

# Unit 57: Photography and Photographic Practice

<b>Unit code:</b>	<b>H/600/6659</b>
<b>QCF Level 3:</b>	<b>BTEC National</b>
<b>Credit value:</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Guided learning hours:</b>	<b>60</b>

## ● Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is to develop learners' knowledge of, and practical skills in, photography. Learners will investigate different areas of photography, such as promotional, advertising and photojournalism, and produce and reflect on their own practical examples of photographic work.

## ● Unit introduction

Photography, or photo-imaging, is a major industry of the media sector in its own right with a wide variety of applications, from the production of personal records such as wedding photographs or family portraits to technical applications such as industrial or medical photography. Many other media industries, such as the press, television, film and interactive media, use (and often rely on) photo images to support their products. Professional photographers can also operate independently, working to commissions or producing exhibition work that derives from their own interests.

Digital technology has changed the way in which images are produced and digital imaging is now prevalent within the industry. Many professional photographers now shoot exclusively in a digital format, and are required to do so by their clients. However, there is still a place for traditional methods of photography, since prints and slides can easily be scanned and converted to a digital platform.

The unit will enable learners to experiment with a range of technology and techniques and should allow for both digital and film-based production. Learners will be able to explore the capabilities of digital image production and how digital cameras and processes can be controlled and manipulated to produce the desired effect. The unit will also allow learners to develop their analytical skills and visual literacy, and gain a contextual and cultural awareness of photography.

## ● Learning outcomes

**On completion of this unit a learner should:**

- 1 Understand different applications of photography
- 2 Know how to use photographic equipment and employ photographic techniques
- 3 Be able to plan and produce photographic images for a specified purpose
- 4 Be able to reflect upon photographic work.

# Unit content

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## 1 Understand different applications of photography

*Photographic applications:* advertising; promotional; fashion; photojournalism; portraiture; high street studio work; architectural; medical; illustration; fine art; documentary

*Contexts:* magazines; newspapers; digital advertising screens; books; web pages; for individual clients; galleries; advertising; journalism

## 2 Know how to use photographic equipment and employ photographic techniques

*Photographic equipment:* cameras; tripod; lenses (wide-angle, long, telephoto, macro, attachments); storage devices (eg colour, black and white, transparency, instant, memory cards, film types, internal storage, portable hard drives, cloud); artificial lights (flash, studio lights, gels, diffusers); processing (eg computer, software, scanner, image capture, image storage, image retrieval, printer, enlargers, tanks, spools, cylinders, temperature, chemicals)

*Techniques:* camera (aperture, shutter speed, focus, lens length, filters, ISO); lighting (eg flash, natural, temperature, high key, low key, lightpainting, gels); processing (eg digital, darkroom); printing (eg functions, stock, paper types, colour accuracy); colour modes; image manipulation (eg correction, distortion, transform, layers, effects, darkroom techniques)

*Health and safety:* environment (eg digital space, darkroom); using lights; location risk assessments; legislation, eg current health and safety regulations in relation to health and safety at work, control of substances hazardous to health, work equipment and display screen equipment

## 3 Be able to plan and produce photographic images for a specified purpose

*Planning:* creative thinking, eg mind mapping, brainstorming, group discussion; research, eg past and current professional practice, background to a subject, response to a brief, feedback on own work; recording ideas, eg notes, sketches, collages, trial shots, influences; shooting schedule, eg studio booking, equipment booking, locations, risk assessment, health and safety, models, props

*Purpose:* eg advertising, promotional, photojournalism, portraiture, web pages, illustration, fine art, documentary

*Presentation:* eg portfolio (material, electronic), exhibition, projection, pitch, product

## 4 Be able to reflect upon photographic work

*Visual language:* composition (juxtaposition, association, angle of view); image construction, eg form, texture, shape, pattern, line, tone, colour, symbols, metaphor, semiotics, connotation, representation

*Audiences:* range of consideration, eg social group, gender, peer group, occupational group, political views

*Historical and cultural context:* range of references, eg social, race, religion, political, economic, art and design references, popular culture

*Finished products:* realisation of intentions; fitness for purpose; responding to feedback; technical qualities; aesthetic qualities; skills and knowledge gained

*Production processes:* technical competencies; creative ability; time management

*Sources of information:* self-evaluation; documentation, eg ideas notes, production logs, sketches, trial shots, notes on professional photographers and photography; comments from others (audiences, peers, tutors, client)

## Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
<b>P1</b> describe different applications of photography with some appropriate use of subject terminology	<b>M1</b> explain different applications of photography with reference to detailed illustrative examples, and with generally correct use of subject terminology	<b>D1</b> critically evaluate different applications of photography with supporting arguments and elucidated examples, consistently using subject terminology correctly
<b>P2</b> use photographic equipment and employ photographic techniques with some assistance [CT]	<b>M2</b> use photographic equipment and employ photographic techniques to a good technical standard with only occasional assistance	<b>D2</b> use photographic equipment and employ photographic techniques to a technical quality that reflects near-professional standards, working independently to professional expectations
<b>P3</b> produce photographic images for a specified purpose with relevant planning material, working within appropriate conventions and with some assistance [CT; SM]	<b>M3</b> produce photographic images for a specified purpose with relevant planning material to a good technical standard, showing some imagination and with only occasional assistance	<b>D3</b> produce photographic images for a specified purpose with relevant planning material to a technical quality that reflects near-professional standards, showing creativity and flair and working independently to professional expectations
<b>P4</b> comment on own photographic work with some appropriate use of subject terminology. [RL]	<b>M4</b> explain own photographic work with reference to detailed illustrative examples and with generally correct use of subject terminology.	<b>D4</b> critically evaluate own photographic work in the context of professional practice with supporting arguments and elucidated examples, and consistently using subject terminology correctly.

**PLTS:** This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

<b>Key</b>	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

## Essential guidance for tutors

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### Delivery

Tutors should note that whilst it is desirable that learners have the opportunity to work with film-based technology it is acceptable for them simply to know about the process and its advantages and disadvantages as compared with digital photography. It is also perfectly acceptable for learners to produce all finished work for this unit using digital technology. It is important that learners understand technological developments in photography, the impact of these developments on photography as an art form and how they have affected the working practices of the professional photographer. Learners should therefore study the work of professional photographers through a range of historical and contemporary material such as advertising, promotional, photojournalism, web pages, illustration, fine art, and documentary.

Preparatory investigations and analysis should develop the confidence of learners in preparation for the production of their own photographic material. Initial group discussions could centre on images that learners have brought into the session and cover matters such as achievement of intentions, audience responses, textual and contextual exploration, and use of technologies. Understanding could be evaluated through further group discussions, presentations or case studies on the work of professional photographers.

Short practical exercises should be set to enable learners to experiment with material and processes. Results should be evaluated by learners, their peers and tutors. It should be stressed that automatic camera functions should be switched off to enable greater understanding and creative control. These initial exercises should allow experimentation with depth of field through aperture and shutter manipulation and exposure effects within a range of lighting conditions, both indoors and out. Film processing if available and printing would allow further stages of control and manipulation whilst digital applications will need to include importing, image editing techniques, such as cropping, and image manipulation techniques, such as the use of layers and filters.

Learners should reflect on development and outcomes using a suitable format. Tasks to create awareness of compositional elements, aesthetics and contextual issues such as representation and semiotics should be introduced alongside technical tasks, offering clear aims for the production of specific images. Tasks should encourage learners to move towards technical and creative independence and to approach photography as a means of visual expression and communication.

Centres may wish to consider working with partners from industry to set real photographic briefs. If this cannot be done, simulated project briefs can be set which would offer an opportunity to learn about industry conventions, such as meeting with the client, presentation of ideas and initial work, meeting the needs of the brief in terms of fitness for purpose, consideration of target audiences, deadlines, constraints and regulations.

**NB:** Health and safety should be paramount when working on this unit. Studio and darkroom work presents particular hazards and lighting can be very dangerous if not handled with care and attention. Any work done outside the centre should be fully risk assessed before learners are allowed to work offsite.

## Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way of planning the teaching and assessment of this unit.

Topics and suggested assignments and activities
Introduction to unit and unit assessment.
Guest speaker – freelance photographer specialising in an area of photography.
Discussion with speaker covering general applications of photography, training for the job and career paths.
Field trips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• exhibition at local gallery</li><li>• museum of photography</li><li>• studio of local photographer.</li></ul>
<b>Assignment 1 – Uses of Photography</b>
Learners receive a brief to produce either: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 an illustrated chapter for a children’s book on photography introducing readers to its uses in the world around them</li></ol> or <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2 a page for a photography website on the same topic.</li></ol> Learners will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• collate notes from guest visit and trips</li><li>• draft chapter</li><li>• research and obtain illustrations</li><li>• write chapter and lay out with illustrations.</li></ul>
Workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• camera techniques<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◊ composition</li><li>◊ camera controls</li><li>◊ flash and studio lighting</li></ul></li><li>• digital<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◊ hardware</li><li>◊ software</li><li>◊ image editing</li></ul></li><li>• traditional comparison to digital practice.</li></ul>
Learner-initiated study – experiments following workshops.

## Topics and suggested assignments and activities

### Assignment 2 – People and Places

As a freelance documentary photographer the learner has been commissioned to record a specific place during a specific period.

Learners will:

- research past and present examples of similar work
- brainstorm initial ideas
- consider potential, constraints and contexts
- develop ideas through sketchbook work, trial shots etc
- produce final photographs
- mount and exhibit.

### Assignment 3 – Evaluation

Learners write a review of their exhibition for a photographic magazine (using the third person pronoun).

Learners will:

- consider their objectives and intentions
- consider past and current practice that influenced their work
- interview peers, tutors and visitors to the exhibition to gather responses
- write review.

Unit learning and assessment review.

## Assessment

### Evidence for assessment

Evidence for the achievement of learning outcome 1 could be provided in the form of a research file or written report that shows understanding of a variety of different applications in photography (documentary, fine art, advertising, photojournalism etc) and how imagery is used to communicate. Evidence might also be presented as a case study presentation or as audio or audio-visual recordings or presentations. Oral presentations must be recorded for the purposes of internal and external verification.

Evidence for the achievement of learning outcomes 2 and 3 will most likely be through an annotated portfolio or blog of finished and presented work, produced either to a given brief or for a purpose defined by the learner. The format for presentation of the finished work could, alternatively, be an exhibition or an installation. Learners will also need to make available all associated supporting work that shows the different stages of the project. This can be presented in formats such as sketchbooks, notebooks, developmental images, screen grabs, annotated printouts and test prints. Where appropriate, evidence can be supported by tutor observation and witness statements.

**NB:** the work for evidencing achievement of learning outcomes 2 and 3 may be produced solely in either film-based or digital form.

Evidence for the achievement of learning outcome 4 might be in the form of a written evaluation, a presentation or as an audio or audio-visual recording or presentation, supported by sketchbooks, notebooks, developmental images, screen grabs, annotated printouts and test images.

For some elements of this unit, and for some learners, a formal viva voce assessment might be appropriate. When more than one learner in a cohort is assessed in this way, care must be taken to ensure that all learners are asked equivalent questions, and that all are given equal opportunities to expand or clarify their answers. Interviewers must also ensure that questions are not phrased in such a way as to provide or suggest an answer. Formal vivas should be recorded for the purposes of internal and external verification and at least 50 per cent of such assessments must be internally verified.

### Application of grading criteria

When applying the grading criteria, tutors should follow the advice given below. Please note that any examples of evidence given here are indicative only. This advice is not exhaustive and the examples need not specifically be included in a learner's work in order for that learner to achieve the exemplified grade.

#### Pass

To achieve a pass grade, learners must achieve all the criteria at pass level. For each of the criteria learners must present evidence that addresses each italicised sub-heading of the content for the learning outcome.

P1: learners will give accurate and substantially complete descriptions of photographic applications and the associated techniques in relation to past and contemporary photographic practice. For example, they might describe some of the main applications of photography, such as advertising, promotional, fashion, photojournalism, sport and portraiture, and describe the main contexts in which these forms can be found, such as magazines, newspapers, digital advertising screens, billboards, books, web pages and galleries, including some reference to the main techniques used.

P2: learners will use appropriate photographic equipment and employ appropriate photographic techniques. They will show a basic understanding of film-based and/or digital technology and will be able to describe, with some accuracy, the equipment and the techniques employed in one or both, though the use of technical vocabulary might be limited. Learners will be able to use the main camera functions such as aperture setting, shutter speed, focal length and the procedures for creating images.

P3: learners will plan for the production of a set of photo images for the purpose specified, though this planning will be basic and documentation brief. The images achieved will be technically acceptable though they will not fully realise what was intended in terms of realising the purpose specified. In terms of the aesthetic or imaginative qualities of their work, learners will not move beyond the conventional, but the conventions applied will be appropriate to the application within which they are working.

P2 and P3: learners will typically need frequent assistance and support, though they will take note of and make use of this help when it is given. If they are in frequent need of such help but fail to make positive use of it, they should not be considered for a pass grade for this unit.

