity, sequencing of evidence and ability to communicate a clear artistic intention.</p> <p>Their final assessment is based on their completed Portfolio (Component 1), judged holistically across AO1–AO4, and includes refined outcomes supported by research, experimentation, recording and evaluation.</p>	<p>Their final assessment is based on their preparatory portfolio and the final piece produced during the supervised 10-hour exam, demonstrating clear development across AO1–AO4.</p>
<p>Citizenship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSHE Development: Students develop independence, resilience and self-management as they plan, refine and present sustained project work across their portfolio. • Careers Education: The unit links to careers in photography, digital media, curation, advertising and wider creative industries through exam-board-aligned workflows and portfolio preparation. • Fundamental British Values: Students demonstrate individual liberty through personalised creative choices and show mutual respect and tolerance by valuing diverse photographic influences and visual cultures. • SMSC Development: Learners deepen cultural understanding through photographer studies, develop social and moral awareness by giving and receiving critique, and strengthen personal expression through their final outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSHE Development: Students strengthen organisational skills, confidence and emotional regulation as they prepare independently for the 10-hour exam and manage a sustained creative process. • Careers Education: The ESA mirrors industry practice, requiring learners to respond to a brief, develop ideas, edit professionally and produce a final outcome under timed conditions. • Fundamental British Values: Students demonstrate individual liberty by selecting their own direction within the ESA theme and show respect and tolerance by exploring a range of cultural and artistic sources. • SMSC Development: Learners explore moral and cultural themes through the ESA, develop social skills through collaborative critique, and express personal meaning through their final exam outcome.

