



Higher National Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Photography: Darkroom Techniques

Unit code: DW81 34

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to enable the candidate to research, produce and present a series of black and white fine art photographs. The candidate will also be able to research different types of black and white papers, developers and toners.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Research black and white printing materials, developers and toners.
- 2 Produce black and white fine art prints, test strips and contact sheet/s.
- 3 Carry out after processes and present finished photographic prints.

Credit points and level: 1 HN credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Candidates should have a basic knowledge of darkroom equipment, enlargers and printing processes.

This could be exemplified by the following Unit:

D956 12 *Photography: Monochrome Film Processing and Printing*

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Problem Solving and Communication at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

General information for centres (cont)

Assessment: The assessment for this Unit will be product based and could be assessed holistically by evidence generated by the production of black and white prints. Much of the evidence should arise naturally from the production of black and white fine art prints but may also include reflective statements made by the candidate on his/her experience related to the work produced and previous research. Outcome 1 should be assessed by an annotated workbook. There should be at least 2 examples of sourced types of photographic paper, developers and toners.

For Outcome 2 the candidate will produce test strips or process control records and produce three fibre based black and white prints to a minimum size of 10 x 8 inches. The prints should show technical competence and aesthetic judgement.

For Outcome 3 the candidate will carry out after processes, tone and present the finished prints from Outcome 2.

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Photography: Darkroom Techniques

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Research black and white printing materials, developers and toning techniques

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Fibre papers
- ◆ Printing developers
- ◆ Toning techniques

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can produce an annotated workbook containing information about:

- ◆ different types of black and white printing papers (where available)
- ◆ different types of printing developers (where available)
- ◆ different types of toning techniques (where available)

Each example must include comments on the relative merits of paper finish, developer choice and toning technique.

Work produced out-with controlled conditions must be subject to authentication by the Tutor.

Assessment guidelines

The assessment for this Outcome can be combined with Outcome 2 and 3 as part of a single assessment for this Unit, details of which can be found in Outcomes 2 and 3

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Photography: Darkroom Techniques

Outcome 2

Produce black and white fine art prints, test strips and contact sheet/s

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Darkroom techniques
- ◆ Preparation of equipment and materials
- ◆ Health and Safety
- ◆ Image contrast
- ◆ Image density

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide product evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ produce a minimum of three black and white fine art prints with the use of test strips or process control records and contact/s prints:
 - prints should show technical competence and aesthetic judgement — each print must be a minimum of 10 x 8 inches from different negatives
 - test strips/prints to ascertain correct image contrast
 - test strips/prints to ascertain correct image density
 - produce contact prints of selected negatives
 - utilise masking techniques to control localised image density
 - complete risk assessment checklist

Assessment guidelines

It is envisaged that black and white prints should be made on fibre based paper and processed by hand to give a higher standard of work both in technique and Outcome. The use of a range of fine art black and white papers and finishes should be encouraged for this Outcome.

Negatives can be sourced from black and white film stock, chromogenic film, Polaroid negative film or inkjet acetates. Contact sheets should show images of correct orientation and may be produced using resin coated paper, machine or hand processed.

Candidates should be encouraged to include contact sheets and test strips in their workbooks. Candidates should be encouraged to process their own films using darkroom-processing equipment but this is not essential to success in this Unit. Health and safety guidelines should be followed at all times when using chemicals in darkroom practice.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Photography: Darkroom Techniques

Outcome 3

Carry out after processes and present photographic prints

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Techniques to enhance or modify black and white prints
- ◆ Retouching black and white prints.
- ◆ Presentation media
- ◆ Presentation skills

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ modify black and white prints from Outcome 2 using an appropriate toning technique
- ◆ retouch prints where appropriate
- ◆ choose a medium, and present the three prints produced from Outcome 2

Assessment guidelines

The assessment would require the candidates to produce three modified fine art black and white prints.

All of the prints produced should show technical competence and aesthetic judgement and be retouched where needed. The final prints should be toned and presented in an appropriate manner. The individual centre assessing this Unit can decide on appropriate presentation but it is encouraged that candidates present their work in a portfolio, workbook, flat mount or window mount.

The candidate's final printed images should arise from research already carried out in the production of the workbook in Outcome 1. The workbook should show information and examples of papers, developers and toners from current manufacturers. The workbook should also show critical engagement with examples, commenting on factors such as paper texture, finish, reflectance, tone, developer contrast and toner colour and usage. An oral presentation is an acceptable alternative to annotations.

There is a major opportunity for integration of this Unit with a variety of existing project briefs within the HN Photography Framework. If used in this manner, an assessment matrix should be devised.

Administrative Information

Unit code: DW81 34
Unit title: Photography: Darkroom Techniques
Superclass category: KE
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History of Changes:

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Amendment to the Evidence Requirements and Guidance for Outcome 1.	22/4/09

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Photography: Darkroom Techniques

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is intended for candidates who are taking a qualification in photography at Higher National level. It may also be taken by candidates in relevant employment wishing to develop and/or enhance their employment skills.

This Unit is designed to develop the knowledge and skills of the candidate with in the context of photographic darkroom practices. The Unit should encourage candidates to work to realistic workplace practices, using industry standard techniques.

The focus on Outcome 1 should be on sources of research (eg manufacturers websites, photographic paper samples, books, internet magazines etc.) The research should be collated in a workbook, with different annotated examples each, of paper, developer and toner (where available). An oral presentation is an acceptable alternative to annotations.

