



PHOTOGRAPHY

A Level Subject Information



Examining Board – AQA

Photography is a practical course with options to allow students to develop their preferred slant on this wide subject. Often this relates to other A-level subjects, university courses or career intentions. As the course develops, there are options for the following kinds of photography:

- documentary
- art (aesthetic), including landscape, portraiture and still-life
- photography for graphic design
- fashion photography
- industrial and architectural
- scientific
- photo-journalism / publishing
- experimental

The course has three learning areas, combined in coursework projects:-

- developing ideas and taking photographs
- working on photographs digitally, using Photoshop
- using critical / contextual / historical sources to develop ideas

Candidates are introduced to a variety of experiences exploring a range of photographic, media, techniques and processes. They should explore relevant images, artefacts and resources relating to Photography. Their responses to these examples must be shown through practical and critical activities which demonstrate the candidates' understanding of different styles, genres and traditions.

A visit to London, Paris or New York is made in the upper sixth form as part of this area of study. Students use journals or sketchbooks to underpin their work. There is no specific requirement for candidates to demonstrate drawing skills in this endorsement unless they wish to. The course at NHGS makes use of digital photography: there is no darkroom work involved on this A level. All processing and editing of photographs is carried out using Photoshop software.

Printing is done using laser and large-format inkjet printers. The subject is an expensive one to run and candidates are asked to contribute £25 towards the cost of materials in each year. This is also the case in other centres offering Photography.

A-Level Photography Results at NHGS

Over the last 6 years, results in Photography have averaged:

A*- B 78%

A*- E 100%

Is Photography for you?

There are no specific GCSE subject requirements in order to take photography. The following should be noted, though:

- Photography is 100% coursework: if you don't respond well to the long-term demands of coursework and deadlines you will not cope.
- There is no *requirement* that you can draw (although you can, if it suits you). There **is** a requirement that you can communicate visually to a high standard, using other methods.
- At NHGS the course is run with an emphasis on critical studies: as such, there is more reading and writing than you might expect.

Course Structure

Advanced level Photography is structured around the assessment units: two units are completed in the second year of the course.

Year 12

Year 12 is focused on the skills needed to deal with the coursework units in Y13. These comprise:-

- Photographers' visual techniques for taking photographs
- Photographers' camera techniques
- Post-production techniques using Photoshop software

A-level Assessment Units

Personal Investigation : 60% of the total A Level marks

Candidates are required to develop a practical personal investigation based on an idea, issue, concept or theme, supported by a written element of 2000 words, leading to a finished piece or pieces.

Externally-Set Assignment : 40 % of the total A Level marks

Candidates select one of eight starting points. The externally-set assignment period will last from February until the end of the course. Candidates should produce preparatory work and a finished piece or pieces. Towards the end of this period candidates complete 15 hours of unaided, supervised time.

Beyond A-Level

What do Photography students at NHGS go on to do?

Here are the numbers for the past 5 years.

Art & Design Foundation Course 6	Marketing with Advertising 1
Bakery 1	Mathematics 1
Business Studies 1	Media Arts 2
Business/Real Estate 4	Music 1
Creative Writing 1	Nursing 2
Electronic Engineering 1	Photography 9
English / Literature 1	Policing 1
Events Management 1	Primary Education 3
Fashion Marketing 1	Product Design 1
Fashion Photography 1	Psychology 6
Film & Media Production 5	Royal College of Music (Voice) 1
French/German 3	Science 1
Health & Human Sciences 1	Sociology 3
Interior/ Graphic Design 2	Software Design 1
ITV Post Production (Job) 1	Spanish 1
Journalism 1	Textile/Fashion Design 4
Marine Biology (Oceanography) 1	Website Design 1

All of the Universities above, accepted Photography as a valid A-Level for entry onto these courses.

For further information, please contact Mr D Allen