The Hart School – Faculty of Design
Yr 10 GCSE Photography (AQA 8206) Curriculum Overview

Curriculum intent: GCSE Art and Design: Photography (AQA 8206) develops pupils into independent photographers who investigate, experiment, record and present a personal response. Component 1, the Portfolio, is 60% (96 marks) and is built from Unit 1 (camera, editing and photographer skills) and Unit 2 (Growth, Decay and Texture). Component 2, the Externally Set Assignment, is 40% (96 marks): AQA releases the paper from 2 January, and pupils have a preparatory period followed by 10 hours of supervised time. Both components are marked in school and moderated by AQA.

Four assessment objectives, each worth 25%, shape every lesson. AO1: develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources. AO2: refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes. AO3: record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses. AO4: present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language. Year 10 builds camera and editing skills through short technique studies, each led by a photographer, then launches Unit 2; Year 11 completes Unit 2 with developments and a final piece, then the externally set assignment.

Every piece is assessed individually against AO1–AO4 with a technical and editing checklist, WWW/EBI and green-pen DIRT, with Pupil Premium work prioritised. Each PPE is followed by QLA by AO and cohort, with PP and SEND work reviewed first. Access arrangements are confirmed before supervised time, and JCQ regulations apply to all assessed work.

Yr 10 end points: By the end of Year 10 pupils can control exposure, focus and composition; photograph still life, texture, macro, reflections and black and white subjects; change photographs by hand and in Photoshop; analyse photographers; and build Unit 2 (Growth, Decay and Texture) from a mood board and statement of intent to three photographer studies, judged against AQA AO1–AO4.

Yr 10 key dates (LTP): Year 10 assessment week w/c 4.1.27 and 11.1.27, with the summative Unit 1 portfolio check w/c 11.1.27 · Year 10 reports home 2.2.27 · summative Unit 2 portfolio check w/c 24.5.27 · AP2 window w/c 7.6.27 to 28.6.27, AP2 recorded w/c 21.6.27 · summer-task brief set w/c 28.6.27 · portfolio housekeeping w/c 5.7.27 and 12.7.27 · reports home 14.7.27

