Higher Photography

Course code:	C855 76
Course assessment code:	X855 76
SCQF:	level 6 (24 SCQF credit points)
Valid from:	session 2018–19

This document provides detailed information about the course and course assessment to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It describes the structure of the course and the course assessment in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that are assessed.

This document is for teachers and lecturers and contains all the mandatory information you need to deliver the course.

Contents

Course overview

The course consists of 24 SCQF credit points which includes time for preparation for course assessment. The notional length of time for candidates to complete the course is 160 hours.

The course assessment has two components.

Component	Marks	Duration
Component 1: question paper	30	1 hour
Component 2: project	100	see 'Course assessment' section

Recommended entry	Progression
Entry to this course is at the discretion of the centre. Candidates would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience: ♦ relevant photography units (SCQF level 5 and above) ♦ National Progression Award in Photography (SCQF level 5) ♦ National 5 Art and Design course or relevant units	♦ other qualifications in photography, art and design or related areas ♦ further study, employment and/or training

Conditions of award

The grade awarded is based on the total marks achieved across all course assessment components.

Course rationale

National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide time for learning, focus on skills and applying learning, and provide scope for personalisation and choice.

Every course provides opportunities for candidates to develop breadth, challenge and application. The focus and balance of assessment is tailored to each subject area.

This course allows candidates to develop knowledge and understanding of photographic media and camera techniques and processes when developing their creative practice. Candidates learn how social, cultural, historical, and scientific influences impact on photographers' work and practice.

Candidates demonstrate technical photographic skills and show personal, creative responses when photographing a variety of subjects. They have opportunities to develop personal autonomy and critical-thinking skills, and learn to evaluate their own photographic work and practice.

Purpose and aims

The course encourages candidates to be inspired and challenged by visually representing their personal thoughts and ideas through the medium of photography. An integrated approach to learning means candidates plan, develop and produce creative and technically proficient photographs.

Candidates develop skills that are valuable for learning, life and work. The course allows them to broaden their skills base and to widen their horizons regarding the range of vocations available to them.

The aims of the course are for candidates to:

♦ communicate personal thoughts, feelings and ideas using photography
♦ develop technical and creative skills through using photographic media, techniques and processes
♦ develop knowledge and understanding of a range of photographic practices
♦ develop skills in problem solving, critical thinking and reflective practice
♦ develop an understanding of the impact of social, cultural, historical, and scientific influences on photographers' work and practice
♦ become critically self-reflective autonomous learners

Who is this course for?

The course is suitable for all candidates with an interest in photography. It is suitable for candidates with a general interest in the subject and for those wanting to progress to higher levels of study. This qualification will allow candidates to consolidate and extend creative skills developed through, for example, the National 5 Art and Design course or the National Progression Award in Photography (SCQF level 5).

The learning experiences in the course are flexible and adaptable, with opportunities for personalisation and choice. This makes the qualification accessible to the needs and aspirations of a diverse range of candidates.

Course content

The course has an integrated approach to learning. It combines practical learning activities that are underpinned by knowledge and understanding of photography.

Candidates learn how to plan and carry out practical photographic work. They investigate selected photographers' work and practice and explain how external influences impact on these. They use this understanding of photographers and their work when developing their own personal approaches to photography. They learn and apply a range of image-making techniques. Candidates develop their creative problem-solving skills as they resolve visual and technical problems. They also reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of their practice and the qualities of their photographic work.

Skills, knowledge and understanding

Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course

The following provides a broad overview of the subject skills, knowledge and understanding developed in the course:

- applying knowledge and understanding of the properties of light and image formation
- applying knowledge and understanding of camera controls and a range of photographic techniques and processes
- investigating and analysing the major historical, scientific, social, and cultural factors influencing photographers and their work
- producing investigative research for photography, and planning, shooting, printing and developing photographs
- exploring and experimenting with a range of photographic media, manipulation techniques and processes
- producing and presenting creative and technically proficient photographs
- effectively managing and storing photographic images
- critical self-reflecting and evaluating by candidates of their work and practice, and the photographic work of others

Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment

The following provides details of skills, knowledge and understanding sampled in the course assessment:

Question paper		Project	
Knowledge and understanding	**Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:**	**Skill**	**Candidates demonstrate ability to:**
		Planning	♦ plan a photography project
Genre	♦ choice of subject ♦ use of subject matter/models/props/location	Using subject matter	♦ select appropriate subject matter ♦ use subject matter/models/props/location as appropriate
		Investigation and research	♦ produce and compile relevant investigative research ♦ explain the impact of social, cultural, historical, and scientific influences on photographers' work and practice
Exposure	♦ exposure triangle — relationship between aperture, shutter speed and ISO ♦ exposure controlled through adjustment of light intensity and time value (shutter and aperture control) ♦ under- and over-exposure ♦ exposure compensation (EV numbers, auto-bracketing)	Using exposure	♦ use camera controls and image-making techniques to produce appropriately exposed images

