



Portland
Place
School

Sixth Form **A Level** **Photography** Transition Booklet



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A-Level Photography

Name:

Welcome to Photography at Portland Place

This transition work is designed to help you to bridge the gap between your GCSE studies and AS/A Level.

Why do transition work?

Preparation is crucial for studying A levels. A levels require you to be an independent learner. Although you have fewer subjects, A levels require different study skills and the volume of work is greater due to the increased demand of depth and detail. The exercises in this booklet will ensure that you are ready for the exciting challenges of becoming an A level student in September. It may be necessary to complete some of the tasks on separate sheets of paper. You have the choice of either typing or handwriting your responses. Each subject will be slightly different, but they will all require you to use the skills you will need for A level: independent enquiry; evidence of reading around the subject and enthusiasm and interest.

Is transition work assessed?

Yes. In September, your subject teacher will ask you for your transition work and it will be assessed. Teachers will be able to diagnose your strengths and weaknesses and begin to support and challenge you in a more targeted way.

**You must bring all the work with you to your first Year 12
Photography lesson in September.**



Y12 A-Level Photography

The first year of this two-year course has no externally set submission deadlines. After an introductory period, students begin to work towards:

UNIT 1: "THE PERSONAL INVESTIGATION":

After an initial introduction period to the basics of camera and digital editing skills, candidates are encouraged to choose their own subject for this first project. Most of the lessons will be taken up by editing images to build up a portfolio and working on the sketchbook that forms part of the coursework.

It is of crucial importance that you have enthusiasm for taking photos on an ongoing basis in preparation for lessons.

There will be two elements of your submission:

1. The Sketchbook: There is a huge emphasis on back-up research towards every piece of work students make. Therefore students must keep a sketchbook in which to record all work done towards the project. In terms of the marking, the sketchbook is of tremendous importance. A talented student who produces a highly successful piece of work but does not back it up through research recorded in the sketchbook, will not achieve a high mark. Apart from the emphasis on the research the sketchbook should also contain evidence of the development of student's ideas and improvement of their work. To sum it up, the sketchbook should provide a collection of visual analyses of both research material as well as student's own work.

2. The Portfolio: This is collection of all your best final images, presented separately from your sketchbook.

During the first year, students will work on developing and practicing skills and building up the sketchbook for the 'Personal Investigation'.

Year 11 to Year 12 Photography AS/A-Level Transition Unit

TASK 1: Study the Camera Manual!!

For this course you are expected to have your own digital SLR camera. Please take your time and work through the camera manual. Because SLR cameras feature a wealth of useful functions, studying the manual is a truly useful introduction to many basics of photography!!!

Make notes of any questions that may arise!

TASK 2: Exercise what you have learned from the camera manual:

Now that you know how your camera works go out and take lots and lots of photographs to practice. The theme for your first assignment will be: "DETAIL"

This can be expressed in different ways:

- on a visual level, you can produce images that show a detail without showing the whole. Images that 'crop' out a section of the whole and/or enlarge their subject.

In photography, making 'ordinary', 'mundane' subjects into the main subject of an image has always been a major theme. Sometimes, the camera 'sees' things that the naked eye would not see or overlook.

• you can also interpret the theme conceptually e.g. showing a detail as a stand-in for your subject, e.g. a photograph of a screwdriver for a workman or a keyboard for a musician or a skateboard for a skate-boarder.

‘Detail’ is a good theme for experimenting with close-ups and a narrow depth of field. If you read your camera manual, you should know what a narrow depth of field is and how to achieve it!

All images should be ***technically well accomplished***, meaning well-exposed and sharp (where wanted).

The purpose of this task is to make you aware that with your camera you can **create interesting images out of mundane everyday subjects** (for example by being in control of depth of field).

Expected result: at least 30 upwards images that you consider a very good solution, i.e. an interesting image result to the task.

You need to bring these images on a memory card or a USB key to your first lesson.

A-Level Photography students are expected to have basic knowledge of the use of their camera when the course begins. Just to repeat this: Working through the camera manual is a very useful introduction.