# National Qualifications

# Photography
# Project
# General assessment information

**This pack contains general assessment information for centres preparing candidates for the project Component of Higher Photography Course assessment.**

**It must be read in conjunction with the specific assessment task(s) for this component of Course assessment, which may only be downloaded from SQA's designated secure website by authorised personnel.**

# Contents

# Introduction

This is the general assessment information for the Higher Photography project.

This project is worth 100 marks. The marks contribute 100% of the overall marks for the Course assessment. The Course will be graded A–D.

Marks for all Course Components are added up to give a total Course assessment mark which is then used as the basis for grading decisions.

This Course assessment has no other Components.

The assessment task will be set by centres within SQA guidelines, externally marked by SQA and conducted in centres under the conditions specified by SQA.

This project has three Sections.

**Section 1**, titled 'Research and Investigation', will have 25 marks.
**Section 2**, titled 'Development and Production', will have 60 marks.
**Section 3**, titled 'Evaluation', will have 15 marks.

This document describes the general requirements for the assessment of the project Component for this Course. It gives general information and instructions for assessors.

It must be read in conjunction with the assessment task for this Component of Course assessment.

# Equality and inclusion

This Course assessment has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment. Assessments have been designed to promote equal opportunities while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the Assessment Arrangements web page: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html

Guidance on inclusive approaches to delivery and assessment in this Course is provided in the *Course Support Notes*.

# What this assessment covers

This assessment contributes 100% of the total marks for the Course.

The assessment will assess the skills, knowledge and understanding specified for the project in the *Course Assessment Specification*. These are:

♦ project planning skills when researching and investigating the negotiated project
♦ applied technical and creative photographic skills when developing photographic ideas and producing photographic images
♦ critical-thinking and evaluation skills when evaluating photographic work and practice

# Assessment

## Purpose

The purpose of this assessment is to generate evidence for the added value of this Course by means of a Photography project. The added value for the Course will address the key purposes and aims of the Course, as defined in the Course rationale.

This Course assessment Component allows candidates to demonstrate their creative and practical photography skills and their ability to evaluate their work and practice.

In this assessment, added value will focus on the following:

♦ challenge: requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
♦ application: requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical contexts as appropriate

## Assessment overview

Assessment should take place when the candidates are ready to be assessed.

The photography project allows candidates to demonstrate their creativity and applied photography skills in a new and appropriately challenging context.

When compiling the project for assessment, candidates will be drawing on, extending and applying their practical photography skills and applying aspects of their understanding of photographic practice developed across the Course.

The project will provide evidence of the candidate's ability to plan a negotiated photography project and to use their research and investigation into photographers' work as a basis for developing their photographic ideas. Candidates will produce a series of photographs demonstrating their technical and creative skills before evaluating their photographic work and practice.

The context and scope of the project brief should be agreed between the candidate and the assessor. An appropriate project brief will be a meaningful and appropriately challenging task, which will allow the candidate to apply practical photography, creative and evaluation skills developed in the *Photography: Image Making* and *Photography: Contextual Imagery* Units.

The project brief must include specific project requirements related to all key aspects and Evidence Requirements for each of the three project Sections.

The agreed project brief should allow the candidate to:

♦ explore the selected topic from an agreed style or approach
♦ produce a body of work that meets the aims of the project and challenges their photographic skills, resulting in a coherent and consistent project

# Assessment conditions

Assessors must exercise their professional responsibility in ensuring that evidence submitted by a candidate is the candidate's own work.

This assessment is a single assessment event which will be carried out over a period of time. Candidates should undertake the assessment at an appropriate point in the Course. This will normally be when they have completed most of the work on the Units in the Course.

It is an open-book assessment. There are no restrictions on the resources to which candidates may have access.

The project will be developed and agreed by the assessor and candidate. Assessors should provide guidance to candidates on the suitability of their project topic/theme ensuring that the agreed project is achievable and realistic before the candidate starts the assessment.

This assessment has three Sections:

♦   a research and investigation Section
♦   a development and production Section
♦   an evaluation Section

The evaluation Section should be completed in no more than one hour and 30 minutes. When completing the evaluation, candidates may have access to one pre-prepared sheet of A4 notes or equivalent and their final photographs.

The assessment will be conducted under some supervision and control. Assessors should put in place processes for monitoring progress and ensuring that the work is the candidate's own and that plagiarism has not taken place.

Assessors should put in place mechanisms to authenticate candidate evidence. For example:

♦   regular checkpoint/progress meetings with candidates
♦   short spot-check personal interviews
♦   checklists which record activity/progress

Candidates must undertake the assessment, whatever the nature, independently.

Some guidance may be provided during the planning Section, but the candidate should work independently throughout the development/production and evaluation Sections. Assessor input and advice on the candidate's planning is acceptable in order to allow the candidate to progress to the next Section of the assessment. The assistance provided must be recorded so that the candidate's own planning work can be marked fairly.

Support and guidance during the implementation and evaluation Sections should be limited to minimal prompts and questioning, referring the candidate to the agreed project brief for the assessment task.

Reasonable assistance may be given on a generic basis to a class or group of candidates, for example advice on how to produce and/or realise their ideas. It may also be given to candidates on an individual basis.

When reasonable assistance is given on a one-to-one basis in the context of something the candidate has already produced or demonstrated, there is a danger that it becomes support for assessment and assessors need to be aware that this may be going beyond reasonable assistance. The term 'reasonable assistance' is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance.

Once the project has been completed and submitted, it should not be returned to the candidate for further work to improve their mark.

# Evidence to be gathered

The following candidate evidence is required for this assessment:

## Section 1: 'Research and Investigation'

♦ a structured project proposal, which is based on the agreed brief and which shows project-planning skills and consideration of site logistics and resource availability (in written, electronic and/or oral form)
♦ investigative research material of relevant image makers/photographers related to the project (in any appropriate format)

## Section 2: 'Development and Production'

♦ evidence of ongoing justified creative decision and exploratory development of initial photographic images carried out during the project (such as candidate contact sheets/test images, notes and/or annotated development work)
♦ a series of 12 technically competent images (maximum A4, minimum A5 size) which meet the project requirements

## Section 3: 'Evaluation'

♦ an evaluation identifying personal strengths and areas for improvement in both their work and practice (in written, electronic and/or oral form)

# General Marking Instructions

In line with SQA's normal practice, the following general marking instructions are addressed to the Marker. They will also be helpful for those preparing candidates for Course assessment.

Evidence will be submitted to SQA for external marking.

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

## General Marking Principles for the project

*This information is provided to help you understand the general principles you must apply when marking candidate responses to this project. These principles must be read in conjunction with the Detailed Marking Instructions, which identify the key features required in candidate responses.*

(a)     Marks for each candidate response must always be assigned in line with these General Marking Principles and the Detailed Marking Instructions for this assessment.

(b)     Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.

The following pages provide information on how marks will be allocated within each Section of the project.

Before reaching a final mark for each Section of the project, assessors will refer to specific descriptions of competence for different mark ranges. They will allocate marks for each Section and part of the project, using a 'best fit' approach.

The band descriptions define the expected level and standard of evidence expected at the mid-point of the band range/specific mark range, as appropriate. Assessors will select the band descriptor which most closely describes the evidence, before calibrating accordingly within the mark range, as appropriate.

This table shows what is required to generate evidence for the Higher Photography project.

## Section 1: Research and Investigation

**There are 25 marks available for this Section.**

This part of the project provides evidence of the candidate's project planning skills.

Marks will be awarded for:

♦ A structured project proposal, based on the selected project showing evidence of project-planning skills such as: providing a rationale, identifying possible approaches, defining the aims and objectives of the project, identifying information sources, identifying the platform to be used (traditional/digital/ software, etc), and establishing timescales for completing the project). **(0-10 marks)**

♦ **Project planning** showing (as appropriate): consideration of location, site logistics, access, risk assessment, legality, resource availability (eg camera, photographic equipment), health and safety, copyright issues, permissions, model release, implications of travel time and cost. **(0-5 marks)**

♦ Collated **investigative research** related to the project topic, including research and investigation of relevant contextual images, photographers' work, relevant technical research (eg photographic techniques, editing and manipulation techniques) demonstrating personal engagement. **(0-10 marks)**

## Section 2: Development and Production

**There are 60 marks available for this Section.**

This part of the project provides evidence of the candidate's applied technical and creative photography skills.

Marks will be awarded for:

♦ A body of photographic work (eg contact sheets and/or test images, edits, experiments with photographic techniques as appropriate) demonstrating a sustained and creative line of visual development relevant to the project topic and selected approach. **(0-10 marks)**

♦ Evidence of **ongoing critical reflection and refinement** of the photographic practice (eg annotations, symbols and keys, annotated diagrams and sketches, shoot reviews, mid-point review, points of action in relation to the project topic) demonstrating understanding of composition, lighting, exposure, photographic techniques and processes and their effect, identification of strengths, weaknesses and problem areas. **(0-10 marks)**

♦ A **justified shortlisted selection** of the **strongest images** from the previous body of work, **relevant to the project topic** and demonstrating a creative

response, from which the final 12 images will be selected. **(0-10 marks)**

♦ Producing **a series of 12 technically competent images** demonstrating appropriate use of photographic techniques (eg focus, exposure, shutter speed, aperture, ISO, white balance, composition, lighting techniques, use of lenses and filters, use of digital manipulation/enhancement/correction/ darkroom techniques, as appropriate). **(0-10 marks)**

♦ **Producing a series of 12 prints** which demonstrate competent file optimisation and print quality appropriate to the project topic and selected approach (eg appropriate resolution for print size A5–A4 or equivalent, choice of substrate, aspect ratio, presentation). **(0-10 marks)**

♦ The **final selection of 12 appropriate images** which communicate the project topic, demonstrating variety and creativity, and which clearly link to earlier investigative research and development. **(0-10 marks)**

## Section 3: Evaluation

**There are 15 marks available for this Section.**

This part of the project provides evidence of the candidate's critical thinking and evaluation skills.

Marks in the evaluation will be awarded for:

♦ Critically reflecting on and identifying personal strengths and areas for improvement in **their final prints** relevant to the project topic and selected approaches. **(0-10 marks)**

♦ Critically reflecting on and identifying personal strengths and areas for improvement **in their photographic practice. (0-5 marks)**

# Administrative information

Published:     September 2016 (version 2.0)

## History of changes

| Version | Description of change | Authorised by | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1 | Section 2 of the General Marking Principles for the project amended. | Qualifications Manager | September 2015 |
| 2.0 | General Marking Principles for the project substantially revised. | Qualifications Manager | September 2016 |
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# Security and confidentiality

This document can be used by practitioners in SQA approved centres for the assessment of National Courses and not for any other purpose.

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