

Photography EXAM PROJECT PLANNER 2026

Your exam is worth 40% of your final GCSE grade.

You will be assessed on four Objectives each equally weighted at 25%.

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.

You can access 75% of your final grade before the timed test.

GCSE ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE

PLANNING OVERVIEW	Learning			Assessment Objective	Deadlines
	5 th Jan	Week 1	Exam question & Initial research		
	12 th Jan	Week 2	Research pages		
	19 th Jan	Week 3	Research pages - AO1 completed, and grades submitted		AO1 Friday 23rd Jan (Twilight)
	26 th Jan	Week 4	Experiment & Record 1 – contact sheet - Ideas and development		
	2 nd Feb	Week 5	Experiment & Record 2 – contact sheet - Ideas and development		
	9 th Feb	Week 6	Experiment & Record 3 – contact sheet - Ideas and development		AO3 Friday 13th Feb (Twilight)
	16 th Feb	Week 7	Experimentation – development of ideas		
	23 rd Feb	Half Term	Homework – Take further photographs in response to your exam question		OneDrive upload March 1 st
	2 nd March	Week 8	Experimentation – development of ideas		
	9 th March	Week 9	Photography Pre-public Final Piece design boards		AO2 Tuesday 10th March Proposal documents
	16 th March	Week 10	Exam prep Presentation boards completed by the end of this week	ALL	All evidence presented on display boards Friday 20th March (Twilight)
	GCSE EXAMS 23RD MARCH – 2ND APRIL. THIS IS THE LAST 25% OF YOUR GCSE GRADE				

Note: All deadlines are the last lesson of the week stated.

You have 9 Homework tasks to complete over the 10 weeks, these homework's are to support evidence needed for each assessment objective and add to your final GCSE grade. The department is open break, lunch and afterschool. Friday OPEN STUDIO is an excellent time to develop work independently with specialist materials on hand.

WK 1 Mon 5th Jan	<p>Visual Mood Board. Use Pinterest and internet searches to gather imagery and research on your chosen theme. You can also add text with key descriptive words. Layout and presentation is important for this task.</p> <p>INVESTIGATION TASK – 1st Photographer investigation Page.</p> <p>Your own opinion and analysis are important because it demonstrates why you have made your choices. Comment on – why have you chosen the photographer? How is the style going to influence you in your own work? You must identify a movement that this photographer is part of, make notes on this movement. How does this work connect with your mood board? How can you use the knowledge learnt from this photographer to develop your ideas?</p>	AO1
Homework 1	<p>First set of photographs taken. Think carefully about the shoot, minimum 35 photographs uploaded to OneDrive and printed as a contact sheet. This must be in response to your first research page. Complete 1st investigation page (photographer 1).</p>	AO3 AO1
WK 2 Mon 12th Jan	<p>INVESTIGATION TASK – 2nd Photographer investigation Page.</p> <p>Same requirements as in the 1st task. This should give you a wider opportunity to gather ideas. Look back at your digital mood board to inspire you. Remember to keep looking at your Pinterest boards for ideas. This photographer could be somebody you have come across in your first investigation. THERE SHOULD BE SOME CONNECTION OR COMPARISONS BETWEEN YOUR FIRST AND SECOND PHOTOGRAPHER. This needs to be handed in by the end of the week.</p>	AO1
Homework 2	<p>Second set of photographs taken. Think carefully about the shoot, minimum 35 photographs uploaded to OneDrive and printed as a contact sheet. This must be in response to your second research page. Complete 2nd investigation page (photographer 2).</p>	AO3 AO1
WK 3 Mon 19th Jan	<p>INVESTIGATION TASK – 3rd Photographer investigation Page.</p> <p>This needs to link directly with how you are envisioning your project developing.</p> <p>This needs to be handed in by the end of the week.</p>	TWILIGHT 23rd Jan
Homework 3	<p>Third set of photographs taken. Think carefully about the shoot, minimum 35 photographs uploaded to OneDrive and printed as a contact sheet. Quality is vital here – this is your last shoot to provide photographs to be used in your exam. All photographs/shoots need to be uploaded to One Drive for next weeks lessons. Complete 3rd investigation page (photographer 3).</p>	AO3 AO1
AO1 DEADLINE	Friday 23rd Jan. The investigation work will be submitted as your final AO1 grade. 25% of overall grade.	

