# Scheme of work

Introduction

This scheme of work offers a route through the A-level Art and Design (7206) Photography course.

Timings have been suggested but are approximate. The order is by no means prescriptive and there are many alternative ways in which the content could be organised.

We have highlighted opportunities to engage in practical skills building workshops, which may be relevant within the first year of study. These may not be relevant for submission as part of Component 1 but may be valuable learning experiences for students.

The scheme of work gives you an example of how to organise and deliver a two- year course in Photography that exploits this specification's curriculum development opportunities. It is designed to help you plan your course so that it meets the requirements of the specification.

At A-level it is important that the student is central to the development of schemes of work within your own school. Much of the approach should be student centric and based upon the students own ideas and intentions. Therefore, it may be that one size does not fit all even within the same school and there are opportunities to tailor the structures below to the skill set and processes available to you within your personal setting.

The scheme of work includes suggestions for activities and project tasks that provide students with opportunities to develop Photography knowledge, understanding and skills.

Here are some tips and ideas to help you plan your course:

* We have used a week-by-week structure, you may choose a different approach.
* You are free to develop a course that meets the needs and preferred approach of your staff, school and students
* The timings we suggest for activities and project tasks are approximate and may vary depending on the processes used and other factors such as internal exams.
* Students need to be aware of and understand the assessment objectives in order to evidence full coverage of the four assessment objectives
* Students should explore ideas, processes and skills in-depth. There is a focus on depth rather than breadth of exploration at A-level
* The Photography title requires students to work in one or more area(s) of photographic study
* Students must provide evidence of written material supporting the practical studies within Component 1. Please see page 10 of the specification for further information.

Assumed coverage

This scheme is relevant for a two-year A-level, with an assumed coverage of around four-five hours of lessons per week. A considerable amount of work would be need to be completed outside lessons, partly depending on lesson time available.

**General timings**

**Project one Year 12**

6 to 8 weeks (approx.) are used for introducing basic skills, techniques and processes. Introducing the specification requirements including presentation of work and making connections with the work of others

**Project two Year 12**

14 to 16 weeks (approx.) are used to enable students to develop a personal project, which covers the requirements of Component 1 on a smaller scale. Full coverage of the A0s and the conclusion with a resolved outcome, referencing the work of others is considered. Although ideas may springboard from this project or the weeks of mini skills building workshops; this work does not form part of Component 1.

**Project three Year 12 - Year 13 Component 1**

16 to 24 weeks (approx.)

* Component 1 is a sustained and focused investigation in response to an issue, theme or idea identified and chosen by the student.
* It is a practical body of work, which is supported by written material of between 1000 and 3000 words. (Annotations and notes do not form part of the word count.)
* Work submitted for assessment must evidence coverage of all four assessment objectives, which are marked holistically.
* The personal investigation will be assessed as a whole. Evidence of meeting the requirements of all the assessment objectives must be evident in the written and practical work.
* There should be clear development of ideas and techniques based upon the students’ intentions.
* Component 1 is not a portfolio and should not contain additional material or projects that are not related to the students personal investigation.
* Presentation of work can be physical or digital sketchbooks, boards, models or a combination of all these approaches.

**Project four Year 13 Component 2**

10 to12 weeks (approx.)

* Component 2, The externally set assignment (ESA) provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to develop and explore ideas relevant to an externally set starting point.
* Students are required to realise their intentions in an outcome or series of outcomes during the period of supervised time.
* Only work produced during the period of preparatory study and within the 15 hours of supervised time may be submitted for assessment.
* Work produced during the preparatory period and the 15 hours of supervised time, will be marked holistically.

**Contents**

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Version 2.0

September 2023

**Specification reference**

Project 1: Skills and Concepts – Technical

**Specification content**

* This scheme of work includes exploration of techniques and processes, critical/contextual material and project work.
* Students explore camera skills, image production and the selection of relevant contextual references. Projects may be approached digitally, traditionally or using a combination of both, depending on the resources available.

