Key Stage 4 Curriculum

Photography

In Year 10 Students will study:

THE WINSFORD ACADEMY

Content

"Students will learn through practical experimentation that will allow them to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of sources, encouraged to reflect critically upon their creative journey and effectiveness to generate personal responses to a given title or theme; demonstrating this through a range of media including drawing and written reflections."

The Photography curriculum at Winsford Academy empowers students to critically engage with and produce creative, visually compelling imagery that addresses societal themes and historical influences. In Year 10, students are introduced to the concept of "Distortion," building foundational skills in SLR camera functionality, lighting, and Photoshop. These skills align with the AQA specification for Component 1 (portfolio), which accounts for 60% of the final grade, and underpin students' Year 11 exploration of "Unsettling Portraiture." This sequence equips students with compositional skills and technical knowledge, enabling them to convey complex ideas through photography.

Our structured approach allows students to follow the GCSE unit's requirements while pursuing personal interests and selecting their own contextual references. This personalised learning fosters independence and critical thinking. Through this lens, students analyse symbolism in historical and modern works, engaging with contemporary themes, including mental health and the influence of social media.

The curriculum is thoughtfully sequenced to support all learners, gradually introducing vocabulary and technical skills to make complex concepts accessible. Inclusivity is a core tenet, with the curriculum integrating diverse perspectives and histories to promote equity and cater to varied abilities. By the end of the course, students possess technical proficiency as well as the critical and conceptual understanding needed to create and analyse visual narratives—skills integral to both academic success and future creative endeavours

Component 1
60% of course content

	Winter Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
	This project, guided by the AQA Art and Design specification, emphasises two main assessment objectives: developing ideas (AO1) and documenting them (AO2).	This part of the course enables pupils to develop and refine ideas (AO1 & AO2), record intentions (AO3), and create a personal response to their still life project (AO4).	In this part of the course, the focus shifts to portraiture, enabling pupils to develop and refine ideas (AO1 & AO2), record intentions (AO3), and create a personal response to their project (AO4)

	Experimental Still Life within photography, focusing on: **Artists and Themes:** • Nick Knight's *Floral Still Life* • Billy Kidd's *Decaying Flowers* • Vanitas Still Life Paintings **Formal Elements:** Composition, Form, Visual Balance, Colour. **Unit Focus:** • Introduces *Vanitas* as a contextual reference, exploring symbolism and gender stereotypes. • Enhances compositional skills, including the *golden/Fibonacci spiral*. • Promotes independent camera settings with emphasis on aperture selection. **Key Knowledge:** • **Themes:** Symbolism in floral imagery representing social and political stereotypes. • **Historical Context: Vanitas** art's historical connections to wealth, social status, and gender inequality. • **Vanitas Visual Characteristics:** 19th-century floral still life's relation to gender stereotypes, especially concerning women artists. **Skills Development:**	*Experimental Still Life* within photography, focusing on: **Artists and Themes:** • Ori Gersht, exploding Still Life • Vanitas Still Life Paintings **Formal Elements:** Composition, Form, Visual Balance, Colour, Harmony, Tone, Texture. **Unit Focus:** • The big question for the unit is how the artists has distorted visual elements within their work to comment on society and stereotypes and the role of women and other minority groups through history. • Promotes experimentation using a range of media. • This unit introduces a range of Photo Shop editing processes with increased complexity and challenge. **Key Knowledge:** • **Vanitas Visual Characteristics:** Understanding the key elements that define Vanitas paintings. • **Connections with Ori Gersht:** Exploring visual and thematic connections between Gersht's work and Vanitas art. • **Shared Characteristics of Artists:** Recognising	*Experimental portraiture* within photography, focusing on: **Artists and Themes:** • **Marcelo Monreal-** Contemporary Instagram artist **Formal Elements:** Composition, Form, Visual Balance, Colour, Harmony, Tone Line, Shape **Unit Focus:** • This unit will support students to recognise how each artist's work creates emotional responses. • Understand how artists document perspectives on beauty standards and social media's impact. • Identify the unique visual and symbolic elements characteristic of each artist. • Explore Marcelo Monreal's themes of mental health, media portrayal, the modelling profession, and the effects of post-editing on self-perception. • Connect contemporary artists' work to themes of distortion and stereotypes. • Understand how historical and current social and political events influence artists' perspectives. **Key Knowledge:** • **Artist's Intentions:** Understand that the artist intended their work

