

SCQF Level 5 (National Progression Award) / Higher Photography



SCQF Level 5 (National Progression Award) Photography

There are 4 units that make up the NPA in Photography:

- Understanding Photography
- Photographing People
- Photographing Places
- Working with Photographs

Higher Photography

Course Specification: <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/47896.html>

Photographers capture still or moving images using cameras. They take photos of people, places, products and events, according to what the client wants.

Skills Learners will be able to:

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

Opportunities for Learners Learners will be able to:

- plan, develop, produce and present creative photographic work using a range of photographic media, techniques and processes
- communicate personal thoughts, feelings and ideas in their photographic work
- analyse the impact of outside influences on photographers and photography
- use creative and technical problem solving skills and be able to critically reflect on and evaluate their own work and the work of others

Assessment

- To gain Higher Photography, learners must pass the two Units and the Course Assessment (the Project for 100 marks). Units are assessed as pass or fail by the school/centre and are quality assured by the SQA. Achievement of Units is recorded on the learner's qualifications certificate
- The SQA has provided examples of Unit assessments that teachers/lecturers can use as they are, or adapt to suit the needs of their learners
- The Course Assessment consists of the Project (100 marks, see below). Evidence from the Project will be submitted to the SQA for marking externally
- Higher Photography is graded from A to D or as No Award.

Project

The Project will assess the learner's ability to integrate and develop creativity and technical skills within a negotiated photography project which will have three sections (Research and Investigation, 25 marks; Development and Production, 60 marks; Evaluation, 15 marks) 100 marks Progression Higher courses can stand alone or follow on from National 5 qualifications and may lead to Advanced Highers, the Scottish Baccalaureate and a range of qualifications within Further and Higher Education.

Jobs in Photography

Photographers usually specialise. You could be working in:

- **general photography** – mostly weddings, portraits or group photographs
- **press photography or photojournalism** – either freelance or on the staff of local or national newspapers
- **advertising and editorial** – for an agency, perhaps specialising in one subject like food or cars, or taking pictures for magazine articles
- **fashion** – clothes fashion, cosmetics and accessories, a very competitive field
- **scientific or medical** – recording experiments and research, or diseases and treatments
- **landscape or nature** – photographing wildlife, plants or scenery and emphasising both the scientific detail and the aesthetic appeal of the subject
- **commercial** – photos for company advertising, marketing and PR.

Your daily tasks could involve:

- discussing your client's needs (the brief)
- researching and choosing the best locations for a photo shoot
- setting up lighting, backgrounds and props and positioning the person or subject
- selecting the right camera, lens and accessories, using modern digital or traditional camera equipment

- improving or making changes to images by hand or by using specialist software, such as Photoshop
- checking the quality of the images before printing or providing in digital format to the client
- processing and printing photos, or arranging for this to be done
- liaising with other professionals such as graphic designers, editors, writers and printers
- bidding for freelance jobs or commissions.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual salaries may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

As with other creative professions, salaries for photographers vary greatly. Starting salaries for qualified photographers in the UK tend to be in the range of £16,000 to £20,000 a year. More experienced photographers can earn up to around £35,000, sometimes more.

It is more common now for newspaper photographers to work freelance rather than being employed. The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) website has a freelance fees guide.

Many photographers run their own business. They charge a fee, which varies depending on the work and their reputation. The better known they are, the more they can charge. Recent rates for event photographers have been between £110 and £250 per day or event.

Conditions

- You would work in a studio or elsewhere on location, which could be indoors or outdoors.
- You would probably use a computer to develop and modify pictures, but if not, you would spend time in a darkroom.
- You might have to carry heavy equipment.
- You might sometimes use chemicals to develop films, although digital photography is increasingly making this method outdated.
- Hours can be long and irregular, often including weekend and evening work.
- Depending on your job, you may have to travel around the UK or abroad and be away from home overnight.
- If you work for the press you might find yourself in dangerous locations.
- If you work in medical or clinical photography or in forensic photography you would have to deal with upsetting subjects (see **job profile Clinical Photographer**). You might also have to work shifts.
- Many photographers work on a freelance basis and work may not always be steady.