**Focus**

* Students are introduced to the basics of photography including:
* the use of cameras, film, lenses, filters and lighting
* darkroom techniques, developing, printing, presentation, layout and mounting
* safe working practices
* aspects of digital media including appropriate use of the internet
* researching and evaluating relevant critical/contextual material.

**Learning outcomes**

Students are introduced to aspects of the course including:

* how to structure and organise sketchbooks, boards etc
* different ways of researching and investigating ideas through initial studies and annotation
* how to handle a range of materials and processes suitable for developing ideas
* effective ways of exploring critical/ contextual materials
* different ways of analysing and responding to the work of others
* how to select and present their work.

**Suggested timing**

Up to 12 weeks

**Possible teaching and learning activities**

* Through a series of exercises and short tasks students learn about:
* viewpoints, composition, depth of field, aperture, shutter speed and capturing movement
* the importance of colour, tone, shape, texture, pattern and form.
* Students begin to compile a journal which includes technical and critical/contextual materials.
* They develop their own ideas for work, based on their observations.
* In their investigation students include research and evaluations of critical/contextual examples related to their chosen theme.

**Possible Themes**

**Pattern**

* Through project work, using a variety of techniques and processes, students develop their own ideas based on the theme pattern.
* This may include:
* Using macro photography to look at textures and patterns found in the every day
* shapes and patterns in the landscape
* patterns of behaviour
* close-ups of plants and/or natural forms
* repeat patterns in the manufactured environment
* repeat patterns created digitally
* layering using non camera techniques in the darkroom
* Ideas are developed in sketchbooks and/or on developmental sheets.
* Students should be encouraged to look at the work of relevant photographers who have been inspired by pattern.

**Perspective**

* Students explore perspective using a range of traditional and digital techniques.
* This may include:
* Using a basic rectangular frame to explore one point perspective
* Using digital techniques to create two and three point perspective landscapes
* Explore distorting perspective through mirrors and glass
* Considering the scale of items to distort or hide a particular viewpoint
* Thinking about where an image is taken from
* Considering perspective as a conceptual theme
* Thinking about cultural perspectives.
* Ideas are developed in sketchbooks and/or on developmental sheets.
* Students should be encouraged to look at the work of relevant photographers which link with the theme.

**Structure**

**Weeks 1 to 2: Observational Development.**

* Students are introduced to the camera and work through basic techniques such as shutter speed, aperture, viewpoint, depth of field and composition. Working digitally students build a glossary of techniques and demonstrate each technique through a photograph or series of photographs. Students are encouraged to link the images thematically.
* Sketchbook focus: introduce the A0s and refer to within teaching.

**Week 3: Darkroom**

* Introduction to the darkroom. Students create a series of photograms using found objects and acetate negatives using images taken in the previous two weeks. Focus on safe working practices in the darkroom. Pinhole photography and the camera obscura could also be considered.
* If there is no option to access a darkroom, focus on other forms of practical photography such as cyanotype or using photographic paper to create a sunprint and scanning the image before it fades.
* Sketchbook focus: students begin to consider how they will present their images within their sketchbook/journal.

**Week 4: Lighting**

* Students can explore natural and studio lighting using either digital or film cameras. Consider how different lighting affects the subject of the image. Focus on composition and placement of the person or object/s.
* Sketchbook focus: show exemplar sketchbooks from previous years or examples from the centre services section of the AQA website standardisation materials.

**Weeks 5 to 6: Film**

* Introduce the idea of taking a series of images on a theme, create either a digital or traditional contact sheet.
* Processing a film or creating a digital contact sheet. Introduction to the concept of review and refinement through the selection of the strongest images.
* Sketchbook focus: how to evidence review and refinement visually and through annotation.

**Week 7: Analysing and responding to the work of others**

* Analyse an image or series of images in class. Provide lists of key words and phrases or question sheets to focus analysis.
* Sketchbook focus: provide a variety of examples of ways to present artist research.

