



RGS
NEWCASTLE

INTRODUCTION TO

PHOTOGRAPHY

at RGS



From September 2026, A-Level Photography will be offered for the first time at RGS, delivered by our outstanding Art Department.

With a long-standing reputation for excellence and consistently high academic results, the Art Department brings a wealth of experience to this exciting new course.

The new photography programme at RGS will be a dynamic and intellectually stimulating environment, where students learn to capture the world through their lens.

Photography is a powerful way to tell stories, evoke emotion and see the world differently. It is a highly regarded A-Level subject, valued for its creative, technical and analytical demands.

It opens pathways to further study in Art Foundation, Photography, Creative Media, Visual Communication and Design, and complements other creative subjects such as Drama, English and Art.



OUR PHILOSOPHY

Involvement in photography sparks creativity and innovation across many areas of life and study. It builds students' confidence, enhances communication skills and sharpens empathetic understanding

Our Art Department's philosophy means that students are supported in producing personal and conceptually driven work, with a strong emphasis on independent thinking and self-motivation. Our teaching team brings expertise in both traditional and contemporary photographic practice.

Students will be introduced to a wide range of techniques - from mastering camera settings and studio lighting to digital editing and visual narrative. Alongside practical skills, students develop a critical understanding of photographic theory, history and context.

A research-led approach encourages pupils to initiate their own projects and explore themes that matter to them. It is often through this personal inquiry that the most compelling and original work is created.

Our teaching fosters imagination, sensitivity, conceptual awareness and analytical thinking. These qualities will be developed through practical exploration, leading to a deeper understanding of photography's role in society and culture.



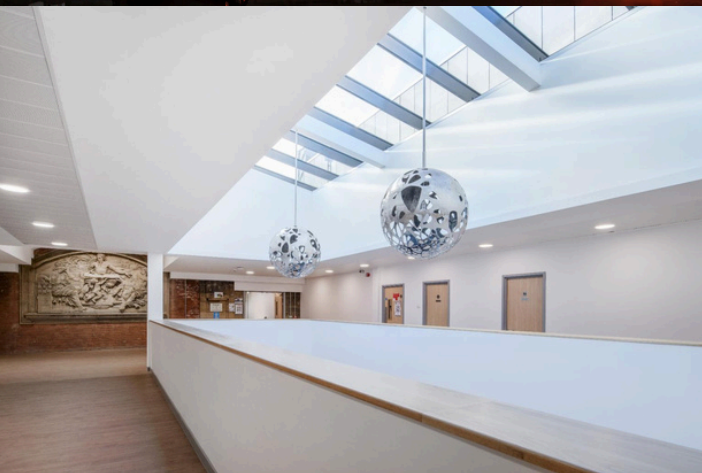


OUR RESOURCES

The department is equipped with outstanding facilities, including a dedicated digital photography suite, a fully functioning darkroom for black and white processing, studio lighting equipment, DSLR cameras, editing software and access to film-making tools.



These are housed within architecturally inspiring spaces that encourage creativity and experimentation. The Art Department itself is a beautiful, light-filled space with some of the best views of the school grounds.



Students love working here, surrounded by the legacy of Old Novocastrians and inspired to forge their own creative paths. Alongside our specialist teachers, an Art Technician offers expertise in photography and film-based practice, providing pupils with professional insight and support.



A-LEVEL COURSE

Photography at RGS Sixth Form is a creative and intellectually stimulating course that encourages students to explore visual storytelling, technical skills and artistic expression.

Whether you're passionate about documentary, fashion, fine art or digital media, this course will help you to build a compelling portfolio and a critical understanding of photographic practice.

You will be expected to direct your work according to personal motivations, supported by generous deadlines and access to a dedicated sixth form studio.

The course will follow the AQA syllabus, the same framework used in our Fine Art programme. This syllabus has consistently inspired students to respond with ambition, creativity, and innovation - often exceeding the expectations they held of themselves.

Assessment will combine practical coursework with a personal investigation, culminating in a final portfolio and an exhibition that showcases your creative journey.





You will be able to utilise a wide range of processes, from traditional darkroom techniques to advanced digital editing and mixed media approaches.

As a student of Photography at RGS Sixth Form, your programme of learning will be tailored to your interests and strengths.

Throughout the course you will learn:

- Camera techniques and digital editing.
- Composition, lighting and visual narrative.
- Historical and contemporary photography.
- Personal projects and portfolio development.
- Exhibition and presentation skills.

“**Photography encourages creativity, independence and critical thinking.**

It supports progression to a wide range of creative and academic pathways, and builds a professional portfolio for careers in visual arts, media or design.

Mr Mason, Head of Art at RGS

CO-CURRICULAR

Our curriculum and co-curricular opportunities are designed to appeal to the diverse range of students in our care. Photography invites students to explore new perspectives, discover passions and build confidence in their ability to create, take risks and solve problems.

The Art Department hosts a wide range of co-curricular activities, open to A-Level students as well as those looking to use their time creatively. Photography is one of six student-led lunchtime clubs, alongside Fashion, ArcSoc, Sewing, Ceramics and Digital Arts.

Dedicated sessions such as OPENStudio and BlackBookClub provide students with time and space to develop their coursework, supported by sixth form mentors. These sessions offer valuable opportunities for reflection, peer feedback and creative growth.

Photography also features in our Complementary Studies Courses, open to all Year 12 students. These sessions introduce a broad range of skills and allow pupils to explore their creative potential in depth, whether through studio practice, darkroom work or digital experimentation.



“**At RGS, we celebrate the Arts for their intrinsic value. They enrich the life of the school and the lives of our pupils.**

We do not aim to turn every student into a professional artist. Instead, we seek to instil a lifelong love, respect and understanding of the arts and the creative process.

Mr Mason, Head of Art at RGS



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Whether capturing light, emotion, or narrative, students at RGS explore the transformative power of photography to shape ideas, spark creativity, and express their unique perspectives on the world.

We look forward to helping you to explore your own viewpoint through the lens.

If you would like further information about Photography at RGS Sixth Form please contact Mr Graham Mason, Head of Art via g.mason@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk

