

# 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**

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

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.

<b>WK 1</b> <b>Mon 5<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	<b>Visual Mood Board.</b> 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.	<b>A01</b>
	<b>INVESTIGATION TASK – 1<sup>st</sup> Photographer investigation Page.</b> 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?	
<b>Homework 1</b>	<b>First set of photographs</b> 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 1 <sup>st</sup> investigation page (photographer 1).	<b>A03</b>  <b>A01</b>
<b>WK 2</b> <b>Mon 12<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	<b>INVESTIGATION TASK – 2<sup>nd</sup> Photographer investigation Page.</b> Same requirements as in the 1 <sup>st</sup> 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 COMPARRISONS BETWEEN YOUR FIRST AND SECOND PHOTOGRAPHER. This needs to be handed in by the end of the week.	<b>A01</b>
<b>Homework 2</b>	<b>Second set of photographs</b> 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 2 <sup>ND</sup> investigation page (photographer 2).	<b>A03</b>  <b>A01</b>
<b>WK 3</b> <b>Mon 19<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	<b>INVESTIGATION TASK – 3<sup>rd</sup> Photographer investigation Page.</b> This needs to link directly with how you are envisioning you project developing. This needs to be handed in by the end of the week.	<div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">         TWILIGHT          23<sup>rd</sup> Jan       </div> <b>A01</b>
<b>Homework 3</b>	<b>Third set of photographs</b> 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 3 <sup>rd</sup> investigation page (photographer 3).	<b>A03</b>  <b>A01</b>
<b>AO1 DEADLINE</b>	<b>Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan. The investigation work will be submitted as your final AO1 grade. 25% of overall grade.</b>	

<b>WK 4</b> <b>Mon 26<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	<b>Experiment and Record 1</b> <b>TASK – Annotation of contact sheets from first HW task.</b> Contact sheets need to be thoroughly annotated. Your ideas and planning may have opened further opportunities for photograph shoots. <b>TASK – Refining ideas</b> 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.	<b>Photoshop</b> 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. <b>Darkroom</b> (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 photograms, chemigrams and cyanotypes along with any other experimental processes found during research and ideas.
<b>Homework 4</b>	Catch-up opportunity – independent work. You may need an additional photoshoot based on your contact sheet.	
<b>WK 5</b> <b>Mon 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb</b>	<b>Experiment and Record 2</b> <b>TASK – Annotation of contact sheets from second HW task.</b> Contact sheets need to be thoroughly annotated. Your ideas and planning may have opened further opportunities for photograph shoots. <b>TASK – Refining ideas</b> 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.	
<b>Homework 5</b>	Catch-up opportunity – independent work. You may need an additional photoshoot based on your contact sheet.	
<b>WK 6</b> <b>Mon 9<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>	<b>Experiment and Record 3</b> <b>TASK – Annotation of contact sheets from third HW task.</b> Contact sheets need to be thoroughly annotated. Your ideas and planning may have opened further opportunities for photograph shoots. <b>TASK – Refining ideas</b> 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<sup>th</sup> Feb

Homework 6	Catch-up opportunity – independent work.		
AO3 DEADLINE	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> Feb. All photographs (contact sheets) to be submitted to form your final AO3 grade. 25% of overall grade.		
WK 7 Mon 16 <sup>th</sup> 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.	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.	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 1 <sup>st</sup> March		
WK 8 Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup> 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 9 <sup>th</sup> 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 9 <sup>th</sup> 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		

<b>WK 10</b> <b>Mon 16<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>TASK – Presentation Boards</b> 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. <b>TASK – Prep</b> 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.	TWILIGHT 20 March	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Homework 10</b>	Work must be 100% complete before the exam starts. <b>ANY OUTSTANDING WORK NEEDS TO BE COMPLETE</b> Fill in the gaps from boards/ What is missing. Have you addressed all assessment objectives evenly?		<b>ALL</b>
<b>PRESENTATION DEADLINE</b>	<b>All work must be completed, printed, mounted and presented. For Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March.</b>		<b>ALL DEADLINE</b>
<b>Week 11</b> <b>Mon 23<sup>rd</sup> March</b>	<b>EXAM SESSIONS</b>		<b>AO4</b>

### 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.

<b>Mon 20<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>Week 1</b>
<b>Mon 27<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>Week 2</b>
<b>ALL COURSEWORK SUBMITTED FRIDAY 1<sup>st</sup> MAY. FINAL EXAM BOARD DEADLINE</b>	

Marking and Standardisation (5<sup>th</sup>- 14<sup>th</sup> May)

Raw marks available 15<sup>th</sup> May lunchtime in AD4

