



Green Gown
Awards 2014

Finalist's case study



Dissemination
supported by:



University of the Arts London Courses and Learning

London College of Fashion: Weaving sustainability through flexible learning fashion courses

Section 1 About the project

Summary

LCF Programme Director Jessica Saunders has woven her passion and knowledge of sustainable fashion through our flexible (part time) courses in Fashion Media, Design & Realisation, Business, Branding and Visual Merchandising. Students tackle realistic sustainability briefs and graduate with the skills to change the fashion industry for the better.

Project partners

Amnesty International, Antiform, Ethical Fashion Forum, Impactt, Traid, Hyundai, Mind Candy Entertainment, Cofrad Mannequins.

Section 2 The results

The starting point

London College of Fashion's Flexible Learning (part-time) programmes are: BA (Hons) Fashion Media, BA (Hons) Fashion Design & Realisation, BA (Hons) Fashion Business, FdA Fashion Retail Branding & Visual Merchandising.

When students start their course, they may not always have the skills or experience needed to contribute to a sustainable fashion industry. Through integrating sustainability through the flexible courses, rather than teaching it as an add-on, sustainability issues and solutions are brought to life through responses to real life briefs and collaborations with a broad range of industry partners. By integrating sustainability into all Flexible courses, Jessica avoids only reaching the "usual suspects" - students who are already interested in sustainability.

The approach

Sustainability is integrated throughout the degrees. Students study human rights, political and cultural limitations and practices in countries where farming for fashion and factories produce garments. Students are marked against their integration of sustainability in their projects, such as buying and merchandising, garment design and the retail environment.



Profile

- HEI
- 18,799 students
- 2,333 staff
- Urban

Our goals

Sustainability is one of University of the Arts' strategic aims:

"To create a culture of social and environmental awareness in order to develop and integrate sustainable and ethical practice throughout all aspects of our life and work."

Performance and results

Students from all four courses are lectured by sustainability experts and must respond to sustainability briefs in their assessed work. Following on from this, many consider sustainability in their work going forward and naturally integrate an aspect of sustainability into their dissertations and degree collections. Business Students are particularly engaged, meaning that a new generation of fashion business graduates are entering the industry with a sustainable conscience and the skills to create change. One graduate from 2013 has now set up her own business in upcycling fabrics and garments and another commented on her "passion to make this a key element of my design process."

Section 3 The future

Lessons learned

- 1 Integrating sustainability into the curriculum enables graduates to set up sustainable businesses, greening the industry and changing the market.
- 2 Having attended modules where sustainability is integrated, many students naturally integrate sustainability into other work going forward.
- 3 Students question their direct impact through their work at university and beyond, as well as their indirect impacts as consumers.
- 4 The Workshop days across all degrees will be rolled out to a wider set of students and could go on to become a College wide event. Research shows that an interdisciplinary approach to sustainability is an effective way to engage students.

Sharing our project

We have publicised this project through staff members and meetings, student inductions, and online through our website and blogs including a post on selection as a Finalist for the Green Gown awards:

<http://blogs.arts.ac.uk/fashion/2014/08/05/london-college-fashion-centre-sustainable-fashion-nominated-six-green-gown-awards/>

What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

"We are delighted that six London College of Fashion projects are Green Gown Award Finalists in 2014. This recognition, of our dedication to sustainability in all that we do and our achievements to date, will help us to celebrate our success and engage even more students, staff and others in using fashion, as a discipline, to drive change, build a sustainable future and improve the way we live."

- Professor Frances Corner OBE, Head of London College of Fashion



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Further information

Contact: Jessica Saunders at j.saunders@fashion.arts.ac.uk

Flexible Learning courses at LCF: <http://www.arts.ac.uk/fashion/courses/part-time-courses/>

Better Lives is a term we use here at London College of Fashion to describe the work we do that uses fashion, as a discipline, to drive change, build a sustainable future and improve the way we live:

<http://www.arts.ac.uk/fashion/about/better-lives/>