KS5 | Curriculum
Photography

THE WALDERSLADE & GREENACRE SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Qualification type / Exam Board

A-Level / AQA

What will I learn about?

In Photography, you will explore the creative potential of photographic techniques and media, including:

- **Digital and Film Photography**: Understanding the technical aspects of using cameras, lenses, exposure, and lighting.
- **Image Manipulation**: Learning how to edit and enhance images using software like Adobe Photoshop or traditional darkroom techniques.
- **Composition and Framing**: Developing skills in composing well-balanced and visually engaging images.
- **Studio Photography**: Experimenting with controlled lighting and setups for portrait, product, or still-life photography.
- **Critical Analysis**: Studying the work of established photographers and exploring the relationship between photography and visual culture.

The course encourages experimentation with different techniques and processes, allowing you to develop your own style. You will work on personal projects, creating a portfolio that reflects your artistic vision and technical skills.

How is my work assessed?

- **Component 1: Personal Investigation (60%)**
  You will develop a body of work on a chosen theme, including:
  - **Practical work**: A portfolio of photography that explores and responds to your chosen subject matter.
  - **Written study**: A contextual essay (1000–3000 words) analysing your own work and relevant photographers or movements.
- **Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (40%)**
  You will choose one of the eight starting points set by AQA. After a preparatory period, you will create a final outcome during a 15-hour supervised assessment.

What should I consider before starting this subject?

Before starting A-Level Photography, consider:

- **Technical interest**: A passion for exploring photographic techniques and equipment.
- **Creativity and experimentation**: The ability to push boundaries, experiment with composition, and think creatively.
- **Self-motivation**: Much of the work is self-directed, requiring strong organisational and time-management skills.

Why is this course useful and what might it lead to?

A-Level Photography provides valuable skills for:

- **Further study**: Leading to degrees in Photography, Graphic Design, Film, Media, Visual Communication, and more.
- **Careers**: Opportunities in areas such as commercial photography, fashion, photojournalism, film production, and freelance work.

Entry requirements

A minimum of grade 5, or equivalent, in a Visual Arts subject; Fine Art, Graphics, Photography or Textiles.

Where can I find more information?

Speak to your Photography teacher or visit the AQA Photography A-Level specification for detailed information about the course structure and assessment.