Question paper		Project	
Knowledge and understanding	**Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:**	**Skill**	**Candidates demonstrate ability to:**
ISO	♦ ISO numbers and effect on light sensitivity ♦ effect of ISO on exposure — relationship to shutter speed and aperture ♦ effect of ISO on grain (film) and noise (digital)	Using ISO	♦ use ISO appropriate to the lighting conditions, intended exposure and for creative effect
Aperture	♦ function of the aperture ♦ measurement using f-numbers ♦ use of aperture to control exposure ♦ use of aperture to control depth of field ♦ effect of aperture on depth of field ♦ effect of aperture adjustment on shutter speed	Using aperture	♦ use aperture appropriately to control exposure and depth of field
Shutter speed	♦ function of the shutter ♦ measurement using time — for example seconds, fractions of seconds ♦ use of shutter speed to control exposure ♦ use of shutter speed appropriate to the subject ♦ use of shutter speed to 'freeze' movement ♦ use of shutter speed to create motion blur ♦ effect of shutter speed adjustment on aperture	Using shutter speed	♦ use shutter speed as appropriate to control exposure and for creative effect
Focus	♦ auto focus — advantages/disadvantages ♦ manual focus — advantages/disadvantages	Using focus	♦ produce appropriately focused images

Question paper		Project	
Knowledge and understanding	**Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:**	**Skill**	**Candidates demonstrate ability to:**
White balance	♦ colour temperature of different light sources and light conditions ♦ colour casts ♦ white balance controlled in camera — effect of pre-set white balance modes, for example daylight, sunny, cloudy, tungsten, fluorescent, auto	Using white balance	♦ use white balance settings appropriate to the lighting conditions ♦ identify and correct white balance issues in camera or post-production
Tonal range	♦ using and interpreting histograms ♦ identifying tonal issues ♦ highlights, mid-tones and shadows ♦ contrast/white point/black point	Using tonal range	♦ produce images which have an appropriate tonal range for the selected approach
Using equipment	♦ SLR/DSLR camera — aperture priority, shutter priority, manual, programme and automatic mode ♦ pre-set modes — portrait, macro, landscape, sport ♦ tripod — stabilisation ♦ remote/cable shutter release ♦ light meter ♦ lighting — continuous and flash, including fill-in flash ♦ light modifiers — reflectors, diffusers ♦ lenses, for example focal length, zoom, telephoto, portrait, standard, macro, wide angle, fisheye ♦ panning, tilting, zooming ♦ filters — neutral density, polarising ♦ computer — post-production enhancement	Using equipment	♦ select and use appropriate equipment competently and safely to produce creative and technically proficient photographs

Question paper		Project	
Knowledge and understanding	**Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:**	**Skill**	**Candidates demonstrate ability to:**
Lighting and properties of light	♦ incident and reflected light ♦ specular and diffuse reflection ♦ lighting conditions — daylight ♦ artificial light sources ♦ high key ♦ low key ♦ hard lighting ♦ soft lighting ♦ back lighting/rim lighting/contre-jour	Using lighting	♦ use natural and/or artificial lighting to produce creative and technically proficient photographs
Composition	♦ camera angle/viewpoint ♦ location ♦ pose ♦ framing ♦ cropping ♦ centre of interest/point of interest ♦ leading lines/s-curves ♦ use of space — for example rule of thirds, foreground, mid-ground, background, balance, negative space, symmetry/asymmetry ♦ scale ♦ proportion ♦ perspective	Using composition	♦ use compositional techniques to produce creative and technically proficient photographs

Question paper		Project	
Knowledge and understanding	**Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:**	**Skill**	**Candidates demonstrate ability to:**
Visual elements	♦ colour ♦ tone ♦ shape ♦ form ♦ line ♦ texture ♦ pattern	Using the visual elements	♦ use visual elements to produce creative and technically proficient photographs
Effect of applied techniques	♦ mood and atmosphere ♦ visual impact ♦ visual effect ♦ creative effect ♦ message communicated about the subject ♦ symbolism ♦ style	Creative decision-making for visual effect	♦ engage in ongoing critical reflection, refinement and creative decision-making ♦ produce a sustained and creative line of development ♦ purposefully explore and experiment with selected image-making techniques and processes ♦ select image-making techniques to create photographs with visual impact and an appropriate style, mood and atmosphere ♦ select images for the final prints which show a creative response to the project topic

Question paper		Project	
Knowledge and understanding	**Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:**	**Skill**	**Candidates demonstrate ability to:**
Resolution and output	♦ file size (megabytes) ♦ dots per inch/pixels per inch appropriate to output ♦ resizing	Printing and presenting photographic prints	♦ produce technically proficient photographic prints — minimum size A5, maximum size A4 (or equivalent area) in an appropriate resolution on a selected paper/substrate
		Evaluation	♦ critically evaluate the strengths and areas for development in their photographic work and practice

Skills, knowledge and understanding included in the course are appropriate to the SCQF level of the course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level, and can be found on the SCQF website.