**Week 8: Experimentation**

* Introduction of student choice. Students are encouraged to explore materials and processes best suited to their personal intentions to produce an outcome bringing together the most successful elements of their initial experimentations. They could repeat a photographic technique already introduced or be shown a new one.
* Potential mini workshop. Introduction of a new technique or process based on the skill set of the teacher. This could be painting with light, basic photoshop techniques manipulating some of the images taken the previous week etc.

**Week 9: Development**

* Review and refinement. Through group and peer review students identify strengths within their practical work to take forward into an outcome. They may plan an outcome or evaluate previous work.
* Sketchbook focus: students produce a clear plan of their outcome, thinking about lighting, studio set up if appropriate, models etc.

**Weeks 10 to 12: Outcome**

* Students produce and present an outcome based on previous study, making links with the work of photographer/artist studies and beginning to develop own visual language.

**Specification reference**

Project 2: Development of Skills and Concepts

**Specification content**

* In this scheme of work students produce work exploring the skills they covered within the initial project and developing personal ideas and interests that could be springboards for ideas to be used within Component 1.
* Students produce a single project which reflects a sustained and in-depth period of study. Examples of work selected from the introductory course are included which exemplify the development of particular skills.

**Focus**

Individual project

**Learning outcomes**

* Students are given a number of options including:
* developing work based on their response to a personal issue, interest or concern
* developing ideas explored in previous study
* developing work in response to a theme provided by teaching staff.
* Students produce an initial project which reflects a sustained and in-depth period of study:
* organising work to present their findings effectively
* different research techniques and analysis of relevant contextual material
* technical aspects of photography including camera controls and image production
* safe working practices
* aspects of digital media
* appropriate use of the internet.
* Through a number of themed projects students learn about:
* viewpoint and composition
* shutter speed and aperture
* the effects of varying light conditions on recording images.

**Suggested timing (lessons)**

12–16 weeks

**Possible teaching and learning activities**

* Although the majority to skills workshops and processes are teacher led, students have the opportunity to fully engage with a theme chosen either by the teacher or in discussion with the teacher and make a personal response when developing, refining and recording ideas.
* Students need to understand how important it is that they address the four assessment objectives as they develop a project from a starting point through to a conclusion.
* Students may engage in workshops, gallery visits, practical skills building satellite projects and experiment with media, processes and conceptual ideas.
* Students use their observations, findings and analysis to develop and produce a personal response that builds upon the ideas or techniques experienced linking their ideas to the work of other artists/designers through thorough artist research and ideas building tasks.
* Use of peer, teacher and group assessment and critique to form the foundation of a culture of review and refinement to fully cover the assessment objectives.
* Students need to make clear and explicit connections between sources and their practical work, ensuring that they use appropriate textile vocabulary, which can be written or visual.

**Possible Themes**

**Dramatic Lighting**

* After individual research, students begin an investigation into how Lighting can be used to change the mood, tone or atmosphere.
* Various ideas could be considered including
* Film noir
* Chiaroscuro
* Theatre
* Drawing, painting with light
* City Scenes.
* Students consider how the time of day/quality of light effects as scene.
* Students explore their ideas in a personal way informed by the work of others.
* Students produce outcomes that could be either single images, series of images or films.

**Identity**

* After individual research, students begin an investigation into how Identity can be represented photographically.
* Various themes could be considered including
* self-identity
* gender
* family
* personal issues
* cultural identity.
* Students consider image quality in depth and further techniques are explored.
* Students explore their ideas in a personal way informed by the work of others.
* Students undertake research into the relationship between people and different environments, considering the impact that particular situations, lighting and colour can have in creating atmosphere and mood.

**Structure**

**Weeks 1 to 2: Initial Ideas building**

* Students brainstorm ideas based on initial interests, this could include group critiques, peer review, reflecting on prior learning. Students could create a visual or written mind-map or collect relevant images and photographer/artist references to begin to explore ideas.
* Presentation – could be on boards, digital files or a sketchbook. Reference to the A0s is important. Focus on reflection and previous work. Both the students own work and examples of past students or examples from the AQA website may be used.