	• **Personal Response:** Present a personal response in distorted still life photography. • **Interpret Symbolic Imagery:** Analyse and interpret symbolic imagery within artists' work. • **Document Developments:** Experiment with materials and techniques aligned with project intentions. • **Record Ideas: Record** visual and conceptual developments clearly and coherently. • **Outcome: Present** experiments into a cohesive set of personal responses.	common features in the works of Billy Kidd, Nick Knight, and Ori Gersht. • **Image Structure:** Understanding background, midground, foreground, and visual balance. • **Themes:** Examining how these works reflect stereotypes and evoke emotional responses. • **Image Composition:** Analysing the arrangement and balance in compositions **Skills Development:** • **Symbolic Interpretation:** Identifying the symbolic connections between Gersht's work and the Vanitas period. • **Artistic Intent:** Interpreting why Gersht may have chosen to explode/destroy images linked to Vanitas themes. • **Image Analysis:** Discussing how elements and structure reveal meaning. • **Symbolism and Context:** Interpreting symbolic images within a broader context. • **Formal Elements Recognition:** Identifying formal elements in artwork. • **Aesthetic Justification:** Justifying personal responses to image aesthetics. • **Subject-Specific Language:** Using precise language in image deconstruction.	to be viewed as "morbid, abstracted glamour." • **Social Commentary:** Recognise how the artwork critiques social media and stereotypes. • **Emotional Impact:** Know how the artwork evokes emotional responses. • **Artist's Views on social media and Beauty Standards:** Understand key information about the artist's documented views on social media and beauty ideals. • **Diverse Meanings in Marcelo Monreal's Work:** Learn how Monreal's work address's themes like mental health, media portrayal, the modelling profession, and the role model's responsibility. Recognise the impact of post-editing on self-perception and societal views **Skills Development:** • **Photoshop Skills:** Apply techniques to emulate the artist's style, including even distribution of space, consistent lighting direction in drop shadows, harmonious background colours, and strategic use of lens flares for softness. • **Layering and Emphasis:** Ensure collage and portrait layers are visually balanced, with desaturated portrait layers to highlight flower elements.

		• **Visual Composition:** Creating balanced compositions through digital and collage techniques. • **Symbolic Interpretation of Exploding Flowers:** Suggesting possible meanings behind Gersht's exploding flower imagery.	• **Logical Documentation:** Clearly document shoot progression, connecting choices to artistic intentions and inspiration. • **Selective Editing Rationale:** Justify choices for excluding certain images from editing based on artistic goals. • **Typography and Layout:** Maintain consistent typography, size, and colour in headings and annotations to align with the selected artist's style. • **Colour and Mood Connection:** Trial and document various colours, connecting choices to intended mood, atmosphere, and symbolic meaning.
Homework	Pupils are expected to carry out their own independent photo shoots to expand on theme themes set out during the course and to broaden the development into a personal outcome. Homework is used to fulfil the course requirement of additional work that is carried out independently by the student. This is a personal interest unit of work.		
Assessment	**Annotation and Personal Response to "Distortion"** **Contextual Knowledge:** • Symbolism in the works of contemporary artists Nick Knight and Billy Kidd and its influence on students' practical work. • Vanitas art and its symbolic role in 19th-century floral still life, with a focus on gender stereotypes.	**Annotation and documentation of shoot development and realisation of practical outcome.** **Contextual Knowledge:** • Understanding how elements and structural systems influence the appearance and hidden meanings within an image. • Recognising and interpreting symbolic imagery and connecting it to broader contextual themes.	Presentation in response to Portraits and the theme of Distortion **Contextual Knowledge:** • How sources relate to historical, contemporary, social, cultural and issues-based contexts. • How ideas, themes, subjects and feelings can inspire creative responses informed by different styles, genres and aesthetic considerations and/or an individual's

	• Application of colour theory to create mood, atmosphere, and context. • Understanding formal elements of composition and visual language. • Nick Knight's "Melting Flowers" series as inspiration. **Technical Knowledge:** • Camera settings and lighting techniques suited to specific artistic intentions (including F-stop, depth of field, use of a soft box and infinity curves). • Digital editing skills to achieve desired visual outcomes (use of Histograms, Curves, Levels and the Blur and cropping tools). **Skills:** • Drawing visual and conceptual connections between themes. • Interpreting, evaluating, and making judgements on subject matter. • Documenting and annotating shoot development and practical outcomes. • Selecting editing techniques to match project intent. • Refining images with a focus on formal elements of composition. • Recording and presenting visual and conceptual	• Identifying the formal elements of art present in an image. • Justifying aesthetic opinions with informed reasoning. • Using subject-specific terminology accurately when analysing an image. • Knowledge of techniques to compose a visually balanced image, including digital and collage methods. • Understanding possible meanings behind symbolic imagery, such as the concept of exploding flowers. **Technical Knowledge** • Camera setting appropriate to desired intentions (aperture selection). • Use of lighting appropriate to intentions (ambient and directional lighting) • Understanding of digital editing processes appropriate to desired outcome (use of layers and layer masks, brush selection, opacity and overlays). **Skills** • Selection of editing process according to specific intent. • Refine image according to the formal elements of composition • Record visual and conceptual developments in a coherent and succinct way. • Presenting a personal response that	distinctive view of the world. **Technical Knowledge** • Guide the subject to convey emotive physical and facial expressions. • Direct the shoot to mirror the style and approach of the chosen artist. • Generate hard or soft light effects to enhance mood within the photograph. • Select appropriate camera settings independently to match creative intentions. • Compose images using the rule of thirds and achieve visual balance. • Experiment with varying depths of field to add focus and depth to the shoot. **Skills** • Apply various photographic techniques aligned with personal artistic intentions, including effective control of lighting, viewpoint, aperture, depth of field, shutter speed, movement, enlarger use, and digital editing. • Demonstrate the ability to convey meanings, ideas, and intentions in photography through both figurative and abstract forms, and by using image manipulation techniques. • Employ visual elements such as colour, line, form, tone, and texture in ways that suit the context and

