Photography

Year 10

Term	Topic	Disciplinary Knowledge	Vocabulary	Assessment	Cross-Curricular Links	Golden Threads	Personal Development	Rationale
1	**Introductory phase: formal elements investigation**	• Apply the formal elements of photography (composition, colour) to create meaningful images. • Use composition techniques such as rule of thirds, balance, framing, and leading lines to structure photographs. • Explore colour through warm/cool tones, complementary colours, and emotional impact. • Experiment with angles, perspectives, and subject matter to enhance visual storytelling. • Produce images that are technically accurate, visually engaging, and intentional, reflecting creative choices. • Reflect on and analyse how formal elements contribute to the composition, meaning, and impact of an image. • Develop hands-on technical skills using cameras or photographic tools in conjunction with theoretical understanding.	consistent composition thumbnail communication commercial compositional balance Narrative contrast Aesthetic	**Assessment of learning:** Assess technical ability in using formal elements and interpreting composition. Formative feedback given. **Assessment for learning:** Teachers question and guide students to identify strengths and misconceptions in composition and technical skills **Assessment as learning:** Students reflect on their images, evaluate use of formal elements, and plan improvements Component One Portfolio is marked using the assessment objectives in line with academy assessment windows. **AQA assessment Objectives:** **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 realizes intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.	**English:** Develop analytical writing and clear annotations to explain ideas and evaluate work. **Maths:** Apply ratios, scale, and measurement for accurate image composition and cropping. **Art:** Explore composition, color theory, and artistic styles to enhance visual creativity. **Technology/ media:** Use digital tools for editing, image manipulation, and understanding technical processes.	**Communication** - Colour and composition become key formal elements for visual storytelling. Students learn to use colour to evoke mood and meaning, and composition to structure ideas clearly, reinforcing creativity, cultural awareness, and technical precision.	**SMSC:** KS4 Photography fosters cultural awareness, moral responsibility, and social engagement through creative expression. Students explore diverse perspectives, ethical image use, and personal identity, promoting respect, empathy, and critical thinking while developing aesthetic appreciation and collaborative skills. **Careers: Commercial Photographer** - photography for advertising, marketing, or product promotion. Careers include shooting for brands, magazines, or advertising agencies. **Think Big Question:** How does the composition of a photograph influence the way a viewer interprets its meaning? **Earthshot:** Consider environmental and social contexts in photography; explore sustainability in visual storytelling	Term One provides a structured introduction to photography, laying the foundation for both technical and creative development. Students begin by exploring compositional rules, which give clarity and confidence in image-making. This is followed by developing analytical skills to interpret and critique photographic work, fostering critical thinking and visual literacy. Practical sessions on camera operation ensure technical competence, enabling learners to apply theoretical knowledge effectively. The term concludes with an in-depth study of the first formal element colour, allowing students to experiment with mood, symbolism, and visual impact. This progression builds on KS3 learning across multiple subjects: Art and Design contributes prior understanding of visual elements and creative expression; Design Technology reinforces structured problem-solving and design principles; Computing supports digital literacy and technical processes; and English strengthens analytical and evaluative writing skills. Together, these connections create a seamless transition from KS3 to KS4, ensuring students develop a broad, interdisciplinary skill set while establishing a strong foundation for future photographic practice.
2	**Introductory phase: formal elements investigation**	• Apply the formal elements of photography (tone, light) to create meaningful images. • Continue to consider composition techniques such as rule of thirds, balance, framing, and leading lines to structure photographs. • Manipulate tone to control exposure, contrast, and highlight/shadow detail. • Understand and use lighting effectively, including direction, contrast, and natural vs. artificial sources. • Experiment with angles, perspectives, and subject matter to enhance visual storytelling. • Produce images that are technically accurate, visually engaging, and intentional, reflecting creative choices. • Reflect on and analyse how formal elements contribute to the composition, meaning, and impact of an image. • Develop hands-on technical skills using cameras or photographic tools in conjunction with theoretical understanding.	Texture Abstract or fragmentation expressionist organic Ambiguity Macro photography illumination urban Abandonment deterioration artificial (lighting) cinematic		**English:** Develop analytical writing and clear annotations to explain ideas and evaluate work. **Maths:** Apply ratios, scale, and measurement for accurate image composition and cropping. **Art:** Explore composition, colour theory, and artistic styles to enhance visual creativity. **Technology/Media:** Use digital tools for editing, image manipulation, and understanding technical processes.	**Communication** - Tone and light as formal elements allow photographers to communicate mood, depth, and meaning visually. By controlling tonal range and lighting, students learn how to guide the viewer's attention and convey emotion or narrative without words. This technical and creative understanding ensures that every image becomes a deliberate act of communication, aligning with the overarching purpose of the course.	**SMSC:** KS4 Photography fosters cultural awareness, moral responsibility, and social engagement through creative expression. Students explore diverse perspectives, ethical image use, and personal identity, promoting respect, empathy, and critical thinking while developing aesthetic appreciation and collaborative skills. **Careers: Photojournalist**: Captures images that document current events, news stories, and social issues. Often works for media outlets, documenting significant moments in history. **Think Big Question:** In what ways can light be used creatively to convey emotion or mood in a photograph? **Earthshot:** Consider environmental and social contexts in photography; explore sustainability in visual storytelling	Term Two builds on the foundational skills from Term One by introducing **tone and light** as key formal elements in photography. Students explore how tonal range and lighting influence mood, depth, and meaning within an image. This term emphasises technical control of light, both natural and artificial, alongside creative decision-making to achieve purposeful effects. Learners develop observational skills through analysis of photographers who use tone and light effectively, reinforcing critical thinking and visual literacy. Practical tasks encourage experimentation with exposure, contrast, and shadow to create dynamic compositions. This progression deepens understanding of visual language and strengthens the link between technical proficiency and expressive intent, preparing students for more complex creative challenges later in the course.

