

Photography

Curriculum Principles

By the end of their all-through education, a student of photography at Dixons Kings will:

To understand in detail the four assessment objectives in Photography; students will be able to list and explain each one in detail, understand what needs to be done to achieve the higher marks for each assessment and will be able to confidently evidence these in their portfolios. I have broken down what students will be able to do and understand into the four assessment objectives:

1. Assessment Objective 1: Students will be able to analyse an Artist or Photographers work confidently using photographic key words and formal elements appropriately. Students will be able to understand how and why they link their own work to their chosen studies artists or photographer's work. Students will also be able to confidently design mood boards and mind maps that are visually pleasing to the eye and introduce their topics and themes.
2. Assessment Objective 2: Students will have worked in a variety of different medias, techniques and creative processes throughout the three-year course. In years 9 and 10 students will experiment with a range of different medias and techniques; the scheme of work is designed to allow students set periods of time to focus on one media at a time, this gives them the opportunity to improve their skillset and develop a greater understanding of the media/process/technique. In year 11 students have a more confident understanding of their chosen materials and media and will be able to create their own work independently and skilfully. Students will understand what the success criteria's are for different types of work, for example for close up photograph, students need to think carefully about lighting and their images should not have any areas of shadow as this effects the quality of the photograph.
3. Assessment Objective 3: Students will be able to follow the guided written evaluation framework independently to write successful evaluations of their own work. Students will understand that they need to include photographic key words in their evaluations, along with written commentary on their process, describe their areas of success and identify and explain any improvements that need making. Students will understand that 'recording ideas' can be evidenced in many forms in their portfolios, students will ensure that all photographs are displayed neatly and, in an order, and work is clearly titled and labelled in their PowerPoints. Images and annotations of how they created their work are evidenced; this can be in a photoshop screenshot grab or images of themselves creating their work.
4. Assessment Objective 4: Students will be able to create a 'final resolution' successfully and skilfully for their chosen projects, students will understand that this piece of work needs to be clearly linked to their chosen photographers or artist studied. These links can be media choices, colours, messages portrayed or composition elements.

In order to truly appreciate the subject and create deep schema, topics within Photography have been intelligently sequenced with the following rationale:

- The Photography curriculum is built upon the foundation skills taught from the beginning of the course in year 9; without the basic knowledge of subject specific vocabulary, rules of photography and Photoshop tools, students will not be able to access any of the higher-level concepts or technical skills in the subject in years 10 and 11.
- It is imperative that students first understand photographic specific terminology and forms before any other techniques and skills are introduced. The building blocks of skill and knowledge can then begin to be built by applying this knowledge to artist analysis and own work. As students have started a new subject that is not taught in KS3, knowledge of subject specific vocabulary is taught at the start of cycle 1 in Year 9, this allows students to gain understanding of the basic skills and apply them confidently throughout the course. The understanding of photographic terminology and forms is taught at the start of cycle 1 as students need to be able to confidently analyse artists and photographers work, this is a skill which is spaced out throughout the 3 cycles and into year 10 and 11 to gain marks for Assessment Objective one. This is initially taught through teacher led examples using visual imagery, Q&A and low stakes quizzing Students move on to understanding how photographic forms are applied in their own photographs, this is taught by focusing on an individual element per photoshoot, for example students will look at a photographer who focuses on perspective and then take their own photographs in a similar style. This allows students to experiment with how different elements can affect the outcome of a photograph. Photoshop is also introduced in cycle 1, short basic skills and tools are introduced first and skills develop throughout the cycle through introduction and application of more complex tools. This is spaced throughout cycle 2 and 3 where students apply their knowledge and understanding of photoshop tools in the style of their artists and photographers



- By the end of cycle 1 in Year 9 students have the necessary foundation blocks to then start experimenting with different techniques and processes in cycle 2 and 3. At the start of cycle 2 students begin their coursework unit which forms 60% of their overall grade, students are first introduced to minimal photography as this is an easier technique for students to access and provides a comfortable start to their coursework unit. Students then move on to more challenging techniques on photoshop, students learn how to select and change areas of colour and how to add lines as a drawing mechanism. Once students have gained more confidence and skill in photoshop we then move onto more technical aspects of Photoshop and students create a t-shirt or bag design on Photoshop.
- In year 10 students are refining their skills even further by the continuation of research, experimentation, and evaluation. Students will create final pieces; these pieces of work are the conclusion to their project, they can take any form the students wish, for example it can be one independent photoshop edit, a series of photographs or construct a 3D model. These final pieces should be influenced by a collection of artist and photographers, in year to this focuses more on the exploration of different medias and processes outside of Photoshop, such as, manipulation of media, cyanotypes and photo transfers techniques. Students will also start a new project that is influenced by Texture, this allows students to create work on a more personal level and encourages students to think more deeply about their work.
- By the end of cycle 1 year 11 students will have created a final piece based around the theme of 'Texture', work will evidence a personal connection to the students and will exhibited in a form of their choice. In cycle 2 year 11 students then start their unit 2 which is their externally set assignment where students choose a starting point and independently research a create work based on their chosen starting point.

