Pearson Edexcel A Level Photography

See differently. Think deeply.

Our role is to help students discover their own creative voice through curiosity, experimentation and purposeful making. We want our lessons to be places where ideas are questioned, risks are encouraged and individuality is celebrated.

Photography challenges students to look beyond the obvious. By exploring the work of artists, photographers and designers from different times, places and cultures, students develop an understanding of the visual world and the develop the confidence to make informed creative decisions of their own.

Through the careful application of Edexcel Pearsons assessment objective criteria, we encourage students to work independently, think critically and refine their ideas with purpose. Through drawing, photography, digital media, painting, printmaking and mixed-media practice, students learn that creative success comes from exploration, reflection and resilience as much as technical skill.

Whether progressing to university, apprenticeships or the creative industries, students leave with more than a portfolio. They leave with the confidence to question, create and contribute.

In our department, students will:

- investigate ideas with curiosity and independence;
- make thoughtful, informed creative decisions;
- experiment confidently with materials, techniques and processes;
- refine work purposefully, developing ideas into original and accomplished outcomes;
- make meaningful connections between artists, contexts and their own practice;
- become reflective learners who can evaluate, adapt and improve their work;
- build the confidence, resilience and creative independence to succeed beyond the classroom.

Our vision is simple: to inspire young people who don't just make art—they think creatively, see differently and have the confidence to shape the world around them.

Why study Photography at The Sixth Form at Ridgewood?

- The subject knowledge of the staff allows you to unlock your unrealised potential.
- Access purpose built modern facilities with space to fulfil most students' ideas, however big they are!
- You will work with trust in your teachers at every step of your studies.
- Bespoke one-to-one intervention takes place for every student in every lesson through questioning, coaching and discussion.
- Your love of the subject is matched by the passion of our staff.
- Modern DSLR, Lighting equipment and image editing equipment.

What topics will I study in this subject?

Topic	What this means
Year 12: **Introductory** **Movement** **Mock Exam**	An introductory project covering technical aspects of photography including the use of digital software. Following techniques explored in the introductory element of the course and taking influence from past and present photographers, you will investigate ideas and ultimately a personal response. A personal response to a given theme allowing you to create personal responses and preparing you for year 13.
Year 13: **Personal Project** **Externally Set Examination**	A self-set project spanning five months. Evidence to fulfil the assessment objectives is generated and collated through guidance from staff. This culminates in a final piece or pieces. Like the GCSE examination, a given starting point will be presented to you, set by the exam board. You will investigate ideas plan and develop a final piece which will be created in the 15 hour examination.

What skills will I need in this subject?

Skill	What this skill involves in this subject
Craftsmanship & technical ability.	You should have a good sense of aesthetic (the way things look) coupled with confident technical ability. This and an added willingness to explore new ways of working will help you develop significantly as Photography student at Ridgewood.
Independent thought and study	You will often be required to explore practitioners' work by yourself, continue with ideas and creative work you may have started in your lesson, and show progress in your next lesson. Confidence in your own ideas is paramount.
Time management	Photography involves a lot of 'doing', it is not a subject you can do well in if you simply turn up to the lesson. You will need to balance your other subjects and independent study, so you can ensure you complete the work set for Photography to an expected standard.

What will my lessons involve?

- Interesting and stimulating briefs to challenge and develop skills.
- One-to-one discussions to aid idea and portfolio development.
- Explore overlapping areas of Photography including portraiture, landscape photography (working from the urban, rural and/or coastal environment), still life photography (working from objects or from the natural world), documentary photography, photojournalism, fashion photography, experimental imagery, multimedia, photographic installation, Moving image (video, film, animation).
- Lessons may involve listening, researching, annotation, discussion (group and individual) as well as creative 'on task' activities.

What will my independent study involve?

- It will involve following next step advice from your teacher and you will be expected to show progress in your next timetabled lesson.
- You should use the Learning Resource Centre for further reading or research.

- You can use the Art studio in Faraday to further develop practical work following guidance from your teacher.
- Your independent study periods will be shared evenly between photography and your other subjects and will be added to your timetable on SIMS.

How will I be assessed?

Percentage exam assessment: 40%	Percentage coursework assessment: 60%

Assessment	Details of assessment
Examination paper in Year 13 is 40%	• One exam, 15 hours, worth 40% of overall mark • An externally set exam is distributed in February of Year 13 and you will have approximately two months to prepare investigations, ideas and experimentations etc. before sitting the 15 hour examination where you will create the final piece.

How do I know this is the right course for me?

- A level Photography is time consuming, challenging and frustrating but can be extremely rewarding and satisfying. You will work hard but will refine your photography skills ready for your next step, creating amazing work along the way.
- The step up from GCSE is not obvious, but generally you'll be required to do as much work in one week as you did in two weeks at GCSE. Through guidance, your work will become more mature and sophisticated, but you must be willing to stretch your own understanding of the subject too.
- Current students enjoy the breadth of opportunities available to them in realising their ideas.
- You can help your success by spending a little time EVERY day adding to your work, looking on specific websites/image research apps, reading around the subject and always looking for the next 'shot'. This will enrich your knowledge and skills and ultimately make your work significantly stronger and more mature.