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3	**Introductory phase: formal elements investigation**	• Use form and shape to create abstraction, structure, and simplified visual compositions • Apply geometric and organic shapes within the photographic frame • Use repetition of colour, light, shape, or form to create rhythm and emphasis • Control focus, sharpness, and contrast to direct the viewer's attention • Use focus intentionally to separate subject from background • Apply formal elements to strengthen meaning and visual impact • Experiment with angles, viewpoints, and framing to support compositional choices.	contour geometric perspective cohesion isolation highlight accentuating Submersion Anthropocene texture enhancement colour grading depth exposure conceptual	**Assessment for Learning:** Teachers use questioning, modelling, observation, and guided feedback during practical photography tasks to address misconceptions about focus, repetition, and compositional control.	**Art & Design:** Use of abstraction, form, shape, and visual balance **English:** Visual analysis, interpretation, reflective writing **Maths:** Geometry, symmetry, proportion, and focus depth **History:** Contextual understanding of photographic styles and movements	Communication - Form and shape give solidity and presence, repetition creates rhythm and emphasis, and focus directs attention to key subjects. These elements ensure the message within an image is clear and intentional.	SMSC - Students explore personal and social environments through abstraction and visual structure, reflect on ethical image-making, express individuality through creative choices, and engage with diverse cultural perspectives in photographic practice. Think Careers: **Fashion Photographer**: Works with designers, models, and magazines to take fashion and lifestyle images, often for magazines, ads, and online platforms. Think Big question: **How does the environment (both natural and built) impact how we perceive a photograph?**	Term 3 develops students' ability to communicate visually by exploring **form and shape**, **repetition**, and **focus**. These formal elements teach learners how structure, pattern, and clarity influence meaning in photography. Students experiment with depth of field and compositional techniques to emphasize subject matter, reinforcing technical control and creative intent. This term builds on previous work with colour, tone, and light, encouraging more sophisticated image-making and analysis.
4	**Introductory phase: formal elements investigation**	• Use pattern and texture to add depth, detail, and visual interest • Apply line and surface detail to enhance composition • Use positive and negative space to control balance and emphasis • Make compositional decisions using space to simplify or isolate subjects • Apply formal elements within portrait photography • Use light, framing, and viewpoint to capture personality and emotion • Combine prior knowledge of formal elements to create intentional portrait images	distortion tension monochrome transparency juxtaposition refractive light abstraction sharpen enhancement realism cyanotype botanical photogram negative space optimisation utilise	**Assessment for Learning:** Ongoing verbal feedback, peer critique, and teacher questioning support students in refining use of texture, space, and portrait conventions.	**Art & Design:** Exploration of texture, pattern, and spatial composition. **Media/ Technology:** Advanced camera techniques for lighting and focus in portraiture. **Media/ Computing:** Digital editing to enhance texture and manage space effectively. **English:** Developing descriptive and evaluative language for portrait analysis.	Communication - Pattern and texture add richness and detail, while space introduces depth and context, enhancing visual storytelling. Portraiture becomes a powerful form of communication, requiring students to capture identity, emotion, and personality through composition and lighting.	SMSC: Students explore identity, emotion, and representation through portraiture, consider ethical responsibilities when photographing others, reflect on personal expression, and engage with diverse cultural perspectives and visual narratives. Careers: **Portrait Photographer**: Focuses on capturing individuals or groups, often in controlled studio environments, for personal, family, or professional purposes Think Big Question: **What ethical considerations must photographers keep in mind when capturing and sharing images of people and places?**	Term 4 introduces **pattern and texture**, **space**, and **portraiture**, deepening students' ability to communicate through visual language. Learners explore how surface detail and spatial relationships create atmosphere and narrative. Portraiture brings a human dimension, requiring thoughtful composition and lighting to convey identity and emotion. This term consolidates technical skills while fostering creativity and personal expression, preparing students for independent project work.

