

# A Level Art and Photography Knowledge Organiser

THE STUDENTS THAT GET THE HIGHEST GRADES IN PHOTOGRAPHY ARE THE STUDENTS THAT PUT IN THE MOST TIME OUTSIDE OF LESSONS. EXTRA PHOTOSHOOTS AND EDITING FROM HOME WILL MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE.



## A LEVEL FINE ART Photography - UNIT INFORMATION

Fine art requires engagement with aesthetic and intellectual concepts through the use of traditional and/or digital media, materials, techniques and processes for the purpose of self-expression, free of external constraints.

Fine art may be created to communicate ideas and messages about the observed world, the qualities of materials, perceptions, or preconceptions. It can also be used to explore personal and cultural identity, society and how we live, visual language, and technology.

Fine Art allows us to consider and reflect on our place in the world, both as individuals and collectively.

### UNIT 1: Personal Investigation

#### Overview

- **Personal Investigation (including a Related Study)**
- **60% of total for A level**
- **Maximum Mark - 120**
- *You will produce one or more final outcomes.*
- *Work is assessed by your tutor and externally moderated.*

### UNIT 2: Externally Set Assignment

#### Overview

- **40% of total for A level**
- **Maximum Mark - 80**
- *This is an externally set assignment, which begins in February of the second year.*
- *You will sit a 15 hour exam in which you must produce a final outcome. This usually takes place in May.*
- *Work is assessed by your tutor and externally moderated.*

# A01

## EXPLORE

## DEVELOP

## DEVELOP IDEAS

## INVESTIGATE & RESEARCH

## OTHER ARTISTS WORK

## ANALYSE

## ANNOTATE

### 1

## Mind Mapping – Ideas presented around the theme of the work

### Central idea.

This is the starting point of your Mind Map and represents the topic you are going to explore. Your central idea should be in the centre of your page and should include an image that represents the Mind Map's topic.

### Branches.

The main branches which flow from the central image are the key themes. You can explore each theme or main branch in greater depth by adding smaller branches.



### Key words.

When you add a branch to your Mind Map, you will need to include a key idea. An important principle of Mind Mapping is using **one word per branch**. Keeping to one word sparks off a greater number of associations compared to using multiple words or phrases.

### Colour coding.

This links the visual with the logical and helps your brain to create mental shortcuts. The code allows you to categorise, highlight and analyse information. Colours also make images more appealing and engaging.

### Include images.

Images have the power to convey much more information than a word or sentence. They are processed instantly by the brain and act as visual stimuli to recall information.

### 2

## Moodboard – A collage of ideas using collected images

### Consider your theme.

Do you want it quite narrow or are you happy to collect a wider range of ideas.

### Use a range of sources.

Internet images, photographs, wallpaper/fabric samples, lettering.

### Don't limit yourself.

Even if it doesn't directly link to your starting point it may relate to the theme. Consider colours and words to help you.



### Apply your ideas.

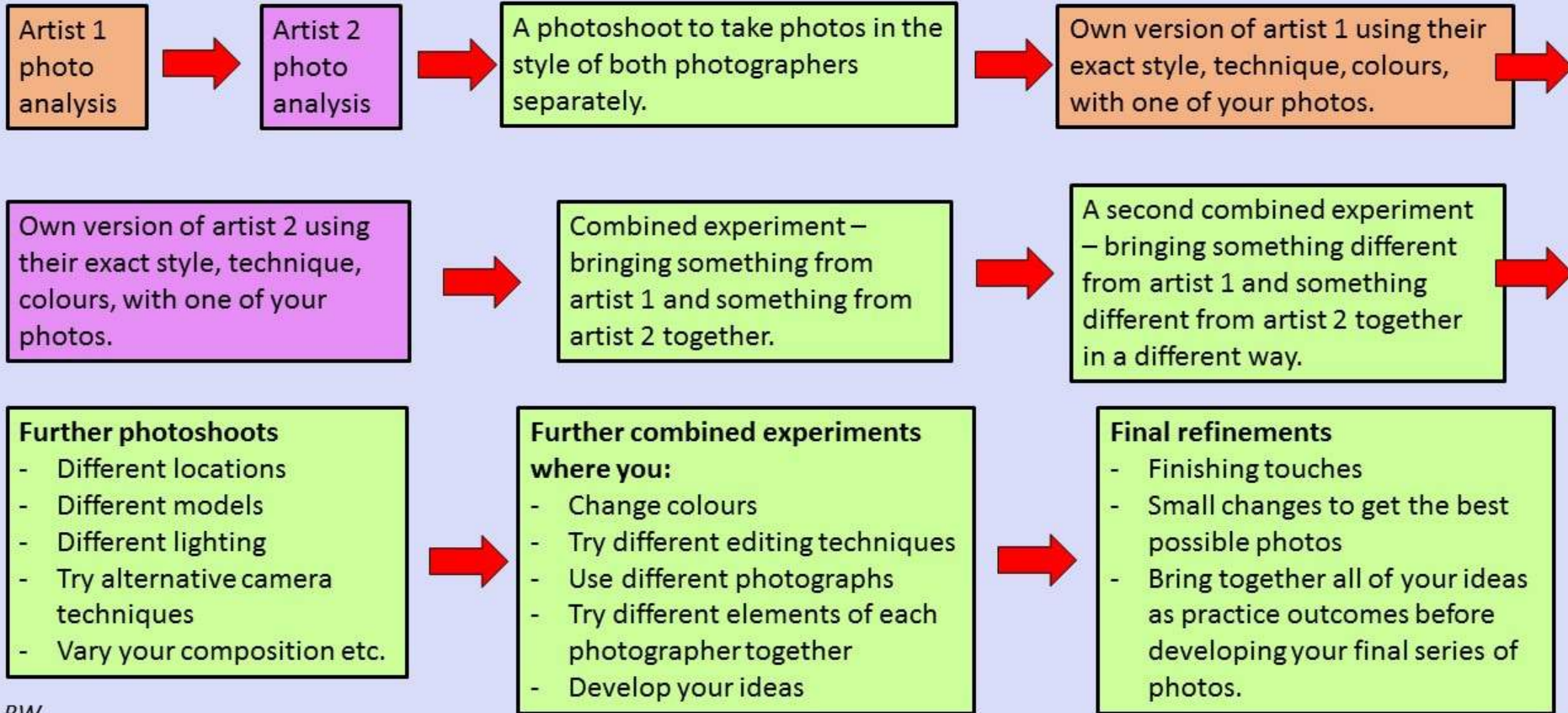
Your moodboard will directly link to the development of your project. If there is empty space fill it with sketches or annotations.

### Pick a style.

Pulling it all together with a colour theme or visual style will make your page work together as a whole.



# AO1 and AO2: How to experiment effectively and independently



## Writing about Photography

### Researching photographers...

•You will regularly have to **carry out independent research** into photography techniques, styles or specific artists and photographers. To ensure that you are successful, use the following to help you:

Find a **photographer that inspires you**. Select the photo that gives you the most ideas and print it out ready to present in your book. Write down the name of the photographer and if you can find it, make note of the title of the image.

•See if the photographer says anything about their **style, influences or photography technique** – if they do, print this to help you later.

•Use some of these questions to help you, and always use key words to achieve the best marks:

- **How does the photographer take his photos?**
- **What camera settings and photography techniques do they use?**
- **What formal elements do they use and how?**
- **What effect does this have on the images?**
- **What kind of editing is used?**
- **How does this affect the way you view the photos?**
- **What do you like about the style? Be specific and explain your answer.**
- **How does this photographer give you ideas for your own work? How will you take inspiration from them?**

### Key Words

#### Camera settings

Macro, fast or slow shutter speed, zoom, focus, aperture, panoramic,

#### Formal elements

Shape, Texture (natural or man made), Pattern (natural or man made, Line, Tone (shadows), Lighting (see highlights on something, eg. shine), Colour (Bright, dull, contrasting, monotone), Composition (centred, off centre, to the side of the photo), viewpoint, Framing (line up edges of photo with edges of subject)