**Weeks 3 to 4: Initial Experimentation**

* Students may be introduced to a range of new photographic processes as a springboard for new ideas, these may then be combined with techniques introduced during the initial skills building scheme of work.
* Students may gather relevant secondary imagery to use as inspiration and may choose to produce some initial shoots based upon these.
* Students should be encouraged to make connections between their shoots, ensuring that each new shoot builds upon elements of the previous to evidence review and refinement. This could be through technical or conceptual links.

**Week 5: Artist Research**

* Students begin to research and select photographers or other influences on their practical outcomes; magazines, fashion photography, street photography, architecture, music and other influences may also be relevant to the student’s intentions. Students are not required to assimilate the style of another photographer/artist but to develop their own personal style which references the work of others.
* Students may wish to emulate different aspects of the work of others to explore a variety of ways of working or they may wish to begin to combine ideas and styles of a number of photographers or artists at this stage. Connections with photographers may be explored through written annotations or visual links.

**Weeks 6 to 8: Development of skills and techniques.**

* Students are encouraged to develop a particular skill or process in-depth and may begin to combine techniques and processes to fully explore their potential. Focus on review and reflection, link back to the A0s and utilise peer review and group critique where appropriate.
* At this stage it may be relevant to introduce some skills based mini workshops to develop particular skills and processes. Further development of darkroom, Photoshop or other digital software skills could be particularly relevant.

**Week 9: Artist Research**

Students may wish to broaden the pool of photographers/artists they are researching at this stage as their work develops. Combining elements of their previous research and adding new aspects to add richness to their explorations. Continued development of skills and processes ensuring that students are focused on their personal intentions and beginning to consider ways to resolve their ideas into a final outcome.

**Weeks 10 to 12: Development and reflection**

* Students will reflect on past work and identify areas of strength. Using these as a basis for further exploration and in-depth studies. These could include planning location shoots, setting up the studio for a specific outcome, identifying suitable models for a particular shoot, exploring creative developing techniques in the darkroom such as using developer creatively or manipulating images either digitally or through burning negatives etc.
* Links to the work of others may be particularly relevant at this stage as students may emulate or combine ideas from looking at the work of a particular photographer.

**Weeks 13 to 16: Final outcome**

* Students reflect on the work already produced identifying areas of strength and creating a detailed plan for the development of a final outcome or series of outcomes. They should reflect on previous feedback and their own personal intentions. Students then create an outcome bringing together the most successful elements of their developmental work, ensuring clear contextual connections.
* Students need to ensure that however they have chosen to present their work makes senses with a clear start, middle and end. Presentation is important and reflects the creative nature of the specification.

**Specification reference**

Project 3: Component 1

**Focus**

Individual project

**Learning outcomes**

* Students are given a number of options including:
* developing work based on their response to a personal issue, interest or concern
* developing ideas explored in previous study
* Students work with increasing independence as they work on an extended project supported by written material.
* Although most students generate a theme independently some students may require some support to get started initially, starting points could be generated through discussions in groups or with the teacher, or could be drawn from previous Externally set assignments. These can be found on the centre services section of the AQA website.
* Students independently research potential critical sources and are required to produce written material of between 1000 to 3000 words. The written material must support the practical studies.

**Suggested timing**

16 to 24 weeks (approx.)

**Possible teaching and learning activities**

All the teaching and learning activities discussed in the previous two projects are relevant to the delivery of Component 1. In addition:

* Component 1 is a project based on a theme chosen by the students themselves and students are encouraged to work with an increased level of independence and autonomy, taking control of their own learning journey and reviewing and refining with increased confidence as the project develops. The teacher supports, facilitates and guides. The objective is to build upon students, skills, experiences and achievements during the initial projects in year 12.
* Support could take the form of weekly one to one tutorials, group critiques and peer assessment. Teachers may use previous students’ work or examples from the AQA teacher standardization bank of exemplar materials to support this. Checklists, post-it notes and frequent reference to the A0s may help students to stay on track.
* Gallery visits, and discussions around appropriate contextual sources may be useful alongside library inductions and art journals. Possible photographer/designer visits could inspire and add interest to the program of study.
* Students may utilise a number of photographic techniques relevant to their intentions or they may choose to use a fewer number of processes and spend time delving deeply to unpick and develop a particular skill or process.
* Students should:
* Include relevant contextual sources that are clearly utilised and responded to within their practical work.
* Include annotation or visual evidence of review and refinement as the project progresses. This could include contact sheets, evidence of how one shoot links to the next, images of outcomes within a particular setting, placing posters/designs etc. into the “real world”.
* Include and respond to relevant stimuli such as a particular lighting level, an inspirational zine, a particular fashion designer, a relevant artist.
* Explore ideas, concepts and processes to refine and develop their ideas. Activities could include working with different combinations of materials, experimenting with the application of techniques, exploring alternative viewpoints, using creative techniques to transfer images onto a range of papers, fabrics etc. Introducing stitch or drawn elements. Presenting work in books or zines.
* Ensure their work is well organised, clear and easy to follow.
* Include clear evidence of intentions to the final outcome which is informed by an aspect of contemporary or past photographic practice.
* Students need to evidence their engagement with a purposeful and meaningful project and this needs to be reflected in how they select and present their work. This could be done in sketchbooks, boards, digitally or using a combination of approaches; whichever best suits their intentions.
* Presentation is important and many students find presenting work in a variety of formats provides more opportunities; for example, producing work on a larger scale than would be possible if solely working in a sketchbook.
* At the end of Component 1 students must resolve their journey with the production of a final outcome or series of outcomes. They must also ensure that they have produced the supporting written element of 1000-3000 words and include a bibliography or list of sources used.

**Structure**

Students may find it helpful to follow a similar structure to the weeks set out for project 2. However, with Component 1 it is important to remember that the project is led by the student’s intentions. Therefore, one size may not fit all. Depending on the needs, processes being used and concepts of the students, flexibility of approach is important. It may therefore be more helpful to build in regular periods or reflection and review into the weeks to ensure students are on task. Checklists that evidence coverage of the assessment objectives may also be useful.

**Specification reference**

Externally set assignment

**Learning outcomes**

* There is a separate externally set assignment paper for each title.
* Each paper includes eight different starting points and includes suggestions of possible contextual sources, which may be used by students to generate ideas.
* The ESA paper must be given to students in their entirety and must not be edited, changed or abridged in any way.
* Students must select and respond to one starting point from their chosen title.
* Examples of starting points from previous years can be found for reference within the Centre Services section of the AQA website.

**Suggested timing**

* Year 13 February to May
* 10 to 12 weeks (approx.)

**Key information**

* Externally set assignment papers are available to students and teachers from 01 February. A preparatory period is followed by 15 hours of supervised study in which students are required to realise their intentions through the production of an outcome or series of outcomes.
* Once the first session of supervised time begins, students must not add to or amend their preparatory work.
* Preparatory work must be stored by the school under secure conditions, between sessions and after the completion of the supervised time.
* Preparatory work must be available for the students to refer to throughout the 15 hours of supervised time.
* All four assessment objectives must be evidenced within the component.
* All work completed during the 15 hours of supervised time must be identified.
* Schools may choose how to break down the 15 hours of supervised time as best suits their students and timetabling needs; however, the first three hours must be consecutive.

**Possible teaching and learning activities**

* Make sure that students are aware of the following:
	+ The photographers referred to within the questions are simply suggestions, students can use their own sources as well/instead of those suggested in their starting point
	+ Students need to evidence their creative journey throughout their preparatory work, which should show the development, refinement and recording of ideas
	+ Preparatory work can be presented in any suitable format
	+ There is no restriction on the scale of work, media or materials used.

**Structure**

Most teachers/students find using a week-by-week planner such as the examples shown above in the earlier schemes of work helpful to allow them to time their preparatory studies time effectively.