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5	**Development Phase:** Personal Response and Identity in Photography	• Apply the formal elements, including, colour, light, tone, shape, repetition, focus, line, and space to strengthen composition • Combine multiple formal elements to create intentional and meaningful images • Use formal elements to communicate personal ideas, identity, and narratives • Develop a personal photographic concept based on research and experimentation • Use photography to explore themes such as identity, relationships, or experience • Experiment with viewpoint, framing, contrast, and tone to support personal meaning • Refine photographic work through testing, reviewing, and improving outcomes • Present a personal and individual response that reflects creative intent	Identity Narrative Composition Formal elements Focus Space Repetition Viewpoint Intentional Refinement utilise dynamic Chiaroscuro selectivity introspection overexposure	**AQA assessment Objectives:** **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 realizes intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.	Art & Design: Composition, visual storytelling, portraiture traditions English: Narrative writing, personal reflection, analysis of meaning Maths: Proportion, symmetry, framing, spatial awareness IT / Media: Digital image editing, file management, visual communication PSHE: Identity, self-expression, empathy, representation	**Communication** - Photography is used as a visual language to communicate identity, emotion, and personal narrative, developing students' ability to express ideas clearly and meaningfully without words.	**SMSC:** Students explore identity, ethics, and representation through portraiture, developing empathy, cultural awareness, and self-reflection while making responsible creative choices about consent, meaning, and how people are visually represented. **Careers: Fine Art Photographer** Creates expressive and conceptual photographic work for exhibitions, galleries, publications, or digital platforms, using photography to communicate ideas, identity, and social commentary. **Think Big Question:** What role does colour play in storytelling within a photograph? **Earthshot:** Students consider how photography can be used to document people, place, and environment, raising awareness of social and environmental issues and encouraging responsible visual storytelling.	This development phase builds directly on students' prior learning of the formal elements by requiring them to apply technical skills to a personal and meaningful photographic response. Students move beyond experimentation to develop ideas, refine outcomes, and communicate identity and narrative through imagery. The project introduces the full GCSE creative cycle of research, experimentation, recording, refinement, and presentation, allowing students to develop confidence, independence, and a personal voice while meeting all four assessment objectives.
6	**Sustained Phase: My Environment: Framing and Place**	• Formal elements: line, shape, repetition, space, focus • Framing within a frame as a compositional technique • Relationship between environment, subject, and meaning • Use of perspective to guide viewer attention • Introduction to sustained project structure • Contextual study: John Divola (space, framing, abandonment)	content form mood process development vibrance adjustment sequence	**Assessment for Learning:** Teacher questioning, modelled examples, and feedback during shooting and annotation to guide compositional decisions and use of framing. **Assessment as Learning:** Students annotate contact sheets and reflect on how framing choices communicate meaning about their environment. **Assessment of Learning:** Students produce an initial series of photographs demonstrating effective use of framing and formal elements, supported by written analysis.	**Geography:** Human environments and sense of place **English:** Analytical and reflective writing **ICT:** Digital photography workflows and basic editing **Art & Design:** Composition and visual storytelling	**Communication** - Photography used as a visual language to communicate personal responses to place and environment.	**SMSC:** Students explore how environments shape identity, reflect ethically on representation of places, and develop personal meaning through visual storytelling rooted in lived experience. **Careers: Film/Video Director of Photography (DP):** Oversees the visual storytelling for film or television, working with lighting, camera angles, and composition to visually convey the director's vision. **Think Big Question:** How can the concept of 'my environment' be explored through the formal elements of photography?	This phase introduces the sustained project by building directly on students' understanding of the formal elements. Through guided exploration of framing and place, students begin developing independence while learning how environments can communicate meaning, preparing them for deeper conceptual work in Year 11.