#### Viewpoints

Distance, perspective, angles, distorted, birds eye, aerial, forced perspective, illusion, close up, macro

#### Photoshop

Brightness, contrast, hue and saturation, layers, filters, curves, colour splash, de-saturate, crop, select, magic wand tool, levels, erase, alter, manipulate, enhance, change, develop, correct

#### Darkroom process

Aperture, enlarger, exposure timing, negatives, developer, stop bath, fixer, wash, under exposed, over exposed, focus, blur

#### Portraiture

Traditional, environmental, candid, lifestyle, surreal, conceptual, abstract, emotion, mood, facial expression, eye contact, gaze, pose, position, interaction, engaging the viewer, character, close up, full length, head shot

# Writing about Photography

## Going for gold

Advanced analysis: Talking about a specific photograph

It is unnecessary to discuss everything in this list, but choose a few additional things to discuss

**When you are writing about how you FEEL about the piece you could use...Mood**

- The photograph gives the **impression** of...
- The photographer gives a **sense** of...
- There is a **suggestion** of...
- There is a **feeling** of...
- The immediate **impact** this image has on me is...
- 

**When you are writing about the STRUCTURE of the piece of art you could discuss...Composition** (the layout of the piece, is it in thirds? Off centre?)

- What is in the Foreground/mid-ground/background?** (where is the focus?)
- Diagonal/vertical/horizontal lines**
- Form** (what is the shape of the key objects in the image?)
- Layers** (building it up, in Photoshop)

**When you are writing about EFFECTS (filters or layers) you could use...Different lenses** (wide angle, telephoto, macro)

- Balance of Curves, contrast, colour** (with lots of expression)
- Filters- Glows, Vignette, Blur, render, sketch**
- Cropping** (this can massively change the way you read the image!)
- tone** – (is there lots of extreme black and white or soft mid-tones/greys?)

•**When you are talking about CONTEXT (how it relates to other things) you should talk about:**Influences (e.g. My photograph is influenced by the Photographer...)

- Does it look like any other Photographers work? How?
- Why did artists of this time choose to work this way?
- The culture of the time
- Are they influenced by **FILM, PAINTING, THEATRE** or **MUSIC**
- 

**When you are writing about COLOUR use words like...Saturated, de-saturated**

- Warm, Cool, atmospheric**
- Certain tints of one colour**
- The Photographer has used a very limited colour **palette** (range)
- Complimentary colours** (these look good together)
- Clashing colours** (these look bad together)

**When you are writing or talking about a STYLE of work refer to Photographic genres like...Portrait/Landscape**

- Surrealist (dream-like, make-believe)
- Documentary (recording events, political, informative)
- Conceptual (with complex ideas and meaning)
- Media (news, magazine, newspaper)
- Fine Art ( geared towards galleries, can be very experimental and abstract)

