

Summer Prep: BA (Hons) Photography Level 6 and BA (Hons) Photography Top-Up 2025-26

SUMMER WORK and PREPARATION

N.B. PLEASE RE-ENROL and READ THIS ENTIRE DOCUMENT CAREFULLY. STAFF ARE NOW ON ANNUAL LEAVE FROM 17TH JULY AND WILL NOT BE ABLE TO REPLY TO YOU UNTIL w/c SEPTEMBER 1st, 2025.

As you embark on the next phase of your studies, this document will provide you with a list of preparatory work for the summer. There is a lot of information contained in the Summer Brief here so please make sure you read it all. The enclosed worksheets within this document are asking you to develop responses for both of your Level 6 modules.

You will have sessions on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and some tutorials on a Thursday online TBC.

Your modules for the Academic year 2025-26:

PHO3006 - Professional Futures (20 Credits)

PHO3007 – Project Foundations: Research and Development (40 Credits)

For further information please download the Programme Handbook from BA PHOTO NILE

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RE-ENROL!

There is a Welcome Week with SU and UON activities planned for w/c 22nd September 2025. Please access the main BA Photography site for updates and activities that you can join. New Top Up Students will be expected to start before the 29th September and engage in Welcome Week activities and we encourage

all progressing students also to engage with this week, and at the very least finish the summer work below.

You will be given access to your modules and your new briefs in the first in-person sessions which will be Monday the 29th of September 2025. See your timetables for times and rooms.

Although at this level more emphasis is placed on independent study, you will be expected to be available on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday each week in person (and Thursdays online tutorials TBC) to participate in seminars, workshops, tutorials, group critiques, supervisor meetings, Level 6 forums, etc. Additionally, there are refresher practical workshops available TBC.

It is important that you **complete the Self-Assessment Sheet - Academic Skills and have it available for your first Personal Tutor meeting** as this will help us to identify specific areas where you may need support and additional help.

Summer Preparation PHO3007 - Project Foundations: Research and Development



The aim of this module is to support students to expand and consolidate their independent creative practice and advance their understanding of the context in which their work is developed, aligned with other image makers and the appropriate audience for the work. The summer tasks we propose below will not only help you establish the foundations of your **Practical Project** but also help you start a survey and analysis of the key academic material (books, journal articles, academic databases, etc.) that you will use to produce an **Extended Research Proposal** as part of your submission for this module.

Summer Preparation for your Practical Project

Narrow down the concept within which you will produce work for your Practical Project and Extended Research Proposal:

During the summer, **determine one to two concepts** that you want to potentially work with for your **Practical Project** work and **Extended Research Proposal**. You may work with topics that you have worked with previously and expand on them or work with new ideas. Produce mind maps to refine the concept and document in your **Digital Research Journal**. You may work with still or moving images for your Semester 1 Practical Project.

Produce an exploratory digital portfolio of images (5-7 images or 1-2 minutes of video clips)

During the summer, **produce a body of work as a portfolio (between 5-7 digital images or 1-2 minutes of video clips), which reflects your vision for your Semester 1 project.** Whilst it may be the case that these ideas will be preliminary, perhaps unfocused, the work you produce here should indicate your depth of thinking and key ideas related to your practice. The set of images/video clips should respond to the concepts that you have developed.

Produce a Digital Research Journal

You are also required to **create a short digital research journal to document and evaluate your research and development methods.** This should be a document produced in the software of your choice e.g., Word, PowerPoint, PDF etc. The images and research journal will form the content of your initial group tutorials for the PHO3007 Project Foundations: Research and Development module.

Summer Preparation for Extended Research Proposal

Complete Development Form

In preparation for your Extended Research Proposal, which will relate to your concept and practical project this semester and form part of the submission for PHO3007, you should conduct your academic research into your chosen concept. First, **complete the Development Form below and upload it to the PHO3007 NILE site during WELCOME WEEK and BEFORE the 1st Teaching Week commencing 29th September 2025.** This form is a document for putting down some initial formative ideas for your project and research proposal to be discussed and developed during the first semester in group tutorials. You will have access to your NILE sites when you have enrolled on the course.

This exercise will ensure that you are engaging with research at a meaningful level from an early stage.

For now, start skimming through a wide range of relevant material and start to pin down possibilities that could form the basis of your final 5-8 sources for the Extended Research Proposal. Please note that the sources should be diverse

(academic articles, books, newspapers, magazines, academic websites, etc.). Although at Level 6, it is expected that you will be putting together your own book lists for modules, there are some books that you could re-visit and it would be helpful for you to re-read relevant chapters of these.

Photographic history and theory

Bate, D. (2016) Photography: The Key Concepts. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Berg.

Clarke, G. (1997) The Photograph. Oxford University Press.