The Photography curriculum at Kings has been influenced by:

- AQA, the examination board we follow at Dixons Kings allows teachers the flexibility to create and teach their own schemes of work, these can change and adapt as the course develops or new artists are found. Photography teachers carry their own strengths in the field, and this allows us to teach our designed projects more confidently. AQA ask for one sustained project for Component 1, (students' portfolios) there is no set time limit for how long this component should run in schools. At Dixons Kings I designed the course so that students have two sustained units of work to submit, including a short mini project which runs at the beginning of the GCSE course. One of the sustained units of Graphic based, students are on photoshop and design their own t-shirts and the second unit focuses on experimental and abstract photography, this provides the students with a larger range of work and media to submit.
- I start the course by introducing Year 9 to a Skills Based project, this project is influenced around the three camera settings that affect a photographs exposure. Students look at three artists that are known for using a specific style of work, through these students learn to analyse, evaluate, and experiment on Photoshop. This small project is run for one cycle, this allows plenty of opportunity for students to gain understanding of the assessment objectives and develop skills in photoshop and camera settings. At the start of cycle 2 in Year 9 students begin their first sustained unit of work based on the starting point of 'Architecture', I choose this topic as photographic opportunities are more easily accessible and can be taught in school. As I mentioned earlier this unit of work is very graphic heavy, students are often creating work on Photoshop and designing images for T-shirts or Posters, this develops the student's technical skillset and gives them the opportunity to work on Photoshop more independently in Year 11 if they wish. Students create work based on photographers such as Alexey Bolgolepov, Mauren Brodbeck, Nicholas Goodden, Nick Frank and look at artists such as Roy Lichtenstein for colour inspiration for one of their final pieces. This unit runs into year 10 and finishes at the end of cycle 1 where students conclude their project by creating a final piece. At the start of cycle 1 in Year 10 students then begin their second unit of work, this unit focuses more heavily on media exploration and experimentation outside of Photoshop, students will plan and conduct more photoshoots and explore the realms of camera less photography. This provides students with a different set of skills and experiences and offers more opportunity for students to gain marks for Assessment Objective 2, 'Working in a range of different medias, techniques and processes'. Throughout this unit students will study and look at artists and photographers such as Albert Renger-Patzsch, Vilde Rolfson, Bjoern Ewers and Anna Atkins. This second unit of work finishes towards the end of cycle 1 in Year 11, students are then allowed a short period of time, around 3-4 weeks to dedicate their time to DIRT and improving any area of their portfolios before the Christmas holidays.

Our Photography curriculum ensures that social disadvantage is addressed through:

- Most of our students have had few opportunities in their home lives to access many forms of photography as an art form, as Photography is a new subject at GCSE many are also new to holding a camera. Some students now have smart phones but are not familiar with the different types of photography or careers opportunities out there. Art taught in primary schools has a broad curriculum so students from different primary schools are taught different skills, techniques and depending on their school, access to different medias and materials. As primary schools in more disadvantaged and opportunistic areas will naturally and often prioritise the core subjects at the expense of the arts and creative arts subjects are not taught daily or in some cases weekly in schools' curriculums. Photography in the past has been an expensive hobby, now less so with the advancement of smart phones and filtering apps but not every student has access to one of these smart phones and they tend to only require these once they get to secondary school as they get older. We have around 20 cameras available to use, students do not need to use their phones and high-tech touch screen laptops which provide the students the experience and knowledge of the technical aspects of the course, these skills they can use later in life, at college or in any workplace that uses a computer.
- All Photography tasks in lessons are differentiated to provide challenges to students at all levels, including those who have no previous experience of Photography, this tends to be most students in year 9 who have opted to take Photography as a GCSE subject. In year 9 tasks are broken down and students are taught the basic skills in camera settings and photoshop; this provides all students with a foundation of skills to build upon in the next three years.
- We often find that behaviour in Photography can be different in other subjects such as core, as students have opted to choose the subject and the arts in general can provide a safe environment for students to express themselves through their work.
- Homework tasks that are set on the computer, students are given the option to attend homework club or they can come in one night after school and use the Photography laptops to complete their homework. Students are also given a whole week to complete their homework and know that these options are available to them.