For Outcome 2 It is envisaged that black and white prints should be made on fibre based paper and processed by hand to give a higher standard of work both in technique and Outcome. The use of a range of fine art black and white papers and finishes should be encouraged for this Outcome. Negatives can be sourced from black and white film stock, chromogenic film, Polaroid negative film or inkjet acetates. Contact sheets should show images of correct orientation and may be produced using resin coated paper, machine or hand processed.

Candidates should be encouraged to include contact sheets and test strips in their workbooks. Candidates should be encouraged to process their own films using darkroom-processing equipment but this is not essential to success in this Unit. Health and safety guidelines should be followed at all times when using chemicals in darkroom practice.

All Outcomes will be evidenced by producing ‘product’ evidence, covering all processes set out by the 3 Outcomes. It is not expected that this Unit should be evidenced through simple exercises, although appropriate evidence may be gathered in the form of an annotated workbook showing the various control processes in the form of test strips or control records.

The Unit is aimed at candidates producing prints with technical competence and aesthetic judgement on fibre-based paper for fine art presentation. It is expected that candidates will gain experience in a range print materials as well as developers and toners.

Candidates should be encouraged to link these assessments with other Units. For example Landscape, Portraiture, Exhibition etc.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Photography: Darkroom Techniques

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Candidates should be given the opportunity to gather source information for themselves and they should be encouraged to make use of relevant websites and other resources and reading lists. Candidates will require guidance from the centre to ensure they adopt a suitable approach for each assessment. Many of the skills achieved in this Unit will be transferable to other photography Units.

While it would be useful to encourage guest speakers to have some input to the delivery of this Unit, it is appreciated that visits of this kind are difficult to co-ordinate and integrate. However, input from current practitioners is encouraged wherever possible.

A candidate centred approach should be adopted at all times. The main emphasis of this Unit lies in Outcomes 2 and 3 — approximately 80% of the time should be allocated to this area.

Candidates should be given demonstration in the assessment of negatives with regards to highlight, midtone and shadow detail. Negatives can be sourced from black and white film stock, chromogenic film, Polaroid negative film or inkjet acetates.

Candidates should also be given demonstration in the use of darkroom enlargers, enlarger lenses, focus scopes, contact frames, and be allocated time to familiarize themselves with their uses. Contact sheets should show images of correct orientation and may be produced using resin coated paper, machine or hand processed.

Candidates should be given demonstration in the use of appropriate techniques to produce final toned prints suitable for archival purposes. Prints may be modified locally to lighten areas with Farmer's reducer, selenium for archival, gold, copper, sepia or a variety of kits can be suggested. Candidates should be encouraged to experiment with processes and be allocated time to familiarise themselves with it. Candidates should be working towards the quality required for final presentation using a range of materials, which are appropriate to the presentation. The individual centre assessing this Unit can decide on appropriate presentation, but it is encouraged that candidates present their work in a portfolio, workbook, flat mount or window mount.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

All elements of the Core Skill of Problem Solving, namely, planning and organising, critical thinking, and reviewing and evaluating could be developed and enhanced as the practical work for the Unit is undertaken. Candidates need to access and review a range of information on materials and observe demonstrations of techniques before applying information to decide processes and approaches likely to be most effective. Prints must be produced and presented working to a specific brief, within available resources. The need to analyse and work with health and safety considerations while applying critical and aesthetic judgement will naturally develop creative problem solving skills and technical competence. Evaluation which examines and analyses the potential and actual impact of work produced is formally assessed during the presentation of work.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Photography: Darkroom Techniques

Although communication skills are not formally assessed candidates should be supported to work to professional standards. On line training could be useful in the development of an effective search strategy for accessing and evaluating information and reviews of materials and processes. If oral reporting is used to present work in Outcome 3 candidates should work to a professional standard using appropriate media to communicate essential ideas and concepts effectively. The availability of suitable software to support effective oral presentation could further assist the development of skills. Annotation of workbooks should be accurate and designed for impact. Candidates should be advised to collate and organise materials effectively, signpost key points, and demonstrate effective verbal and non-verbal communication techniques. They should be prepared to respond to questions in a way that progresses communication with their audience.

Open learning

If this Unit is delivered by open learning methods, additional resources will be required for candidate support, assessment and quality assurance.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

General information for candidates

Unit title: Photography: Darkroom Techniques

This Unit is designed to enable you to produce high quality fine art prints from a range of negatives and then be able to tone them for archival purposes.

In Outcome 1 you will source different types of photographic printing paper, processing chemicals and toners. You will produce an illustrated evaluative workbook that contains:

- ◆ different types of black and white printing paper (where available) stating their characteristics
- ◆ different types of printing developers (where available) stating their characteristics
- ◆ different types of toning techniques (where available) stating their characteristics

In Outcome 2 you will learn about creating imaginative, creative high quality fine art prints. You will learn how to produce contact prints, test strips to control image density and contrast, and how to alter these two variables to produce prints with a range of tones that suit the subject matter. You will be encouraged to experiment with a range of different fibre based papers and different developers available from photographic manufacturers. For Outcome 2 you will:

- ◆ produce a minimum of three, technically and aesthetically competent black and white prints from different negatives - each print must be a minimum of 10 x 8 inches
- ◆ produce test strips/prints to ascertain correct image contrast
- ◆ produce test strips/prints to ascertain correct image density
- ◆ produce contact prints of selected negatives
- ◆ utilise masking techniques to control localised image density

In Outcome 3 you should learn how to apply different toners/reducers to apply after processes to modify final printed work. You will then choose an appropriate presentation method. For Outcome 3 you will:

- ◆ produce three, technically and aesthetically competent, modified black and white prints from Outcome 2, using an appropriate toning technique
- ◆ retouch prints where appropriate
- ◆ present your work

Finally, you will discuss your work and present it to your Tutor.