Photography

Year 11

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1	**Sustained Phase: My Environment: Everyday Spaces and the Unnoticed**	• Formal elements applied to mundane subject matter • Repetition and focus to create visual emphasis • Editing techniques: saturation, tone, contrast • Relationship between subject choice and meaning • Contextual study: Nigel Shafran (mundanity, realism)	sequence minimalism Softness Ambient atmospheric Meditative desaturated Mundane Comparison Symbolism understated domestic Candid	**Assessment for Learning:** Ongoing feedback during shooting and editing to refine subject choice, composition, and technical control. **Assessment as Learning:** Students evaluate how editing choices strengthen meaning and record reflective annotations linked to intentions. **Assessment of Learning:** Students present a refined body of images demonstrating control of formal elements and purposeful editing.	**English:** Visual narrative and descriptive annotation **ICT:** Photoshop editing and file management **Art & Design:** Abstraction and conceptual development **Citizenship:** Representation of everyday life	Communication - Students communicate meaning through subtle subject matter, editing choices, and visual narrative.	**SMSC:** Students reflect on identity, ethics of representation, and personal experience by elevating everyday environments into meaningful visual statements. **Careers: Editorial Photographer:** Works for magazines, newspapers, or online media to create images that accompany articles and stories, often capturing people, events, or issues in compelling ways. **Think Big Question:** How does the environment we live in shape our identity and experiences? **Earthshot:** Students explore sustainability and consumer culture by documenting everyday spaces and overlooked environments.	This phase deepens conceptual thinking by encouraging students to find meaning in the ordinary. Through editing and subject refinement, students strengthen visual communication skills and move toward greater independence in preparation for exam-based work.
2	**Sustained Project: My Environment (Architecture, Nature & Personal Journey)**	• Pattern, texture, and space in environmental photography • Interaction between natural and built environments • Perspective and scale in architectural photography • Personal voice through sustained visual investigation • Contextual study: Romain Jacquet-Lagrèze (architecture, space)	solitude spatial arrangement imposing essence convey clarity	Component One Portfolio is marked using the assessment objectives in line with academy assessment windows. **AQA assessment Objectives: 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 realizes intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.	**Geography:** Built and natural environments **Maths:** Scale, proportion, symmetry **ICT:** Advanced image editing and presentation **History:** Architecture as cultural record	Communication - Students communicate complex ideas about place, identity, and environment through sustained visual storytelling.	**SMSC:** Students explore cultural identity, ethical representation, and personal meaning by interpreting environments through architecture and space. **Careers: Architectural Photographer** Specialises in photographing buildings, interiors, and spaces, working with architects, designers, and real estate agencies to showcase structures **Think Big Question:** In what ways can photography capture the unseen or unnoticed aspects of our surroundings? **Earthshot:** Students consider environmental responsibility by examining the relationship between humans, architecture, and nature.	This final sustained phase consolidates all prior learning, enabling students to refine a personal voice and produce an independent, meaningful portfolio. It directly prepares students for the externally set assignment by embedding conceptual depth, technical control, and evaluative practice.

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3 to 5	Component Two: Externally Set Assignment: (Independent Personal Response)	Independent application of formal elements: line, shape, repetition, space, focus Visual communication of personal, social, and environmental meaning Selection and refinement of techniques to meet individual intentions Contextual understanding applied independently to inform outcomes Cohesive portfolio construction aligned to assessment objectives	Chronology, ethereal Convergence, overlay Halation, veiling obfuscation foreshortening Assemblage, tactility superimpose simulacrum Ambiguity, silhouette Topography, duality Triptych, tonality refraction Polaroid, ecliptic fragmentation ambient chiaroscuro ephemeral botanical Contour, gradient afterimage	**Assessment for Learning:** Teacher guidance is limited to clarification of the brief and assessment requirements. Feedback focuses on process checks, time management, and alignment to assessment objectives without directing creative outcomes. **Assessment as Learning:** Students independently evaluate progress against the assessment objectives, using written annotation to justify decisions, reflect on development, and refine intentions. **Assessment of Learning:** Final submission demonstrates a sustained, personal, and meaningful response to the externally set brief, meeting all four assessment objectives through a resolved photographic portfolio.	**English:** Analytical and reflective writing through annotations and final statements **ICT:** Advanced digital editing and file management using Photoshop **Art and Design:** Independent creative practice and personal response **Geography:** Interpretation of environments and sense of place **Citizenship:** Ethical representation and social responsibility **History:** Contextual awareness of photography as a cultural record **Maths:** Composition, proportion, and spatial awareness	Communication - Students communicate complex personal ideas visually through independently developed photographic outcomes, using the formal elements to convey meaning, mood, and intention.	**SMSC:** Students explore ethical representation, cultural perspectives, and social issues through independent creative choices, developing responsibility, critical awareness, and respect for diverse viewpoints within their personal photographic responses. **Earthshot:** Students may explore environmental change, sustainability, or human impact through self-directed investigation, responding to global or local environmental concerns within the externally set theme.	The externally set assignment builds directly on the formal elements explored in Year 10 and the sustained "My Environment" project. This phase prioritises independence, critical thinking, and personal decision-making, enabling students to demonstrate technical control, conceptual depth, and a confident personal voice in preparation for final assessment.

Trinity Academy Cathedral