# A02 REVIEW

## REFINE

### EXPERIMENT

EXPLORE DIFFERENT IDEAS AND MEDIA

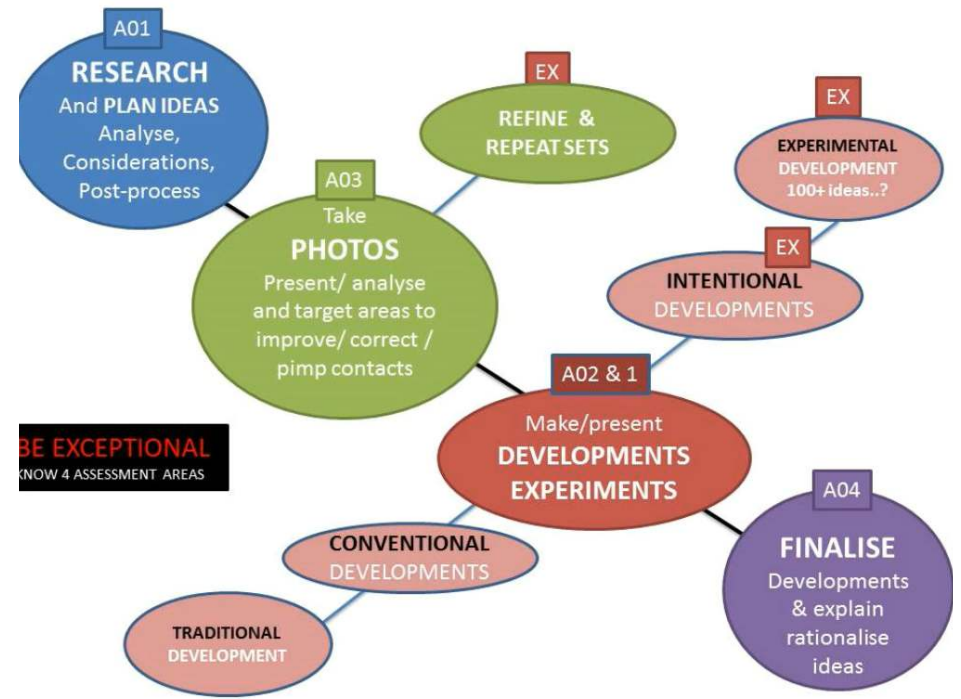
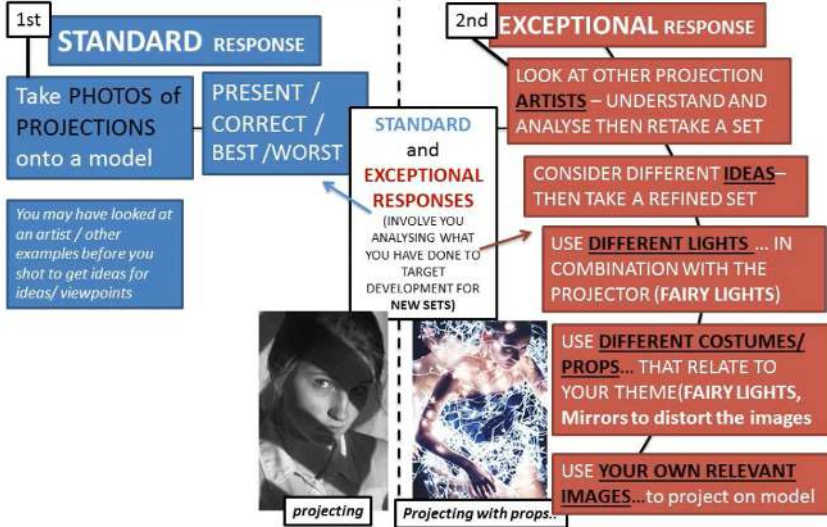
A RANGE OF TECHNIQUES & PROCESSES

## SELECT

## IMPROVE

### BE EXCEPTIONAL...

in the way you **Respond** to an idea / take a set of images





Composition is one of the most important things to think about in order to get a good photograph. It is basically the lay out of your picture. And the way you should purposefully select the way you lay out the things in your photo.

## BALANCE



## NEGATIVE SPACE



## LEADING LINES



## SYMMETRY



## VIEWPOINTS



## RULE OF THIRDS





## Starting Points

# CONNECT AND EXPLAIN

## Developing / Experimenting

- **WHAT** did you do...?

Explain the task, what you did, where you did it...?

- **HOW** did you do it ...?

What camera angles/ viewpoints did you use...?

What settings did you use...? Did you use props, lighting background etc...? Did you use a prime lens..? What other materials did you use...? Did you do anything specific to correct the images...

What did you do to correct the images..?

- **WHY** did you do it..?

Explain why you took the photos...? How did photos relate to your theme?- was it a refined set...?

- **WHO** did it connect to..?

Which artist(s) did it connect to...? how did the shots you took relate to the artist (theme, viewpoint, content, way you photographed)

- **HOW** could you refine the set...?

Describe any issues / problems you had (too yellow, didn't reflect the artist's style too many out of focus? Composition was too boring...etc)...