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Core Course Topic: Lesson (L) numbers and the week each is taught. Bold = summative assessment.	**Unit 1: Still Life, Texture, Macro, Black and White** L1 · Still life (Dana J. Quigley / Sarah Graham): set-up, angles, edit · w/c 7.9.26 L2 · Still life: crop, brighten, saturation; analyse · w/c 14.9.26 L3 · Texture (Lucy Shires): in-focus texture images · w/c 21.9.26 L4 · Texture: refine and present a final image · w/c 28.9.26 L5 · Macro/close-up (Heather Angel): hue and saturation · w/c 5.10.26 L6 · Macro: present and analyse the best image · w/c 12.10.26 L7 · Black and white (Karl Blossfeldt): natural forms, tone, contrast · w/c 19.10.26	**Unit 1: Ice, Drawing into Photos, Photoshop** L8 · Black and white: edit, present, analyse a final image · w/c 2.11.26 L9 · Flowers in Ice (Mo Devlin): set up frozen forms; angles · w/c 9.11.26 L10 · Flowers in Ice: creative edits; present, analyse · w/c 16.11.26 L11 · Drawing in photography: stitch, doodle-bomb, layering · w/c 23.11.26 L12 · Drawing in photography: manipulate printed images · w/c 30.11.26 L13 · Photoshop experiments: filters; label and analyse · w/c 7.12.26 L14 · Photoshop: refine best edits; analyse the favourite · w/c 14.12.26	**Unit 1 Review and Unit 2 Launch: Growth, Decay and Texture** L15 · Reflections (Sebastian Magnani): capture, edit, analyse · w/c 4.1.27 **L16 · Reflections: refine; analyse the favourite · w/c 11.1.27** L17 · Unit 1 review: complete and annotate technique pages · w/c 18.1.27 L18 · Unit 2 intro: title page, brief, mood board (A3 slides) · w/c 25.1.27 L19 · Unit 2: brainstorm; identify possible photographers · w/c 1.2.27 L20 · Unit 2: own Growth/Decay/Texture photos (15–20 per theme) · w/c 8.2.27	**Unit 2: Themed Shoots and Statement of Intent** L21 · Capture themed images; consider composition · w/c 22.2.27 L22 · Edit themed images: hue, saturation, contrast, brightness, crop · w/c 1.3.27 L23 · Refine edits; peer WWW/EBI · w/c 8.3.27 L24 · Critically analyse own work; choose best theme(s) · w/c 15.3.27 L25 · Statement of intent; research 3 photographers · w/c 22.3.27	**Unit 2: Photographers 1 to 3** L26 · Photographer 1: research; images in their style · w/c 13.4.27 L27 · Photographer 1: edit; favourite analysed start to finish · w/c 20.4.27 L28 · Present Photographer 1 work; refine · w/c 27.4.27 L29 · Photographer 2: research; images in their style · w/c 3.5.27 L30 · Photographer 2: editing and analysis · w/c 10.5.27 L31 · Photographer 3: research; initial images · w/c 17.5.27 **L32 · Photographer 3: editing and analysis · w/c 24.5.27**	**Unit 2: Consolidation, AP2 and Housekeeping** L33 · Portfolio completeness vs tracker; finish work · w/c 7.6.27 L34 · Coursework consolidation (AP2 window) · w/c 14.6.27 **L35 · Editing and analysis refinement (AP2) · w/c 21.6.27** L36 · Present final Unit 2 pages (AP2 window) · w/c 28.6.27 L37 · Portfolio check against AQA AOs · w/c 5.7.27 L38 · Contingency; portfolio housekeeping into Year 11 · w/c 12.7.27
Additional support links: Topic-specific pages from trusted sources (links checked September 2026)	**AQA** GCSE Art and Design (Photography) 8206 **Canon** How to control exposure: aperture, shutter speed and ISO **Lucy Shires** Photography (texture, shape, shadow) **Heather Angel** British nature and macro photographer	**Mo Devlin** Frozen flowers explained **Flowers Gallery** Julie Cockburn: embroidered photographs **Adobe** Photoshop adjustment layers (non-destructive editing) **Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza** Karl Blossfeldt: plant photographs	**Sebastian Magnani** Reflections series **Tate** Vanitas (art term): still life, decay and time **AQA** GCSE Art and Design (Photography) 8206	**Canon** Composition techniques: rule of thirds, leading lines **Adobe** Lightroom basic edits: light and colour	**The Photographers' Gallery** Learn **AQA** GCSE Art and Design (Photography) 8206	**AQA** GCSE Art and Design (Photography) 8206
Knowledge: The specific knowledge your child will learn in detail	Exposure is controlled by the exposure triangle: aperture (how wide the lens opens, which also sets depth of field), shutter speed (how long light reaches the sensor) and ISO (how sensitive the sensor is). A still life is an arranged group of objects, lit and photographed from several angles. Texture images need sharp focus and light from the side to show the surface. Macro (close-up) photography magnifies small subjects, so the depth of field is very shallow and focus must be precise. Black and white removes colour, so tone, contrast and form carry the image; Karl Blossfeldt photographed plant forms in sharp detail against plain backgrounds. Every study ends with an analysis of the best image: settings, composition, edits and effect.	Mo Devlin photographs flowers frozen in ice: freezing in layers holds the flowers in place, and light from behind shows the bubbles and cracks. Photographs can be changed by hand after printing: stitching, drawing (doodle-bombing), collage and layering add texture and a 3D effect, as in Julie Cockburn's embroidered photographs. In Photoshop, filters and adjustment layers change an image without destroying the original. Labelling each edit (tool, setting and effect) evidences AO2 experimentation. Analysing a favourite image explains the photographer's influence, the camera settings, the edits and the effect on the viewer.	