WK 4 Mon 26th Jan	Experiment and Record 1 TASK – Annotation of contact sheets from first HW task. Contact sheets need to be thoroughly annotated. Your ideas and planning may have opened further opportunities for photograph shoots. TASK – Refining ideas Begin to develop ideas in response to your theme and photographers. You will be starting independent experimentation. You must record all experimentation – digital and non-digital. You can begin presenting work on boards this week. Record development of ideas.	Photoshop demonstrations will be tailored to meet the needs of all pupils. In discussions with your teacher in week 4,5 & 6 you will have highlighted tools and processes that your teacher will demonstrate in class during this time.
Homework 4	Catch-up opportunity – independent work. You may need an additional photoshoot based on your contact sheet.	
WK 5 Mon 2nd Feb	Experiment and Record 2 TASK – Annotation of contact sheets from second HW task. Contact sheets need to be thoroughly annotated. Your ideas and planning may have opened further opportunities for photograph shoots. TASK – Refining ideas Refine and develop ideas further. Record any experimentation – strengths and constraints of the materials. How does this allow you to develop your ideas further? Explain how this is furthering your project development.	Darkroom (one of your experiment and record sessions should be darkroom based). This is an opportunity to record and explore your ideas further. The darkroom will be open for photographs, chemigrams and cyanotypes along with any other experimental processes found during research and ideas.
Homework 5	Catch-up opportunity – independent work. You may need an additional photoshoot based on your contact sheet.	
WK 6 Mon 9th Feb	Experiment and Record 3 TASK – Annotation of contact sheets from third HW task. Contact sheets need to be thoroughly annotated. Your ideas and planning may have opened further opportunities for photograph shoots. TASK – Refining ideas At this point you should have a clear idea of how your project is developing. Ensure you have explored all experimental options including darkroom use.	TWILIGHT 13 th Feb

Homework 6	Catch-up opportunity – independent work.	
AO3 DEADLINE	Friday 13th Feb. All photographs (contact sheets) to be submitted to form your final AO3 grade. 25% of overall grade.	
WK 7 Mon 16 th Feb	Development of ideas TASK – Produce 3 idea designs for final outcomes. Think about linking in all your research and most successful experimentations. Annotate these design ideas to explain your thinking.	AO2
HOMEWORK 7	Feb ½ term week Catch-up opportunities – Your teacher will have discussed your AO3 Photograph submission with you. Your ideas will have developed, and you may need an additional photoshoot to realise your ideas. These must be uploaded to one-drive by the 1st March	School Pre-Publics. You are likely to miss some of your Photography lessons. You still need to manage your time and liaise with your teacher on your individual progress.
WK 8 Mon 2 nd March	Development of ideas TASK – Final design idea Identify your best design, discuss this with your class teacher and finalise your best idea. Discuss materials, time scales and any additional preparation work that is needed. You will be making a small sample of this ideas as part of your Pre-Public exam to you need to be clear on what to do.	AO2
Homework 8	Independent work	
WK 9 Mon 9th March Pre-Public Exams	PRE-PUBLICS You will have a 3-hour session to practice and test out your final idea. This needs to be in a mock up form. This is designed to practice your skills and identify areas that need to be developed and refined before the 10-hour timed test. Record and document all of your experimentation for your display boards.	AO3
WK 9 Mon 9th March	TASK – Proposal document/planning and organisation of materials Develop and refine your chosen idea further by completing an exam proposal document It is important to complete the proposal document by the end of this week. This will help you to plan your 10-hour exam and also provides a materials list for the department technician to source, cut and prepare.	AO2
Homework 9	Independent work	

WK 10 Mon 16th March	TASK – Presentation Boards <p>Throughout the 10 weeks you will have been presenting your work on display boards. This is your last week to ensure that all your work is presented creatively and orderly showing evidence that addresses all the assessment objectives.</p> <p>TASK – Prep Any specialist preparation should be done at this point such as priming boards, laser cutting shapes etc. Make the full 10 hours count...what can you do before the exam to make best use of the time in the exam.</p>	TWILIGHT 20 March ALL
Homework 10	Work must be 100% complete before the exam starts. ANY OUTSTANDING WORK NEEDS TO BE COMPLETE Fill in the gaps from boards/ What is missing. Have you addressed all assessment objectives evenly?	ALL
PRESENTATION DEADLINE	All work must be completed, printed, mounted and presented. For Friday 20th March.	ALL DEADLINE
Week 11 Mon 23rd March	EXAM SESSIONS	AO4

Easter Holidays 3rd April to 17th April (2 weeks)

The remainder of the course will be allocated to refining your coursework (Component 1)

Your Component 1 is worth 60% of your final GCSE grade.

You will be assessed on four objectives each equally weighted at 25%.

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.

Mon 20th April	Week 1
Mon 27th April	Week 2 ALL COURSEWORK SUBMITTED FRIDAY 1st MAY. FINAL EXAM BOARD DEADLINE

Marking and Standardisation (5th- 14st May)
Raw marks available 15th May lunchtime in AD4