... suggest ways to fix the problems e.g better use of settings, tripod..?, look more carefully at the artist, direct the model more clearly.

How could you fix the problems in Photoshop..? Colour layers – ask Mr R if you don't know what else you could do...?

- **WHAT and HOW** did you do to develop...?

Explain what you did to develop your images, How did you use Photoshop / traditional methods. What did you do exactly? (use technical terms)... & use print screens to explain **HOW** you developed...?

...Was the development conventional, intentional and experimental...?

- **WHY** did you develop in this way..?

Explain why you developed in this way...? How did the development relate to your theme?- was it a refined development set- or was this your first attempt ...?

- **WHO** did your Development connect to..?

Which artist(s) did it connect to...? how did the developments you made relate to the artist (theme, viewpoint, content.

### **HOW** could you refine the development and improve the development if you were to do it again...?

Describe any issues / problems you had ... time consuming, difficult to arrange space, unpredictable process...

... suggest ways to develop your images more relevantly and more effectively next time... look at the artist more clearly and determine techniques that are more relevant.... Could you use other ways to develop that you haven't tried yet...?

How else could you develop your images (and ideas) using Photoshop..? Could you pick something more experimental or try to be more relevant to your artist ...ask Mr R if you don't know what else you could do...?

# A03

EVIDENCE

## RECORD

## PRESENT IDEAS

### PRIMARY OBSERVATION

DRAWING, PAINTING,  
PRINTING, PHOTOGRAPHY,  
WRITING, PHOTOGRAPHY...

## ANNOTATE

DIFFERENT MEDIA

### Methods of Recording

Observational drawing	Drawing from looking at images or objects
First hand observation	Drawing directly from looking at objects in front of you
Second hand observation	Drawing from looking at images of objects
Photographs	Using a camera or smartphone to record images will class as first hand observation
Sketches	Basic sketches and doodles can act as a starting point for development

### Stages of Drawing

Basic shapes

Accurate shapes

Detail

Shade

#### Shape, form, space

Closed  
Open  
Distorted  
Flat  
Organic  
Deep  
Flat  
Positive  
Negative  
Foreground  
Background  
Composition  
Curvaceous  
Elongated  
Large  
Small  
2D 3D

#### Tone

Bright  
Dark  
Faded  
Smooth  
Harsh  
Contrasting  
Intense  
Sombre  
Grey  
Strong  
Powerful  
Feint  
Light  
Medium  
Dark  
Dramatic  
Large  
Small

#### Pattern and Texture

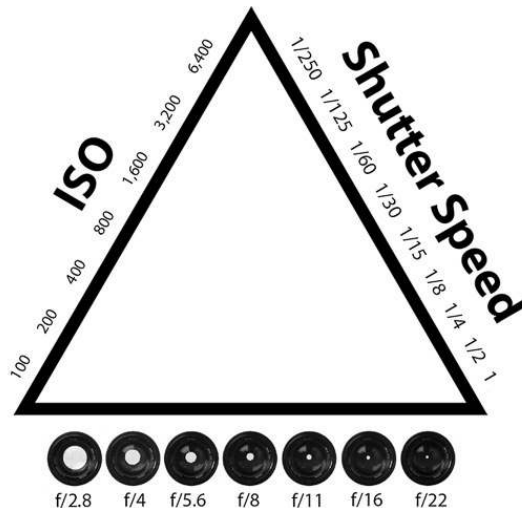
Repeated  
Uniform  
Geometric  
Random  
Symmetrical  
Soft  
Irregular  
Coarse Bold  
Uneven  
Bumpy  
Rough  
Smooth  
Uneven  
Spiky  
Broken  
Furry  
Fine Flat  
Grid

#### Line

Fluent  
Free Rough  
Controlled  
Powerful  
Strong  
Geometric  
Angular  
Light  
Delicate  
Flowing  
Simple  
Thick Thin  
Horizontal  
Broken  
Interrupted  
Rounded  
Overlapping  
Broken  
Faint

#### Colour

Bright Bold  
Primary  
Secondary  
Tertiary  
Radiant  
Dull Vivid  
Contrasting  
Deep  
Monochrome  
Harmonious  
Complementary  
Natural  
Earthy  
Subtle  
Pale  
Cool Warm  
Saturated  
Luminous  
Strong



- Remember...annotation must be demonstrating your technical understanding of materials and processes!
- Annotation must not be telling us something we can already see (eg “this is a black and white photograph”) What artists have you linked your work to and why? How have you explored composition? How will you develop this idea further in your sketchbook?