Wells, L. (2015) Photography: A Critical Introduction. 5th Edition. Oxford: Routledge. Davis, W. (2011) A General Theory of Visual Culture, Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Langford M 2015, Basic Photography & Advanced Photography

BA (Hons) Photography

PHO3007: Extended Research Proposal

Name:

Topic of interest to be researched:

Review of the literature and artist practice relating to the topic:

e.g. the definitive or most influential pieces of research in this area are...

the key books, articles, works in this area are...

the experts in this field are...

(You should include primary and secondary sources, galleries and studios, books, journals, proposed interviews etc.)

Statement of problem/outline of argument:

e.g. what are you trying to find out/explore through your photographic practice?

Methodologies (both practice-based (techniques, equipment, etc. and theory):

SUMMER WORK TASKS

PHO3006 Professional Futures



(Images created with ChatGPT)

BA Photography PHO3006 Semester 1 Mondays (see electronic timetable in September for room and exact times AM TBC)

Professional Futures is a module that is designed to get you thinking about, and taking positive steps towards, improving your professional profile and thinking about your goals after you leave university. In the module you will be asked to undertake research into the area of the industry that you are most interested in, as well as building resources, marketing materials and portfolios. There are many ways you can enter the industry or continue to prepare for future employment and a career once you graduate. Below might be some of the options you can consider:

- Freelance employment (for example, a self-employed photographer, retoucher, content producer or role in the creative industries)
- Hybrid (a mixture of freelance and employed)
- Employed.
- Continuing Education: for example, studying for an MA.

You need to prepare for your progression route by understanding the type of work/role/opportunity you are looking to pursue, and you need to be producing some work that is directly relevant to the path you want to follow.

If you are interested in being a freelance photographer, you need to know about setting up in business and the types of marketing you will need.

If you are looking for employment, you'll need to understand the industry you are thinking of heading into and prepare materials that will be necessary.

If you want to continue your studies, you'll need to produce some practical work that has a strong academic component.

Once you have an idea about your route you will need to put in place a self-development plan. There are many tools available online, you need to select one of those. You may choose to use SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound) targets or IPARR (Identify, Plan, Action, Record, Review), or another tool for self-development, or personal-development planning.

It's also worth doing some personality tests and getting to know what you think are your strengths and weaknesses – these should form some of the PDP (Personal development Planning) we focus on in the first weeks of the module in Semester 1, which starts on Monday 29th September 2025.

SUMMER WORK TASKS

1. Prepare a presentation to deliver in week 1

- You will need to research tools for producing a self-development plan and be ready to give a short presentation in week 1 where you set out your aims for the module and career plans for after university.
- If you really struggle with deciding which way you want to go, you will need to produce a document utilising personality test and be ready to explain those results relating to where your strengths may lie.
- If you are still struggling you will need to be prepared to present an overview of the client work you undertook in level 5 and the lessons you learned from it. Ask yourself, how does that work help you make decisions about your next steps?
- The presentation should be approx. 5 mins long.

Notes: this module will allow you to do lots of research and you can do that in a variety of ways, even with AI. However, it's very important that you reference this all correctly. Over the summer have a look at tools which may help you with this.

RefWorks – You should be able to access this through your university email account

Zotero

End Note

2. To aid your presentation prepare a DRJ

We are looking for **quality** in your research **NOT** quantity. Your research, once you have filtered the useful bits can be appendices to your DRJ and **applicable and relevant** research should form the basis of planning and evaluation in your DRJ.

Do not cut and paste large passages of text **from any source** into your DRJ. Abridge that text into the appendices and use **appropriate** stats and facts in the DRJ.

If you start looking at areas you are interested in over the summer, start compiling and referencing them as you go along using an appropriate tool.

Your DRJ should be **NO LONGER than 100 pages**, including appendices on submission!

There will be a formative submission site on the PHO3006 module NILE site which will be open to you by the 26th September.

3. Read through the Programme Guide on the main BA Photography NILE site and access the information about your module.

N.B. The full module guide will be available on the PHO3006 NILE site from 26th September

Essential Welcome Information

BA (Hons) Photography Top-Up Students - additional information

As you will be joining us this year, we thought it may be helpful to provide you with a list of suggested equipment for the BA Photography course, much of which you may already have. Realising that a photography course makes a number of financial demands on you, with that in mind we have put together a list of some of the things we would see as essential items.

Essential Items:

- Paper/notebooks – writing (lined and plain) for note taking
- Pens, pencils, highlighter pens
- Sketchbooks – you will be encouraged to produce electronic sketchbooks (PDF's or a blog), however if you wish to start exploring and collating your ideas physically- you will need a sketchbook
- A lens cloth

There is an Art Shop on campus - where you will be able to purchase all the usual items. They stock a good range of art materials. High quality digital prints can also be purchased on- site.

