

Glasgow School of Art Course Specification

Course Title: Black and White Photography

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Please note that this course specification is correct on the date of publication but may be subject to amendment prior to the start of the Academic Year.

Course Code	HECOS Code	Academic Session
	100063	2026/27

Course Title	Black and White Photography
Course Contact	Gordon Webb, Head of Continuing Education

Credits	10
SCQF Level	7
When Taught	Open Studio programmes throughout the year.

Associated Programmes	None
Lead School	Fine Art
Other Schools	None
Date of Approval	PACAAG August 2026

Course Introduction

This is a 10-credit, level 7 course that introduces the basic concepts and techniques of Black and White photography.

This course is an introduction to black and white photography and will instruct students in the use of a 35mm film SLR camera and its primary functions along with film processing and working in a darkroom. The course will cover camera handling, exposure control, contact printing, developing and enlarging. Using these skills, students will learn to shoot and develop their own photographs and be encouraged to develop an individual practice through project briefs.

Course Aims

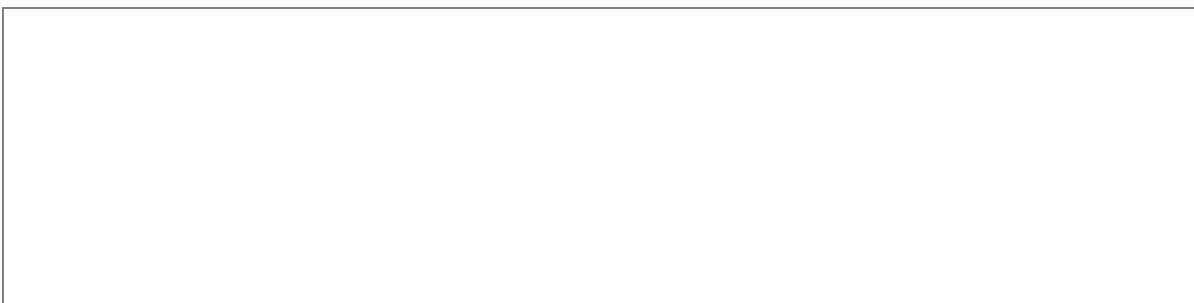
The aims of this course are to:

- Equip students with skills in taking photographs and to think more creatively and philosophically about making photographs, and to develop individual photographic concerns.
- Equip students with the skills in working with a 35mm SRL camera
- Develop darkroom skills and processes enabling students to develop finished prints

Course Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Use the camera intelligently.
- Process photographic film and contact sheets.
- Using increased competency in darkroom skill set, deliver finished prints.
- Have an understanding of composition and subject matter, and develop an individual and creative outlook on the medium.



Indicative Content

This course will provide students with a solid knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of Black and White Photography. Students will learn technical skills in the use of the camera and darkroom equipment appropriately and be confident using this equipment. Students will firstly be introduced to the use of the 35mm SRL camera and the darkroom and processing equipment. Students will be instructed on how to load the film and the first project will be discussed.

On completion of the first film, students will start to process their films by loading spirals – which will be practiced before using test film. Contact sheets from the film will be produced and students will be introduced to first test strips. On choosing which photographs to be printed from the contact sheet students will then be instructed in the use of the enlarger and printing from negatives to produce first finished prints. Photographs are printed using the automated printing process that develops fixes and dries the prints.

In developing the photographs students will also cover burning/dodging, retouching, creative enlarging and cropping, composition and the use of contrast correction filters
The second project themes will be broad to encourage the students to think philosophically about making photographs

Description of Learning and Teaching Methods

Small group of students taught one-to-one both inside and outside the dark room. Group crits allow students the opportunity to assess their own work in relation to their peers. Students develop their shooting skills outside around Glasgow.

Indicative Contact Hours	Notional Learning Hours
33	100

Description of Formative Assessment and Feedback Methods

Engagement with formative assessment is a mandatory requirement.
Formative assessment occurs during regular contact with the tutor, including informal tutorials and discussion within the studio/darkroom Throughout the course students are supported in assessing their developing work and encouraged to make adjustments where necessary. Although it takes place in every class with individual critiques, over time they are able to evaluate their work in progress and learn to modify its development.

Feedback is provided via on-to-one tutorials enabling students to note feedback and critique remarks.

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Description of Summative Assessment arrangements

The course will be internally assessed by studio work. Finalised collection of work and completed self-evaluation form will be assessed by the tutor and another member of staff and an assessment checklist will be completed. The student's technical capability of the darkroom processes will be assessed through their submitted final portfolio. Submitted work will be assessed and moderated in accordance with the GSA Code of Assessment.

Description of Summative Assessment Method	Weight %	Submission week
Students should submit their final prints over two projects with the support of test sheets and proof prints. Students will be assessed on the creativity and competency in how they responded to the projects	60%	12
Technical capability of darkroom processes	30%	12
Completed Self-Evaluation Form	10%	12

Exchange/Study Abroad

Can this course be taken by Exchange/Study Abroad students?	Yes
Are all the students on the course taught wholly by distance learning?	No
Does this course represent a work placement or a year of study abroad?	No
Is this course collaborative with any other institutions?	No
If yes, then please provide the names of the other teaching institutions	

Reading and On-line Resources

Schaefer, J.P., 1999. The Ansel Adams Guide - Basic Techniques of Photography Book 1, Little, Brown and Company.

Clarke, G., 2002. The photograph, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Milton, M., 2005. 100 ways to take better black and white photographs, Cincinnati, OH: David & Charles.

Carroll, H., 2014. Read this if you want to take great photographs, London: Laurence King Pub.