<b>Shape, form, space</b> Closed Open Distorted Flat Organic Deep Flat Positive Negative Foreground Background Composition Curvaceous Elongated Large Small 2D 3D	<b>Tone</b> Bright Dark Faded Smooth Harsh Contrasting Intense Sombre Grey Strong Powerful Feint Light Medium Dark Dramatic Large Small	<b>Pattern and Texture</b> Repeated Uniform Geometric Random Symmetrical Soft Irregular Coarse Bold Uneven Bumpy Rough Smooth Uneven Spiky Broken Furry Fine Flat Grid	<b>Line</b> Fluent Free Rough Controlled Powerful Strong Geometric Angular Light Delicate Flowing Simple Thick Thin Horizontal Broken Interrupted Rounded Overlapping Broken Faint	<b>Colour</b> Bright Bold Primary Secondary Tertiary Radiant Dull Vivid Contrasting Deep Monochrome Harmonious Complementary Natural Earthy Subtle Pale Cool Warm Saturated Luminous Strong
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Basic, simple, solid, loud, quiet, bright, realistic, stylised, observed, busy, vibrant, strange, interesting, balanced, lively, negative, recognisable, abstract, tactile, meaningful, symbolic, depressing, unique, emotive, hidden, textural, dynamic, disturbed, sophisticated, puzzling, optimistic, powerful, intentional, concealed, subtle,

#### Example

I have created this piece using watercolours, coloured pencil and oil pastel. I have learnt how to blend the watercolours to show different tones and use oil pastels to show the darkest tones and add texture. The piece shows strong shapes and vivid colours. I have added coloured pencils to show some areas in more detail and focus. The artist Georgia O'Keefe has inspired my piece. In her work she uses bright, bold colours to show close up views of flowers with a range of dark to light tones. I aim to now further develop my piece by using other materials. I could do this by experimenting with block prints on watercolour back grounds or possibly try painting onto fabric to then stitch into to show more detail.

**REMEMBER to check your..  
Spellings, Grammar and  
Punctuation**

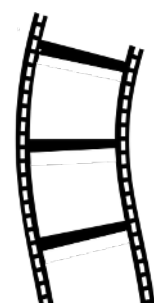
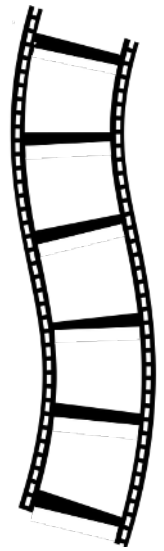
#### Sentence Starter Help

#### Try thinking of your own too

- In this piece I have...
- The materials I have used are...
- The technique I have used is...
- Through working in this way I have learnt how to...
- I have shown... in the style of...
- This piece could develop further by including...
- The artist ..... has influenced my designs because...
- To develop this piece further I could...
- I think using... worked really well because...
- I am particularly pleased with... and I now aim to....



- **ISO speed** – rating of a film's sensitivity to light, describes the sensitivity of a digital camera's image sensor. Higher the ISO, poorer the image quality. Cameras usually have a self-adjust system but can be adjusted manually.
- **Megapixel** = 1 million pixels
- **Pixel** – building blocks of digital photo – small dot of light that adds up to make image
- **Image Stabilizer** - system of three+ accelerometers in a camera which adjusts the camera's lens if you were to shake or move the camera while taking a shot. Prevents blurriness in images.
- **DPI** – Dots per inch, used to measure the resolution (pixel height)
- **LCD** – Liquid Crystal Display – the display screen on the back of the camera where you view and review your photos
- **Resolution** – number of pictures in an image, more pixels = better resolution
- **Noise** – the name for the 'grainy' appearance in digital photos
- **Aliasing** – jagged-edges on curved or diagonal surfaces in images cause because of the fact that pixels are squares
- **White Balance** – function on camera to compensate for different colors of light being emitted by different light sources
- **Memory Card** – Device in digital cameras that stores pictures and video files
- **CMOS** – Complimentary Metal Oxide Semiconductor, one of the sensors found in cheaper cameras, does the same thing as a CCD only lesser quality



## Glossary.

To get a C or above in photography, you must use key words. Not only must you use them, but you need to understand them. Research the meaning of all of the following words and write a definition about their use in photography. Start with this list, we will add to it throughout the year.

composition	Pixel	
rule of thirds	Filters	
negative space	Polarizing filter	
balance	Post Processing	
depth of field	Vignette	Flash
lens	Viewpoint	Contrast
shutter speed	Angle	monotone
aperture	Zoom	manipulate
DSLR	Focus	desaturate
Macro	Framing	Hue
Noise	Perspective	Saturation



What is in the picture?  
Describe it in detail.

What kind of colours are  
in the picture?  
What do they make you  
think about?

What mood or  
atmosphere is created in  
the picture? How does it  
make you feel and why?

What is your opinion of this  
photograph? Be specific and  
explain yourself fully.

Where has the photograph  
been taken?  
Describe the setting or  
scene.



Salvador Dalí / Philippe Halsman  
Dali Atomicuscirca 1948

What message do you  
think the  
photographer wants  
to communicate to  
you? What is the work  
about

What formal elements  
can you talk about in  
this picture? Can you  
describe the lighting/  
composition/  
viewpoints/pattern/  
textures?

What ideas could you take from this  
photographer to inspire your own  
photography?

**A04 OUTCOME**

**PRESENT FINAL IDEAS**

DEVELOPED AS PLANNED

CLEARLY RESPONDS TO ARTISTS EXPLORED

**CONNECTION**

**CONCLUSION**

Here you are demonstrating your understanding of the artists you have explored in your sketchbook in order to produce a final outcome. Your final ideas must be a *personal response* to your theme



A Rough	A Visual/ Maquette	Final Piece
A basic sketch of a final idea	A small image or model created in selected materials	An image or sculpture pulling all preparatory work together





### 3f. H600/01-H606/01 Personal investigation: practical portfolio and related study – Marking criteria

Level	Element	AO1: DEVELOP	AO2: EXPLORE	AO3: RECORD	AO4: PRESENT
1	Practical portfolio	Ideas are simplistic with minimal reference to contextual or other sources, with evidence of unfocused investigation. Demonstrates simplistic analysis and critical understanding. 1–4	Simple explorations with minimal ability to select resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Minimal evidence of review and refinement of work as it develops. 1–4	Simple recording of ideas showing minimal links to any deliberate intention. Simplistic ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 1–4	A personal response with simplistic realisation of intentions. Connections between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are minimal and superficial. 1–4
	Related study	Simplistic ability to communicate ideas, with minimal exploration of critical and contextual understanding. Some inaccuracy and incoherence in recording when using specialist language and vocabulary are demonstrated. Simplistic knowledge and understanding are shown when presenting the study and realising intentions. Connections, where appropriate, between visual and other elements are minimal. 1–4			
2	Practical portfolio	Ideas are developed with evidence of some links to contextual or other sources, with evidence of basic investigation. Demonstrates basic analysis and critical understanding. 5–8	Evidence of basic exploration and some ability to select resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Review of work is evident as it develops with some refinement made. 5–8	Basic recording of ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions. Basic ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 5–8	A personal response with some meaning and a basic realisation of intentions. Connections between visual or other elements, where appropriate, are limited. 5–8
	Related study	Limited coherence when communicating ideas, with some exploration and limited evidence of critical and contextual understanding. Limited accuracy and partially structured recording when using specialist language and vocabulary are demonstrated. Some evidence of knowledge and understanding is shown when presenting the study and realising intentions. Connections, where appropriate, between visual and other elements are limited. 5–8			
3	Practical portfolio	Ideas are developed with links to appropriate contextual or other sources, with some relevant and effective investigation. Demonstrates relevant and effective analysis and critical understanding. 9–12	Evidence of appropriate exploration and ability to select relevant resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Review of work demonstrates effective refinement as work develops. 9–12	Effective and appropriate recording of ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions. Effective ability to reflect critically on work and progress. 9–12	A personal and meaningful response with appropriate and realised links to intentions. Connections between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are effectively developed. 9–12
	Related study	Effective communication of ideas, with appropriate exploration and clear evidence of critical and contextual understanding. Accurate and mainly structured recording when using specialist language and vocabulary are demonstrated. Evidence of knowledge and some understanding is shown when presenting the study and realising intentions. Connections, where appropriate, between visual and other elements are appropriately developed. 9–12			