Please be aware that our main stocks of digital cameras are Nikon and Canon, we have a range of lenses that will fit these (in addition to adaptors so that these lenses can be used for Canon cameras) and a selection of some canon lenses. The following is a short list of recommended equipment you will need for the course:

- Portable external hard drive for backing up all work. Suggested makes include Seagate, LaCie, Samsung, Western Digital (WD). Suggested size 1TB/2TB, ensure Mac compatible- as the computers within the department are Macs. Some suggested suppliers: PCWorld, Ebuyer.com, Amazon.
- Your own SD cards- we suggest 3-4 which have at 16GB/32GB/64GB of memory. These are essential if you are borrowing our DSLRs and video

equipment. Suggested makes include, SanDisk Extreme Pro, Lexar Professional, Transcend. You can buy these from Ebuyer.com, Amazon, WEX, CurrysPCworld.

- Archival/Portfolio Photographic Boxes - for presentation and storage of photographic prints. These are recommended, but you can discuss this with a tutor and pick them up after you start the course. Consider getting together as a group and you may save money through a bulk order (<https://www.seawhite.co.uk/>, <https://www.cassart.co.uk/>, <https://www.preservationequipment.com/>, <https://www.preservationequipment.com/Catalogue/Archival-Storage/Boxes/Portfolio-Box-10-sizes-Up-to-619mm-x-517mm-24-x-20>, <https://www.ryderbox.co.uk/>)
- Memory sticks/USB Flash drives- 16GB/32GB- for transferring files and storing lecture slide presentations. Suggested makes: Samsung, Kingston, SanDisk, Corsair
- Negative Folder for black and white and colour negative storage if you are intending to shoot analogue (Wex, Secol, Amazon, etc. stock these) - paper sleeves are supplied by the University.
- Photographic lupe/magnifier- for checking analogue and digital prints.
- If you work with film, please remember it is often cheaper to buy online- watch for deals - <https://analoguewonderland.co.uk/collections/cheap-film>, <https://www.discountfilmsdirect.co.uk/>, <https://www.ebay.co.uk/>

Top Up only - You will be provided with additional information and a possible 'Cultural' Exhibition visit in welcome week. (TBC)

Worksheets - PHO3006 Professional Futures

These worksheets are designed to help structure your Marketing Pack submission. It is anticipated that you will complete these sheets prior to your first meetings with your dedicated supervisor. They will help to focus the attention of these meetings on some key areas for development.

Worksheet One: Defining Interests- Freelance or Employment

When developing your Marketing Pack, it is appropriate that you think about the potential beyond this year of study. Where do you want to be in one year/five years' time? What are your goals and what will drive you?

What aspect of photography and the photographic industry interests you most? Is there a particular field that you would like to develop links with? For example, you may want to consider the following:

- Are you an artist practitioner who hopes to exhibit work in galleries?
- Do you see your pathway as taking a more commercial route and if so, what particular aspect of photography interests you (fashion, editorial, advertising)?
- Do your interests lie in post-production services (i.e. specialist editing/ Photoshop)?
- Are you interested in working with a collection or archive (e.g. within a museum or picture/ stock library)?
- Would you like to teach?

Whatever area of practice interests you there is a great deal that you can do now to define these interests and develop some meaningful contacts this year.

Personal Values:

In this section, you need to consider your personal values: what are the things that make you truly and passionately committed to what you are doing in your

work? It will be different for everyone; for example, creating awareness of social issues may be important to you, while others may be driven by being creatively innovative. See if you can list FIVE things that are important to you in the block below.

Personal Qualities:

Start this exercise by listing the things you feel are your strengths and areas where you feel uneasy or less confident.

What I'm good at...	Things I struggle with...

Worksheet Two: Researching Career Opportunity Paths

Communicating with relevant organisations, groups and individuals.

Now that you have begun to find focus for your developing practice, it is important for you to consider who and what agencies or organisations or schools you should make contact with in order to forge ahead with your plans.

By researching into appropriate photographic and employment fields, compile a list of initial contacts that you can approach to discuss work experience, internships or shadowing. Compile a list of a minimum of 5 possible contacts.

Name of Contact & Organisation	Purpose of Contact / Relevance to Career Plans

How will you contact these individuals, agencies or organisations?

- by phone?
- by email?
- by letter?

However you decide to make initial contact, it would be good for you to develop a 'script' that can be adapted and personalised.

You now need to draft a script that you can use for this purpose. It does not need to be too long- it is not at this stage a CV. You need to think about how you will capture someone's attention and encourage them to respond to your enquiry (yours will be one of many). What is your USP (Unique Selling Point)? Do you need to include visual references to your work (if so, how would you present or incorporate them)?

Spend some time considering what you want to say- can you find a shared interest or link that might help the introduction? Here are some web links to

help you construct your introduction; although they are targeted at email contact, they can be adapted for either phone or letter.

Keep **ALL** evidence of your contacts even though some may not get back to you, or you may receive a negative response.

<http://www.slideshare.net/HubSpot/how-towriteemailspeoplewanttorespondto>

<https://designmodo.com/best-email-opening-lines/>

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/networking-by-email>

<https://www.criminallyprolific.com/cold-email-example/>