	developments coherently. • Delivering a personal response that encapsulates the theme of "Distortion."	encapsulates the project theme	enhance the impact of the work

In Year 11 Students will study:

	Term 1 **Distortion/ Unsettling Portraiture**	Term 2 **Personal response to externally set assignment (Component 2)**	Term 3 **Personal response to externally set assignment (Component 2)**
Content	***Areas of study*** **Artists and Themes:** • Focus on distortion and portraiture, with inspiration from artists Marcelo Monreal, Amanda Clyne, and Del Zou. • Exploration of historical and contemporary works, highlighting changes in gender stereotypes and equality from 19th-century still life to modern portraiture. **Formal Elements:** • Emphasis on new lighting techniques to highlight subject matter. • Application of composition techniques such as visual balance, rule of thirds, and varying depth of field. **Unit Focus:** • Independent, self-directed project that builds resilience and independence, culminating in a personal response during a controlled assessment. • Preparation for GCSE-style exams, fostering personal interest and ownership in creative direction. **Key Knowledge:** • Emotional impact and symbolic characteristics in the works of Monreal, Amanda Clyne, Del Zou, and others. • Contemporary themes of beauty standards, social media influence, distortion, and stereotypes.	***Areas of study*** AQA provides an externally set assignment for each title, with seven different starting points. Students choose one starting point from their selected title to respond to. This assignment allows students to demonstrate their ability to combine different areas of knowledge, skills, and understanding in a creative, extended response. Students will have approximately six weeks of preparatory time to develop their ideas before a ten-hour, unaided, invigilated assessment. • Students may discuss their chosen starting points with the teacher during the preparatory period. • Preparatory work can be presented in any two- or three-dimensional format, such as mounted sheets, sketchbooks, journals, or a digital portfolio. • All preparatory work must stop once the first supervised assessment period begins. • There are no restrictions on the scale, media, or materials used in the final work	***Areas of study*** **Personal response to externally set assignment (Component 2)** Course completed by the end of half term 5

	Skills: • Discussing structural elements contributing to hidden meanings in images. • Justifying aesthetic choices with subject-specific language. • Documenting visual and conceptual development concisely. • Experimenting with materials and techniques aligned with intent. • Recalling influences such as Ori Gersh, Billy Kidd, and Nick Knight inspired by Vanitas art. **Technical Knowledge:** • Mastery in camera settings, lighting, viewpoint, aperture, depth of field, and digital editing. **Contextual Knowledge:** • Understanding artists' intentions and cultural influences on their work, particularly around social issues. **Skill:** • Demonstrated ability to independently direct shoots, select appropriate techniques, and compose images with emotional impact and technical precision.		
Homework	Pupils are expected to carry out their own independent photo shoots to expand on theme themes set out during the course and to broaden the development into a personal outcome.	Pupils will work on developing a body or work independently in response to the chosen externally set question. During this time pupils can opt to carry out independent work in the department after school to access technical equipment in addition to the	

	Homework is used to fulfil the course requirement of additional work that is carried out independently by the student. This is a personal interest unit of work.	regular extra- curricular after school clubs	
How you will be assessed	***How it's assessed*** • 96 marks • 60% of GCSE **Presentation of whole project for Component 1** (AO1 /AO2 / AO3 and AO4) Internally marked and moderated according to AQA guidelines. Presenting a personal response that encapsulates the project title of *Distortion.* This will comprise all sketchbook, board work development, artist statement, extended writing and outcome.	***How it's assessed*** Preparatory period followed by 10 hours of supervised time. • 96 marks • 40% of GCSE **Personal response to selected controlled assessment question*/GCSE unit 2.*** AO1 /AO2 / AO3 /AO4 Internally marked and moderated according to AQA guidelines.	***How it's assessed*** • 96 marks • 60% of GCSE **Personal response to the title *Unsettling /GCSE unit 1.*** AO1 /AO2 / AO3 /AO4 Internally