4	Practical portfolio	Ideas are well-developed, reflecting influences of relevant research of contextual and other sources, with evidence of focused and detailed investigation. Demonstrates detailed and informed analysis and critical understanding. <b>13–16</b>	Detailed and informed exploration and selection of relevant resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Detailed and informed review and refinement of work as it develops. <b>13–16</b>	Detailed and informed recording of ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions. Purposeful ability to reflect critically on work and progress. <b>13–16</b>	A personal and meaningful response with well-developed and purposeful links to intentions. Connections made between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are well developed and purposeful. <b>13–16</b>
	Related study	Detailed communication of ideas with informed exploration, refinement and critical and contextual understanding. Purposeful use of specialist language and vocabulary in recording is demonstrated. Evidence of knowledge and well-developed understanding is shown when presenting the study and realising intentions. Connections, where appropriate, between visual and other elements are well developed and purposeful. <b>13–16</b>			
5	Practical portfolio	Informed ideas are fully developed, with in-depth reflection of influences of contextual and other sources, with evidence of focused and insightful investigation. Demonstrates fully developed and insightful analysis and critical understanding. <b>17–20</b>	In-depth exploration and well-considered selection of relevant resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Fully developed and insightful review and refinement of work as it develops. <b>17–20</b>	In-depth and well-considered recording of ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions. Insightful ability to reflect critically on work and progress. <b>17–20</b>	A personal and meaningful response with fully developed and insightful realisation of intentions. Connections made between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are fully developed and insightful. <b>17–20</b>
	Related study	Well-considered communication of ideas with insightful exploration, refinement and critical and contextual understanding. Extensive and well-considered use of specialist language and vocabulary in recording is demonstrated. A high level of structured and reasoned knowledge and understanding is shown when presenting the study and realising intentions. Connections, where appropriate, between visual and other elements are fully developed and insightful. <b>17–20</b>			
6	Practical portfolio	Informed ideas are fully and maturely developed, reflecting a sophisticated response to contextual and other sources, with evidence of mature and sustained investigation. Demonstrates sophisticated and sustained analysis and critical understanding. <b>21–24</b>	Sophisticated and sustained exploration and mature selection of relevant resources, media, materials, techniques and processes. Sophisticated and sustained review and refinement of work as it develops. <b>21–24</b>	Sophisticated and mature recording of ideas, observations and insights to reflect intentions. Sophisticated ability to reflect critically on work and progress. <b>21–24</b>	A personal and meaningful response showing sophisticated and mature realisation of intentions. Connections made between visual and other elements, where appropriate, are sophisticated and mature. <b>21–24</b>
	Related study	Sophisticated and sustained communication of ideas with thorough exploration, refinement and excellent critical and contextual understanding. Extensive and sophisticated handling of specialist language and vocabulary in recording is demonstrated. An accomplished level of structured and reasoned knowledge and understanding is shown when presenting the study and realising intentions. Connections, where appropriate, between visual and other elements are sophisticated. <b>21–24</b>			

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit.