# PHOTOGRAPHY

**EXAM BOARD :AQA**

**Why study Photography?**

**Here at Stratford upon Avon School we have an excellent track record and reputation for helping our A-Level Photographers become exciting, innovative and individual Photographers who often go on to pursue Photography/Art & Design at a higher level.**

We want you to make our reputation even stronger by learning how to express yourself visually in a way that makes you unique and then exploring in depth the project themes that will show off your artistic attributes.

**Subject Specification Outline:**

Year 12 • Component 1 Skills Development Portfolio
Year 13 • Component 1 Personal Investigation
• Component 2 AQA Externally Set Theme

This specification consists of four main elements:

**Year 12 Coursework Assignments:**

**CAMERA TECHNIQUE**
Learn how to shoot on film and digital formats, learning traditional traditional wet processes in the darkroom and contrasting these skills to modern-day digital processes using DSLR cameras and image manipulation. ware. This form part of the Year 12 Skills Development folder.

**RESEARCH PHOTOGRAPHERS**
Research into a range of photographers/artists and design movements, producing critique, relevant to your own area of interest.

**CREATIVE LIGHTING TECHNIQUES**
Shooting with studio lighting, flashguns, utilising off-camera flash techniques, as used in fashion/ editorial shoots. You will also be shown how to make and adapt existing lighting gadgets for creative effect

**COMPETENCY TEST**
A competency test to demonstrate their newly acquired skillset.

**Year 13 Coursework Project:**

Students research a genre of choice, carrying out initial research and experimentation to develop ideas. To maximise grades and demonstrate technical and creative competencies students are encouraged to shoot both traditional film, 35mm and medium format 120 and to contrast results against DSLR shoots or similar, to develop ideas fully.

Alongside practical experimentation (darkroom and digital) students should research relevant photographers/artists/designers, producing an essay of 1000 – 3000 words.

As part of the course students are expected to shoot in their own time off site, at their own expense, and to seek out and visit relevant art galleries/exhibitions to push their own creative processes and thoughts forward. (Funding support may be available through the post-16 bursary)

All evidence should be recorded in a journal/ sketchbook, showing what has been learnt from research, experiments, visits and clearly demonstrating how this has influenced the investigation. It is important to remember that the Personal Investigation relies upon the student working extensively in their own time off site, practicing a range of techniques across different formats – making the work stand out, demonstrating their individual creative goals.

**Final Exam Format:** 15 hours and an 'externally' set exam, very similar in format to the GCSE Photography exam, you will receive the exam paper and have 8/9 weeks before the 15 hour exam days to prepare your idea.

**Self-Study Requirements:**

Students are required to research, develop and experiment away from school, in addition to committing to shooting new test shoots on a weekly basis to push ideas forward.

**Progression Pathways:**

Photography is ideal for students wishing to pursue a career in either journalism or the media industries, and is therefore a popular choice with English, Media and Humanities students. Our 2026 leaver Lily studied A Level Photography and has gone onto Nottingham Trent to study Sports Photography.

**Important:** Prior to joining the course, students will be expected to purchase, or at least have ongoing access to, a DSLR camera or similar, for the duration of two years. The school has a limited number of DSLR cameras but is unable to guarantee ongoing access to cameras for sixth formers as the photography courses are very popular across the wider school cohort.