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

This course helps candidates to develop broad, generic skills. These skills are based on [SQA's Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#) and draw from the following main skills areas:

3   Health and wellbeing

3.1   Personal learning

5   Thinking skills

5.4   Analysing and evaluating
5.5   Creating

Teachers and lecturers must build these skills into the course at an appropriate level, where there are suitable opportunities.

Course assessment

Course assessment is based on the information provided in this document.

The course assessment meets the key purposes and aims of the course by addressing:

♦ breadth — drawing on knowledge and skills from across the course
♦ challenge — requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
♦ application — requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate

This enables candidates to:

♦ demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of photographic practice in multiple-choice and extended-response formats in a question paper
♦ produce a photography project by applying and extending the skills and knowledge developed in the course

Course assessment structure: question paper

Question paper   30 marks

The question paper assesses candidates' knowledge and understanding of photographic work and practice.

The questions are designed to test candidates' ability to:

♦ demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the properties of light and image formation, camera controls, and image-making techniques and their effects
♦ analyse examples of photography

Details of the knowledge and understanding required can be found in the 'Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment' table in this document.

The question paper has a total mark allocation of 30 marks. This is 23% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

The question paper has two sections.

Section 1: Multiple choice

This section has 10 marks. It contains 10 multiple-choice questions. Candidates answer all questions.

Marks are awarded for:

♦ demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the properties of light and image formation, camera controls, and image-making techniques and their effects

Section 2: Analysis

This section has 20 marks. It contains two questions which ask candidates to critically analyse two unseen photographic images from a range of genres and styles. Candidates answer both questions.

Marks are awarded for:

♦ analysing two unseen photographic images by applying knowledge and understanding of the properties of light and image formation and photographic practice
♦ drawing valid conclusions and giving explanations supported by justification

Setting, conducting and marking the question paper

The question paper is set and marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA.

Candidates have 1 hour to complete the question paper.

Specimen question papers for Higher courses are published on SQA's website. These illustrate the standard, structure and requirements of the question papers candidates sit. The specimen papers also include marking instructions.

Course assessment structure: project

Project   100 marks

The photography project assesses candidates' ability to integrate and apply their creative and technical skills and their knowledge and understanding of photographic practice.

Candidates must plan and carry out a selected photography project. They research and investigate their project topic. Drawing on this material, they develop their own creative response by carrying out practical photographic work. From this development work, candidates select and present a series of 12 images which communicate the project topic. Candidates also evaluate the effectiveness of their photographic work and practice.

The project provides an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate the skills listed in the 'Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment' table in this document. The total marks available for each section are as follows:

Section 1 — planning, research and investigation   20 marks
Section 2 — development and production   70 marks
Section 3 — evaluation   10 marks

The project has a total mark allocation of 100 marks. This is 77% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

Setting, conducting and marking the project

The photography project allows candidates to demonstrate their creativity and to apply photographic skills in an appropriately challenging context. The project allows candidates to demonstrate their ability to work independently and is sufficiently open and flexible to allow personalisation and choice.

The project allows the candidate to:

♦ explore the topic using a selected approach
♦ produce a coherent body of work that challenges their photographic skills and that meets the requirements of the assessment

The project is:

♦ set by centres within SQA guidelines
♦ conducted under some supervision and control
♦ submitted to SQA for external marking

All marking is quality assured by SQA.

Assessment conditions

Candidates agree the project topic together with their teacher or lecturer. Teachers and lecturers may provide guidance to candidates on the suitability of the topic. They should also ensure that the project is achievable before candidates start the assessment.

Candidates must undertake the assessment independently.

Time

Candidates produce their project over an extended period. This allows them to develop and refine their work before it is presented for assessment.

Supervision, control and authentication

The project is produced under some supervision and control. This means that:

♦ candidates do not need to be directly supervised at all times
♦ the use of resources, including the internet, is not tightly prescribed
♦ the work an individual candidate submits for assessment is their own
♦ teachers and lecturers can provide reasonable assistance

Resources

There are no restrictions on the resources to which candidates may have access while producing their project.

Reasonable assistance

Candidates must undertake the assessment independently. However, reasonable assistance may be provided prior to the formal assessment process taking place. The term 'reasonable assistance' is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. If any candidates require more than what is thought to be 'reasonable assistance', they may not be ready for assessment or they may have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

Candidates can seek clarification regarding the project assessment task if they find it unclear. In this case, the clarification should normally be given to the whole class.

If a candidate is working on their project and is faced with more than one possible solution to a problem, then teachers and lecturers can explore different options with them. The teacher or lecturer and candidate can discuss the pros and cons of each option. The candidate can then decide on a solution based on the discussion.

Once candidates have submitted their evidence, it must not be changed by teachers or lecturers or candidates.

Centres must not provide model plans, evaluations or writing frames to assist candidates when completing their projects.

Evidence to be gathered

Volume

Candidates may present their work in a variety of ways. The 12 final prints must be a minimum size of A5 and a maximum size of A4 (or equivalent area).

Only evidence which is relevant to the selected project should be submitted for assessment.

There is a 500 word limit for the evaluation.

If the word count exceeds the maximum by more than 10%, a penalty will be applied.

Grading

Candidates' overall grades are determined by their performance across the course assessment. The course assessment is graded A–D on the basis of the total mark for all course assessment components.

Grade description for C

For the award of grade C, candidates will typically have demonstrated successful performance in relation to the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course.

Grade description for A

For the award of grade A, candidates will typically have demonstrated a consistently high level of performance in relation to the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course.

Equality and inclusion

This course is designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

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/assessmentarrangements.

Further information

The following reference documents provide useful information and background.

- [Higher Photography subject page](#)
- [Assessment arrangements web page](#)
- [Building the Curriculum 3–5](#)
- [Guide to Assessment](#)
- [Guidance on conditions of assessment for coursework](#)
- [SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)
- [Coursework Authenticity: A Guide for Teachers and Lecturers](#)
- [Educational Research Reports](#)
- [SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools](#)
- [SQA e-assessment web page](#)

The SCQF framework, level descriptors and handbook are available on the SCQF website.

Appendix: course support notes

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance to teachers and lecturers on approaches to delivering the course. You should read these in conjunction with this course specification and the specimen question paper and coursework.

Developing skills, knowledge and understanding

This section provides further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding that teachers and lecturers could include in the course. Teachers and lecturers have considerable flexibility to select contexts that will stimulate and challenge candidates, offering both breadth and depth.

Teachers and lecturers should ensure that candidates are fully aware of the range of skills, knowledge and understanding that they are developing in the course. This is laid out in full in the 'skills, knowledge and understanding' section in this course specification. Teachers and lecturers should also highlight any transferable learning that supports the development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work to candidates.

The 'Approaches to learning and teaching' and 'Preparing for course assessment' sections provide suggested activities that teachers and lecturers can build into the course to develop these skills, knowledge and understanding.

Approaches to learning and teaching

Effective learning and teaching in this course draws on a variety of approaches and provides opportunities for personalisation and choice to motivate and challenge candidates.

Teachers and lecturers can use a variety of learning and teaching strategies to deliver the course. The following information provides guidance on possible approaches. The course is learner-centred and provides many opportunities for active, experiential learning.

Using technology in innovative and creative ways helps create inclusive learning and teaching approaches and can also help develop candidates' creativity.

Teachers and lecturers should consider how they can build variety into their teaching and learning approaches to meet the needs of candidates. When planning delivery, teachers and lecturers must ensure that the range of choices offered to candidates is appropriate and manageable for their centre. Teachers and lecturers are free to select the contexts that are most suitable for specific photographic activities. These contexts should allow candidates to personalise their work.

When selecting approaches and contexts, teachers and lecturers should consider:

♦ candidates' prior experience
♦ candidates' aptitudes and abilities
♦ the size of the group
♦ their own knowledge, skills and confidence
♦ the facilities, equipment and resources available
♦ the time available and time management

The following table provides examples of learning and teaching approaches.

Approach	Description	Candidates can:
Whole-class teaching	Teachers and lecturers address the class as a whole.	♦ receive important information such as: — aims — assessment task instructions — clarification of the assessment task — explanations of techniques and processes — deadlines ♦ learn about the work and practice of photographers
Practical demonstration	Teachers and lecturers demonstrate a practical photographic technique. Demonstrations can be broken down into stages to make learning more accessible.	♦ observe first-hand how to apply a technique or use photographic equipment ♦ ask questions ♦ get hints and tips
Practical activity	Candidates apply what they have learned in a practical photographic activity.	♦ demonstrate understanding ♦ engage in active learning ♦ build up their skills ♦ develop and refine their techniques ♦ engage in creative experimentation

Approach	Description	Candidates can:
Question and answer	Candidates have the opportunity to ask and answer questions about aspects of the course. Teachers and lecturers can use simple, straightforward questions to test basic understanding and recall of facts. They can use higher-order questions to help candidates develop their understanding and gain new insights.	♦ demonstrate their knowledge and understanding ♦ reinforce their learning ♦ learn from their peers ♦ develop their understanding of a topic ♦ form opinions and justify them
Personal investigation and research	Candidates have access to sources, for example books, print-outs, the internet so that they can gather information and learn about a topic independently.	♦ collate information on the work and practice of photographers ♦ gather research on photographic techniques and processes ♦ explore aspects of a topic that are relevant to their selected approach ♦ increase their knowledge and understanding of photographic practice
Visual presentation	Teachers and lecturers, or candidates, could give a presentation, supported by diagrams, images, slides and/or video clips.	♦ develop their understanding of a technique or process ♦ develop their understanding of the work and practice of photographers

Approach	Description	Candidates can:
Discussion with individuals and/or groups	Candidates have the opportunity to discuss their work with their teachers and lecturers and/or peers.	♦ receive feedback and constructive criticism ♦ arrive at decisions about the direction of their work ♦ identify areas for improvement and plan next steps
Self-reflection	Candidates have the opportunity to evaluate their own work and progress.	♦ express evaluative judgements on their work and progress ♦ record justified opinions and decisions
Group activities	Candidates work in groups to explore and collate information on a topic. Candidates work in groups to apply a photographic technique. **Note:** candidates must produce work for their project individually.	♦ engage in co-operative and collaborative learning ♦ gather and share information ♦ learn from their peers
Visits	Candidates visit a location or venue to gather factual and/or visual information before carrying out a photographic activity. Candidates visit a location or venue to carry out a practical photographic activity. Candidates are introduced to techniques that require facilities and equipment not available in their centre. Candidates visit a gallery, exhibition or photographic studio.	♦ gather research, such as notes, and/or visual material ♦ gain a deeper understanding of photographic practice, techniques and processes ♦ gain insights into techniques and processes that they cannot access in their centre ♦ produce practical photographic work
Guest speakers	Candidates listen to a presentation by a practising photographer and have the opportunity to ask questions.	♦ develop an understanding of photographic practice and the influences that impact on a photographer's work

Studying photographers

The course should include practical learning underpinned by supporting contextual knowledge and investigation into the work and practice of photographers.

This approach:

♦ develops candidates' knowledge and understanding of the varied working practices and approaches used by past and present photographers
♦ helps candidates critically reflect on choices about their own approaches
♦ encourages candidates to use techniques in a more informed manner in their own work
♦ inspires candidates to apply what they have learned to their own practical photography

Candidates should learn about the work and practice of a range of photographers. This could include investigating examples of contemporary and historical photography. To broaden their experience during the course, candidates should learn about photographers who work in a variety of different styles and genres. In their project, they should focus on specific photographers whose work has relevance to their own topic and intended approach. Considering how others have responded creatively to particular topics helps candidates to reflect on their own creative choices and apply this understanding in their own work.

Candidates should learn about how photographers use a variety of techniques and technology. They should develop their knowledge and understanding of photography practice. Candidates are expected to be familiar with external influences that have affected the work of selected photographers.

Examining the techniques and working practices of significant photographers could provide a useful starting point for integrating this knowledge and understanding with applied practical skills. For example, candidates could learn about a particular photographer's approach and then carry out a practical task where they try to reproduce the approach. As candidates develop their understanding of the creative process and the influences that affect the work and practice of photographers, they can broaden their own practical experience. They can then apply this knowledge of cameras, photographic techniques and processes in their own creative work.

Integrating practical photographic activities with knowledge and understanding

There are many different ways of delivering the Higher Photography course. There is no set way to approach the learning and teaching required for the project. When planning learning and teaching activities, teachers and lecturers should use methods and strategies to encourage candidates to develop technical and creative skills.

To prepare for the project assessment task, much of the learning and teaching on the course should focus on practical activities. Individual centres can decide the scope and context of these activities.

Depending on the skills and prior knowledge of candidates, the time required for them to develop proficiency in technical camera skills could be significant.

Most of the learning in this course could take place through completing structured practical activities, where candidates put theory into practice and learn experientially. Candidates could practise photographic techniques with teacher or lecturer support during a series of simple, but specific, contextualised tasks.

During practical activities candidates have opportunities to:

♦ plan and organise their own photographic work
♦ produce and compile relevant investigative research
♦ use photography equipment and/or technology to produce their own photographic work
♦ develop their understanding of photographic techniques and processes
♦ explore and experiment with selected photographic techniques, media, manipulation techniques and processes
♦ make creative decisions to refine their photography work and practice
♦ apply their technical and creative photographic skills to produce creative and technically proficient photographs
♦ work with increased autonomy

As part of their learning, candidates should explore working in a variety of contexts. This helps to reinforce their understanding of photography styles and genres so that they can make an informed choice when deciding on the topic and approach for their own project.

As the course progresses, teachers and lecturers should encourage candidates to take increasing responsibility for managing their own learning. This helps to prepare them effectively for the project assessment task.

Teachers and lecturers should make a judgement about when candidates have the necessary knowledge and skills to undertake the project assessment task.

Preparing for course assessment

When preparing candidates for the course assessment, teachers and lecturers can avoid unnecessary or repetitive assessment tasks by focusing on the information contained in the specimen question paper and the project assessment task document. They should also share the 'instructions for candidates' section from the project assessment task and the marking instructions from the specimen question paper and past papers with candidates to make them aware of the assessment criteria.

Assessment supports learning by:

♦ using information gathered to set learning targets and plan next steps
♦ adapting learning and teaching activities based on assessment requirements
♦ providing constructive feedback on candidates' progress

Question paper

The question paper requires candidates to integrate and apply knowledge and skills from across the course. It allows them to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of light and image formation, camera controls, image-making techniques and their effects.

Candidates must have opportunities to develop an understanding of photographic concepts and terminology as this should enable them to respond to questions effectively. A list of concepts that could appear in the question paper is included in the 'Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment' section of this course specification.

The duration of the question paper is 1 hour. Candidates should respond to 10 multiple-choice questions and two extended-response questions within this time. Candidates benefit from practice in exam technique. For example, responding to practice questions within a time limit can help them to develop the ability to manage their time effectively for the question paper.

Section 1

Questions 1 to 10 are multiple-choice questions. Each question is worth 1 mark.

Section 2

Questions 11 and 12 contain unseen images, which candidates critically analyse by giving extended responses. Each question is worth 10 marks.

Question 11 is broken into different parts, each part is worth between 2 marks and 4 marks.

Question 12 is an open-ended question worth 10 marks. Candidates are required to discuss the technical and creative decisions made by the photographer.

The command words and requirements for section 2 of the question paper are outlined in the following table.

Command	Candidates should:
Identify	♦ give the correct name (for example a specific camera control, technique, effect)
Explain	♦ provide factually correct information, showing knowledge of photography practice ♦ apply their knowledge and understanding of light and image formation, camera controls, image-making techniques and their effects to relate cause and effect and/or make relationships between things clear
Discuss	♦ examine an unseen image and apply their knowledge and understanding of image-making techniques and their effects in order to communicate ideas and information on technical and creative decisions made by the photographer ♦ draw valid conclusions and give explanations supported by justification

A range of genres and styles is represented in the question paper. Analysis images are selected from the following genres:

♦ portraiture

♦ still life

♦ landscape

♦ urban environment

♦ natural world

♦ documentary

There are many styles of photography and candidates benefit from being introduced to the work of a diverse range of photographers. This enables them to gain an appreciation and an understanding of different styles and genres.

Teachers and lecturers can help candidates prepare for the question paper by:

♦ explaining the concepts that could come up in the question paper

♦ ensuring that they are familiar with photography from a range of genres and styles

♦ giving them opportunities to participate in group discussion and presentations based on examples of work by a range of photographers

♦ sharing the specimen question paper and marking instructions with them

♦ explaining the meaning of the photographic terminology that they are likely to encounter in the question paper

♦ advising on how to respond effectively to the command words in the questions

♦ advising on how to apply knowledge and understanding to the questions asked, so they can explain and discuss image-making techniques and their effects in an analytical way

♦ advising on how to answer extended-response questions

♦ explaining how marks are awarded, according to the marking instructions

- giving them opportunities to attempt examination-style questions and to receive feedback on their performance, for example through homework tasks and/or class tests
- asking them to respond to questions within a time limit to help improve their exam technique
- giving them the opportunity to sit a practice examination, which replicates the format and assessment conditions of the question paper
- marking their homework, class tests and practice examination work in line with the national standard

Coursework assessment task

The coursework assessment task requires candidates to plan and produce a photography project demonstrating their response to a selected topic. During the project, candidates work independently to integrate and apply their technical and creative photographic skills. They carry out research and investigation relevant to their topic and use this to develop ideas through practical photography, leading to the production and presentation of 12 technically competent and creative final prints. They then reflect on and critically evaluate their photographic work and practice. The task is sufficiently open and flexible to allow personalisation and choice.

The project assessment task document contains detailed information for teachers and lecturers and candidates. Teachers and lecturers must give all candidates the instructions for candidates for the project assessment task before they begin their practical assessment.

The following table shows how marks are allocated across the project.

Section	Description		Total marks /100
1 Planning, research and investigation	Planning a project in response to a selected topic	10	20
	Producing and compiling relevant investigative research	5	
	Explaining the impact of external influences on selected photographers' work and practice	5	
2 Development and production	Producing a sustained line of photographic development work	20	70
	Demonstrating ongoing creative decision-making and refinement	10	
	Producing 12 technically competent prints	20	
	Producing 12 prints which demonstrate a creative response to the topic	20	
3 Evaluation	Evaluating the effectiveness of the photographic practice	5	10
	Evaluating the effectiveness of the final prints	5	

Approaches to assessment — project

Selecting a topic

Candidates should select the topic for the project with guidance from their teacher or lecturer. Teachers and lecturers can provide a selection of suitable topics for the project or candidates can suggest their own. Teachers and lecturers should not allow candidates to select topics that are beyond their ability and level of experience, or that their centre would find difficult to support and facilitate.

Candidates can choose to work within one genre or can work with a thematic approach that allows them to work across genres.

Examples of genres in photography include portraiture, still life, landscape, urban environment, natural world and documentary.

Genres are not topics. To illustrate this, a candidate working in the genre of portraiture may take a number of different approaches and could choose from a variety of topics, for example my family, friendship, emotions, identity. A candidate working in the genre of urban environment could choose from a number of topics, including modern architecture, my town, and bridges.

The most effective topics encourage a creative, yet focused, approach. A topic that is too broad may cause problems for candidates. For example, nature as a topic would present too many possibilities, but more focused topics, such as pattern in nature, woodlands, botanical forms or garden birds would provide a more specific direction.

Open-ended topics, which may be realised in a number of different ways, such as protection, ageing, and water could provide scope for interpretation and opportunities for candidates to produce their own personal technical and creative responses.

Another approach might be to use a topic that gives the candidate a specific brief, such as:

♦ the school year — produce 12 images suitable for the school magazine that will be issued at the end of the academic year
♦ food for thought — produce 12 images to illustrate a healthy eating guide for teenagers
♦ spring flowers — produce 12 images for the spring issue of a gardening magazine

Candidates should take account of when they will be carrying out the practical photography. For example, a topic representing the four seasons may be impractical.

The assessment task is accessible to all candidates as it can be tailored to their preferences and the equipment, resources and time available. Candidates should consider these factors when selecting a topic. For example, a candidate who does not enjoy working outdoors is unlikely to engage successfully with a landscape project. Likewise, a candidate who is trying to emulate the style of a studio fashion photographer may find this very difficult without access to lighting equipment. Some areas, such as sports photography, require particular equipment to achieve technically competent photographs.

Teachers and lecturers should make candidates aware of legal and societal issues relating to photography to ensure that they have an awareness of potential problems or difficulties that they could encounter when taking photographs in specific places or when photographing certain subjects. Teachers and lecturers should give careful consideration when selecting the range of topics to offer candidates. They should show sensitivity as some topics may inadvertently cause candidates offence, harm or discomfort.

Health and safety is an important consideration in photography. Some topics involve more health and safety issues than others. Teachers and lecturers should ensure that candidates are aware of safe working practices so that they do not put themselves or others at risk when carrying out their project. It is good practice for candidates to carry out risk assessment before starting the practical photography for their projects.

Producing a plan for the project
The plan should provide an outline of the topic and the intended approach. The following table gives examples of points that candidates could consider when producing their plan.

Planning for:	Points for candidates to consider
Personal approach to the topic	♦ How will you interpret the topic? ♦ What is your overall vision for the project? ♦ What subject or subject matter will you use? ♦ Will you work within a particular genre, or in more than one genre? ♦ Is there a particular style you are aiming for? ♦ Will your project be inspired by the work of any significant photographers? ♦ Are there any specific photographic techniques you intend to use?
Time management	♦ What time is available to carry out the practical photography? ♦ How many photoshoots will you need and when will you complete them? ♦ How much time will you need for post-production and printing?
Equipment and resources	♦ What camera(s) will you use? ♦ What other equipment will you need? ♦ What resources will you need? ♦ How will you plan and resource individual photoshoots throughout the project?

Planning for:	Points for candidates to consider
Other relevant issues	♦ What information do you need and where will you find it?
	♦ Are there any location or logistical issues?
	♦ Are there any accessibility issues?
	♦ Do you need models? Do you need to arrange model release?
	♦ Do you need permissions?
	♦ Risk assessment — are there any health and safety issues?
	♦ Are there any legal or copyright issues?

Candidates must produce their plan independently. Teachers and lecturers must not provide writing frames or model plans, or assist candidates with writing their plans. Once candidates submit their plan for assessment, it must not be altered in any way.

Investigative research

Research included in the project should be relevant to the topic and selected approach. This may include relevant:

♦ contextual images

♦ examples of photographers' work

♦ technical research — this should not be generic information on photographic techniques; all research should be pertinent to the topic and approach

Research images should have strong visual continuity with the candidate's personal interpretation of their topic. The influence of their research should be evident in their subsequent development work.

As part of their research, candidates are required to select relevant photographs from their investigative research and explain the impact of social, cultural, historical and/or scientific influences on the photographers' work and practice. The external influences on photographers' work and practice are wide-ranging. Social, cultural, historical and scientific influences may be interpreted widely, and include (but are not limited to):

♦ developments in photographic technology — available equipment and technology, including new and emerging photographic techniques and technology

♦ influence of other photographers or photography movements

♦ national or world events

♦ exposure to different cultures or popular culture

♦ physical environment or geography or nature

♦ politics

♦ gender

♦ religion or belief

♦ developments in other fields, for example art, film, literature

♦ living conditions, including economic conditions

- ♦ social or cultural expectations
- ♦ influence of family and community
- ♦ personal circumstances
- ♦ health and wellbeing

Research work should be proportionate to the number of marks available and candidates do not need to explain the external influences on a large number of photographers or photographs. It is possible for candidates to achieve full marks for their research by commenting on the work of two photographers and using one or two carefully selected examples of work by each to illustrate their points.

Teachers and lecturers should make candidates aware that providing biographical information or referring to influences without explaining their impact on the photographers' work and practice does not fulfil the requirements of this part of the assessment.

Development

Candidates should use their image-making skills to produce a body of photographic work showing a sustained line of development. This should demonstrate how their ideas developed in response to their topic. This development work should show their technical and creative exploration and experimentation, including, for example:

- ♦ contact sheets showing the images from each shoot
- ♦ edit experiments
- ♦ test prints

When carrying out their practical photographic work, candidates need to organise their workflow effectively and ensure that work in progress is stored securely. They should organise their images using a logical system to allow them to retrieve particular images easily. If they are using a digital platform to store their images, they should back up their work regularly.

Candidates should work independently on their practical photography. If they need help, for example a lighting assistant or model, they should give clear direction to ensure that the photographic work produced originates from their own ideas.

Development work should demonstrate ongoing critical reflection, refinement and creative decision-making. Quality is more important than quantity and there is no merit in repetition, for example including multiple shots of the same subject taken from the same viewpoint in the same lighting conditions.

Candidates can demonstrate their critical reflection in a number of ways, for example:

- ♦ shoot reviews
- ♦ mid-point review

Candidates can demonstrate refinement and decision-making visually in practical photographic work by showing:

♦ adjustments to the viewpoint
♦ adjustments to pose or the arrangement of the subject matter
♦ adjustments to camera settings and exposure
♦ adjustments to the lighting
♦ the re-shooting of an unsuccessful shoot

To further demonstrate their refinement and decision-making candidates should make a shortlist of potential final images. This can be done:

♦ shoot-by-shoot
♦ at appropriate points throughout the project
♦ before they select their final 12 images

Incorporating a shortlisting process should make it more straightforward for candidates to monitor their own progress and to select their final 12 images.

Production

Candidates should select the most appropriate images from their development work for their final 12 prints. This selection of final images is very important and will affect the marks available for this part of the project.

When making this selection, candidates should consider which images:

♦ communicate their topic in the most effective and creative way
♦ most effectively demonstrate their technical competence in photography
♦ work together best as a set

The final 12 images must be evident in the candidate's previous development work.

Candidates must print and present their final series of 12 photographs. These images can be printed in-house or the printing can be outsourced.

When organising the printing of their final images, candidates should consider:

♦ the type of photographic paper
♦ aspect ratio
♦ format — landscape, portrait, square, or a combination
♦ dimensions — between A5 and A4 (or equivalent area)
♦ borders or borderless prints — unwanted borders in final prints should be trimmed
♦ file optimisation —images should be of a suitable file size for their intended dimensions and have an appropriate dpi (dots per inch) to ensure prints have an adequate resolution
♦ screen and printer calibration to ensure colour reproduction is as intended

Some candidates may choose to present their final 12 prints as a photobook. Candidates should ensure that their images are produced in the appropriate colour space (ICC profile) specified by the print lab to avoid inaccurate colour reproduction.

Evaluation

Candidates should complete the evaluation as the final stage of the project. Evaluations must not exceed 500 words, so they should be focused and succinct.

Candidates should critically evaluate their project, expressing justified opinions on:

♦ the effectiveness of their photographic practice
♦ strengths and areas for improvement in their final photographic prints, with reference to their project topic and selected approach

It is important for candidates to understand the difference between describing how they carried out their project and evaluating their work and practice. They will benefit from guidance on how to make evaluative statements.

Candidates must produce the evaluation independently. Teachers and lecturers must not provide writing frames or model evaluations, or assist candidates with writing their evaluations. Once candidates submit their evaluation for assessment, it must not be altered in any way.

Presenting the project for external assessment

Candidates can present their projects in a number of formats, but they should present it in the following order:

♦ plan
♦ investigative research
♦ line of development (contact sheets, edit experiments, shortlist) including evidence of critical reflection, refinement and creative decision-making
♦ final 12 prints
♦ evaluation

Final photographic prints do not need to be mounted. Unmounted photographs are acceptable, and preferable to poorly mounted prints. Ideally, prints should be presented loose rather than stuck into a workbook, folder or sketchbook, unless they must be viewed in a particular order. Loose prints may be submitted in an envelope or folder for protection. Centres should avoid submitting prints individually in plastic pockets designed for documents, as this can adversely affect viewing. Archival, crystal-clear sleeves are available for photographic prints if more protection is required.

Candidates should only submit work for assessment that is relevant to their project topic.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Teachers and lecturers should identify opportunities throughout the course for candidates to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

Candidates should be aware of the skills they are developing and teachers and lecturers can provide advice on opportunities to practise and improve them.

SQA does not formally assess skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

There may also be opportunities to develop additional skills depending on approaches being used to deliver the course in each centre. This is for individual teachers and lecturers to manage.

Some examples of potential opportunities to practise or improve these skills are provided in the following table.

Skill	Opportunity to practise or improve skill
3 Health and wellbeing	
3.1 Personal learning	♦ investigating, researching, developing, producing ♦ identifying areas for improvement and next steps for learning
5 Thinking skills	
5.4 Analysing and evaluating	♦ analysing and evaluating their own photographic work and practice ♦ analysing the impact of social, cultural, historical and scientific influences on photographers' work and practice ♦ critically reflecting and creatively solving problems
5.5 Creating	♦ producing technically proficient and creative photographic images

Teachers and lecturers should make candidates aware of the skills, knowledge and understanding that they are developing throughout the course. By considering and using tailored learning and teaching approaches, teachers and lecturers can help candidates to address and develop their skills more effectively and identify ways they can improve them.

Administrative information

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History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	Course support notes added as appendix.	September 2018

Note: you are advised to check SQA's website to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this document.