P4: learners will consider their own work in such a way that they move beyond merely describing it. They will make evaluative comments upon what they have done but these comments will be assertions that are not supported by consideration of the brief.

P1 and P4: evidence will show a basic understanding of technical terminology but learners will generally be unsure about this vocabulary and will make fairly frequent mistakes when they do use it.

### **Merit**

To achieve a merit grade, learners must achieve all the pass and all the merit grade criteria. For each of the criteria learners must present evidence that addresses each italicised sub-heading of the content for the learning outcome.

M1: learners will explain the main photographic applications, contexts and the associated techniques in relation to past and contemporary photographic practice, using for the most part clear and accurate language and appropriate technical vocabulary. For example, they might explain the main applications of photography and the contexts in which these forms can be found, and then explain in some detail the photographic techniques that are associated with each form. The work will show clear reference to a range of detailed illustrative examples in each case but the learner will not elucidate these examples to show how they illustrate the point they support.

M2: learners will use appropriate photographic equipment competently, and employ appropriate photographic techniques to a good technical standard. Learners will have a good understanding of film-based and/or digital cameras and the associated processes for creating prints. The equipment used and processes undertaken will be explained in such a way as to show how or why they have been used and what the results are, including some indications of how any improvements could be made.

M3: learners will plan the production of a set of photo images for the purpose specified carefully and in some detail. Evidence of some confidence in relation to photographic skills and the handling of equipment will be explicit. The final images will have mainly achieved their intentions, showing evidence of a good technical standard. Although learners might still be working within recognisable conventions, there will be some thought behind the application of technical skills, and codes and conventions will be used with some inventiveness.

M2 and M3: learners may still require assistance and support, particularly when dealing with more complex technology or trying to apply more sophisticated techniques. Like the pass grade learner, they will respond positively to any help given.

M4: learners will go beyond description and begin to explain clearly the effectiveness of their own work and explain decisions made, with reference to detailed illustrative examples from their own work and applying appropriate language and technical terminology accurately. However, the examples they give will not be further elucidated.

M1 and M4: learners will use technical vocabulary for the most part correctly, but may make mistakes or be unsure about usage at times.

### **Distinction**

To achieve a distinction grade, learners must achieve all the pass, all the merit and all the distinction grade

criteria. For each of the criteria learners must present evidence that addresses each italicised sub-heading of the content for the learning outcome.

D1: learners will critically evaluate the main photographic applications, contexts and the associated techniques in relation to past and contemporary photographic practice. They will justify the points they make, develop ideas critically (that is, compare, assess and discriminate) and draw out of an example precisely what it is about it that exemplifies the point it illustrates. Accurate and fluent terminology will be applied throughout.

D2: learners will use appropriate photographic equipment and techniques with creativity and flair, to a high technical standard. They will have experimented with a full range of processes and techniques, and will have a clear understanding of the processes associated with film-based and/or digital photography, being able to employ a selection of these techniques to near-professional standard. Learners should be able to fully explain the equipment and techniques employed and justify the decisions made in a fluent and confident manner, using appropriate technical vocabulary.

D3: learners will meticulously plan the production of a set of photo images for the purpose specified, with contingency plans to deal with possible problems. Documentation and finished work will show that there has been a clear progression from original planning through to the final work. Learners will typically have the confidence to explore techniques and produce a wide range of effective and well thought-out photographic images. Examples will show a high technical standard as well as creativity and flair, resulting in images which fully realise the specified purpose and in which technical and production skills are beginning to approach the professional standard – that is, they bear comparison with it. Learners will apply their technical skills not just with imagination but with ingenuity, and appropriate codes and conventions will be used with occasionally surprising results.

D2 and D3: in all practical activity distinction grade learners will be capable of working autonomously and effectively. The term 'working independently' means that they are able to work on their own initiative, do not need constant support or supervision, give the work their full commitment, work positively and cooperatively with others, and meet deadlines. In other words, they have the kind of self-management skills that would be expected of them in a professional context. Note also that this criterion should not be taken to mean that learners do not seek advice or that they work without discussing things with their tutor, but rather that they are not dependent upon the support of others and that when they take advice they weigh it carefully for themselves.

D4: learners will produce a comprehensive, fluent and critically objective assessment of their own work that has well-considered justifications for the choices made with detailed reference to elucidated examples taken from that work. They will make critical comparisons of their own work with current or past photographic practice in line with the needs of the brief.

D1 and D4: technical vocabulary will be secure and used correctly and confidently at all times.

## Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Pearson assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, M1, D1	Assignment 1 – Uses of Photography	The learner has been commissioned to produce either an illustrated chapter for a children's book on photography introducing readers to its uses in the world around them, or a page for a photography website on the same topic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All notes taken from visiting speaker and during visits.</li> <li>Illustration research notes.</li> <li>Final chapter or screen grabs.</li> </ul>
P2, M2, D2 P3, M3, D3	Assignment 2 – People and Places	As a freelance documentary photographer the learner has been commissioned to record a specific place during a specific period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All initial ideas, notes and sketches.</li> <li>Research into examples of others' work.</li> <li>Development of ideas.</li> <li>Final work mounted for exhibition.</li> </ul>
P4, M4, D4	Assignment 3 – Evaluation	Learners write a review of their own exhibition for a photographic magazine.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal reflection notes.</li> <li>Interview notes.</li> <li>Finished review.</li> </ul>

## Links to other BTEC units

This unit forms part of the BTEC Creative Media Production suite. This unit has particular links with the following units in the BTEC Creative Media Production suite:

Level 2	Level 3
	Digital Graphics for Print
	Graphic Narrative Production
	Producing Print-Based Media

## Essential resources

Learners will need access to camera equipment, software for image manipulation, computers and colour printers and ideally to darkroom facilities.

## Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Centres should develop links with local photographers who could be approached to provide visiting speakers, study visits or examples of professional work.

ScreenSkills, the Sector Skills Council for the creative media sector, has a substantial section of its website dedicated to careers, including job descriptions.

## Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
<b>Creative thinkers</b>	generating ideas and exploring possibilities for own photographs trying out alternatives or new solutions and following ideas through when producing photographs
<b>Reflective learners</b>	reviewing progress, and acting on the outcomes, evaluating experiences and learning to inform future progress when reviewing and refining ideas for own photographs assessing themselves and others, identifying opportunities and achievements when evaluating their own and others' work through structured critical reviews
<b>Self-managers</b>	organising time and resources during the production of own photographs seeking new challenges and demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness in the production of photographs.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
<b>Independent enquirers</b>	planning and carrying out research into techniques and technology planning and carrying out research into subjects for own photographs.

## ● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
<b>ICT – Use ICT systems</b>	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	scanning and developing ideas digitally using software to develop image creation researching contextual and other information for the development of own visual recording work
Use ICT to effectively plan work and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system they have used	planning where and how ICT might be used in photographic projects evaluating outcomes
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	researching from internet sources downloading information creating folders for storage and retrieval
Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices	researching from internet sources downloading information creating folders for storage and retrieval
<b>ICT – Find and select information</b>	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	researching media, techniques and technology researching examples of published photographs which demonstrate use of techniques developing own response informed by research
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	researching information for different briefs and activities evaluating results
<b>ICT – Develop, present and communicate information</b>	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• text and tables</li> <li>• images</li> <li>• numbers</li> <li>• records</li> </ul>	experimenting with digital processes and techniques designing digitally using scanners inputting and formatting information from sources producing photographs if working digitally
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	developing design ideas digitally importing visual and textual information relevant to brief/activity
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	using digital means to plan, create and give presentations to different audiences

Skill	When learners are ...
Evaluate the selection and use of ICT tools and facilities used to present information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>outlining the suitability of media, techniques and technology</li> <li>assessing their progress and commenting on the appropriateness of their selection of ICT tools and facilities</li> </ul>
Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively including storage of messages and contact lists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>using email to submit written work</li> <li>downloading information from internet sources</li> <li>storing information and creating folders for access</li> </ul>
<b>Mathematics</b>	
Understand routine and non-routine problems in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>working with photographic media, techniques and processes in scaling, timing, measuring</li> <li>using perspective and other methods of projection</li> </ul>
Identify the situation or problem and the mathematical methods needed to tackle it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>using measuring and orthographic projection for accuracy, and scaling</li> <li>using software to observe and modify designs taken from visual recordings</li> <li>checking and modifying different viewpoints</li> </ul>
<b>English</b>	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discussing the project brief</li> <li>contributing to group discussions and the sharing of ideas</li> <li>comparing others' use of photography media, techniques and processes</li> <li>presenting ideas for own photographs</li> <li>describing own use of media, techniques and technology</li> </ul>
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reading commentaries on past and current photographers</li> </ul>
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evaluating results of use of photographic media, techniques and processes and analysing skills and qualities achieved</li> <li>analysing and evaluating selected photographers' images for the purpose of informing own work.</li> </ul>