We fully believe Photography can contribute to the personal development of students at Dixons Kings through:

- Promoting an appreciation and love for the arts in a core heavy curriculum
- Allows students to express their feelings, emotions, and views in a safe and healthy environment
- Students are asked to work collaboratively, often in pairs to support each other in decision making and creative choices
- Developing confidence in their technical abilities; students work with laptops and camera on a weekly basis
- Provides them with the skill set of looking at the world from a different perspective, students can capture ordinary things in different and unusual ways

Our belief is that homework is used for deliberate practice of what has been taught in lessons. We also use retrieval practice and spaced revision to support all students with committing knowledge to long term memory.

- Many homework tasks that are set focus on meeting assessment objective three which is to 'record ideas', as many students do not have access to a laptop or photoshop at home. It is not always appropriate to set practical homework's and the standard is often not as high as when creating work in class as students tend to rush these homework tasks. Students therefore are asked to upload photographs in a certain order, to evaluate their own photographs using a differentiated writing framework in their knowledge navigators, both these tasks meet the success criteria for assessment objective three and contribute towards marks in their coursework.
- As they become more independent learners, in Year 11 the frequency of homework increases, students are expected to take their own photographs at home using their smart phones and come up with their own ideas. This also helps the students practice their time management for their independently led project for component two.

Opportunities to build an understanding of social, moral and ethical issues are developed alongside links to the wider world, including careers:

- Photography is a quick and now accessible media thanks to smart phones that has helped to preserve and capture our culture and history. There are many areas of history that we might not know or understand without photographs. Students are exposed to many different photographers and different types of photography throughout their three-year course, students not only examine the formal elements and processes of a photo but also its origins and meanings. Art is, historically, a method of expression by presentation; a way of understanding the world and translating it. It has allowed the artist to convey ideas, concepts, and events in ways that they perhaps could not describe. This can be the same for students, photography can be a means of expression that perhaps they could not communicate through speech and writing due to aspects such as poor literacy skills or oracy skills.
- Participating in the arts helps students to develop students independent learning and creative thinking, these skills are transferable and can be used across a broad spectrum of subjects and post-16.
- Students will develop their understanding of art in other cultures around the world and will study Photography in relation to worldwide topics and important social issues. At KS4 students will have the opportunity to select their own theme relating to issues they feel passionately about these can be around the themes of mental and emotional health, relationships and many more.

Remote working in our subject supports students to access the full curriculum in the following ways:

The current Year 9 cohort have had many disruptions to their learning during Cycle 1, many periods of self-isolation meant that many students missed vital Photoshop lessons which introduced them to the basic tools of Photoshop. With this in mind, I have designed the Year 9 Home learning tasks around Photoshop, students are asked to complete online quizzes that focus on the photoshop tools, this makes students recall their knowledge of Photoshop on a weekly basis and fixed this knowledge into their long-term memory. I have also discovered a free editing software called 'Photopea', students are also asked to create their own photoshop edits using the tools that are mentioned in the linked quiz. This provides the students an opportunity to practice applying the tools and will improve their technical and creative skillset.

My current Year 10 classes already have a good understanding and knowledge of how Photoshop is used and have already evidenced some high-quality edits in Year 9 and 10. Home learning tasks with Year 10 are also based on Photopea but need to create different outcomes to Year 9, students have been asked to create edits in the style of Pop art which is the style of work Year 10 were focussing on before lockdown began. This work is separate from the scheme of work and will be an addition to their coursework.

Year 11 students will be continuing with their 'Texture' themed projects at home, this unit of work students started in November 2020 and is their second sustained unit of work. Students will be asked to take textural photographs of things they can find around the home; brick of the exterior of their house, the rugs and any household items such as a bin liner or folder fabric. Students will also be asked to evaluate these and demonstrate refinement by choosing their most and least successful. Students will then be using Photopea to combine two pieces of work together to create creative and visually interesting edits; students would be experimenting with camera less photography if in school but due to the use of chemicals and expensive materials I cannot let students collect them and use these at home. I have also offered work packs for students they do not have access to a laptop at home, these contained print outs of their images, paper, tape, textured rollers and brushes. Following video instructions this will enable students to create hand edits at home and students can still gains marks for assessment objective two and three.

Further Information can be found in:

- Long term plans
- Schemes of work
- Knowledge Navigators
- PowerPoints