Reflections use mirrors, water, glass or shiny surfaces to double or distort a scene; Sebastian Magnani places a round mirror in a landscape so the reflection shows a different view. The Unit 1 review checks every technique page is complete and annotated against the AOs. Unit 2, Growth, Decay and Texture, is a themed project that forms part of the Component 1 portfolio (60%). A mood board and brainstorm explore the theme in images and words and help choose photographers. Growth and decay connect to natural forms and to the vanitas tradition in art, where decaying objects remind us that time passes.	Composition guides the eye: the rule of thirds places the subject off-centre, leading lines draw the eye in, framing and negative space focus attention, and viewpoint changes the meaning. Editing (brightness, contrast, hue, saturation and crop) should serve the theme rather than decorate. Critical analysis judges your own images against your intentions and picks the strongest theme. A statement of intent explains what you want to explore, which photographers will guide you and how the work will develop.	Each photographer study follows the same journey: research (who, when, why and how, with your own opinion), a shoot in the photographer's style using your own subjects, editing, and a start-to-finish analysis of your favourite image (settings, composition, edits and effect). Presenting the work links each image to the photographer and the theme, so a moderator can see AO1 (sources), AO2 (experimenting and refining) and AO3 (recording) clearly.	A portfolio tracker lists every page and AO requirement, so gaps are found and closed before Year 11. Consolidation means completing unfinished shoots, edits and annotation rather than starting new work. Housekeeping organises digital files and slides so the portfolio is ready for development work and moderation.
Key vocabulary: Subject terms your child should know, spell and use	*exposure, aperture, f-stop, shutter speed, ISO, depth of field, focus, still life, texture, macro, black and white, tone, contrast, crop, saturation, hue*	*backlighting, frozen form, manipulation, stitch, doodle-bomb, layering, print, filter, adjustment layer, non-destructive editing, annotation*	*reflection, distortion, symmetry, portfolio, annotation, theme, brief, mood board, brainstorm, growth, decay, vanitas*	*composition, rule of thirds, leading lines, framing, viewpoint, negative space, contrast, critical analysis, statement of intent*	*photographer study, context, in the style of, shoot, contact sheet, selection, analysis, presentation*	*tracker, consolidation, AP2, housekeeping, portfolio, file management*
Camera & Editing Skills: Techniques and AO skills your child will develop	Setting up and lighting a still life; shooting from different angles; precise focusing; macro close-ups; basic edits (crop, brightness, saturation, hue); converting to black and white and controlling contrast; analysing a photographer	Setting up frozen subjects; creative editing; stitching, drawing and layering on printed photos; Photoshop filters and adjustment layers; labelling edits; written image analysis	Photographing reflections; refining edits; annotating technique pages; making a title page and mood board; shooting 15 to 20 images for each theme	Composing themed shoots; purposeful editing; peer critique; selecting a theme; writing a statement of intent; researching photographers	Researching photographers; shooting in a photographer's style; selecting from a contact sheet; editing; start-to-finish image analysis; presenting pages	Auditing a portfolio against a tracker; completing and refining pages; organising digital files; setting targets
How it is assessed: Formative checks and summative assessments	Every piece: assessed individually against AQA AO1–AO4 using the technical and editing checklist; WWW/EBI handout; green-pen DIRT on completion; PP prioritised.	Every piece: assessed individually against AQA AO1–AO4 using the technical and editing checklist; WWW/EBI handout; green-pen DIRT on completion; PP prioritised.	Year 10 assessment week (w/c 4.1.27 and 11.1.27). L16: summative Unit 1 portfolio check against AQA AO1–AO4, QLA, DIRT. Every piece: assessed individually against AQA AO1–AO4 using the technical and editing checklist; WWW/EBI handout; green-pen DIRT on completion; PP prioritised. Reports home 2.2.27.	Every piece: assessed individually against AQA AO1–AO4 using the technical and editing checklist; WWW/EBI handout; green-pen DIRT on completion; PP prioritised.	Every piece: assessed individually against AQA AO1–AO4 using the technical and editing checklist; WWW/EBI handout; green-pen DIRT on completion; PP prioritised. L32: summative Unit 2 portfolio check against the tracker and AQA AOs, with QLA.	AP2 window w/c 7.6.27 to 28.6.27: L35 summative Unit 2 progress against AQA AOs, recorded as AP2. Summer-task brief set (L36). Portfolio housekeeping check (L37). Otherwise assessed individually against AO1–AO4 with the checklist. Reports home 14.7.27.
Builds on / leads to: How this topic connects to prior and future learning	Builds on: KS3 Art photography (Y7 portrait photos, Y8 DSLR portraits, Y9 insect photography and digital manipulation). Leads to: creative techniques (Autumn 2); Unit 2 themed shoots.	Builds on: Autumn 1 camera and editing skills; Y8 doodle-bomb photography. Leads to: reflections (Spring 1); Unit 2 developments that combine styles.	Builds on: Unit 1 techniques. Leads to: themed shoots and editing (Spring 2); Year 11 Unit 2 developments.	Builds on: the Unit 2 launch. Leads to: photographer studies (Summer 1); Year 11 developments.	Builds on: the statement of intent. Leads to: Year 11 Photographers 2 and 3 and Developments 1 to 3.	Builds on: Unit 2. Leads to: Year 11 Photographers 2 and 3 and Developments 1 to 3.

Year 10 Assessment Week w/c 4.1.27 and 11.1.27

AP2 Assessment w/c 7.6.27 to 28.6.27