

## Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

### Basic Course Information

1.	Awarding Institution:	Nottingham Trent University
2.	School/Campus:	School of Art & Design/City Campus
3.	Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study:	MA Fashion Knitwear Design Full-time
4.	Normal Duration:	45 weeks (September–July)
5.	UCAS Code:	N/A

### 6. Overview and general educational aims of the course

Fashion Knitwear Design at NTU has an outstanding international reputation based on research and investment in advanced knitting technology and associated specialist expertise. The growth in innovative knitwear within the fashion industry has led to new opportunities for designers to simultaneously explore knitted textile and garment design through a range of traditional and digital technologies. The role of a knitwear designer is to research and develop concepts for an expanding international market. Working as an individual or as part of a team, you will be required to apply creative and technical skills to initiate and resolve designs for specific markets and consumers.

The MA in Fashion Knitwear Design encourages innovation through experimental research and practice, leading to highly original knitted textiles and garment forms. The emergence of 3D/whole-garment technologies alongside established manufacturing methods offers designers the opportunity to develop new research and design development methods and methodologies and knitted fabrications. The course enables you to explore and understand the relationships between knitwear design and contemporary global markets, trends and traditions and to establish your own design philosophy and identity within this challenging and distinct design discipline.

The curriculum has been designed to support you to complete an individual project through a personally negotiated Project Proposal and provide a cohesive range of learning experiences, based on developing your creative, academic and professional potential as directed by your career aspirations. It provides a unique opportunity for you to explore and develop existing 2D and 3D knitted textile skills through the use of a range of industry standard flatbed and advanced knitting technology. Workshops in CAD (dedicated knit programming and graphics software), creative pattern cutting, design

development and communication, and portfolio development will help you to enhance your existing fashion knitwear, manufacturing, and presentation skills. By the end of the course, you will produce a directional portfolio which reflects your future aspirations, containing a body of work that demonstrates your ability to undertake and resolve advanced creative projects.

Projects may be developed in all areas and market levels of fashion knitwear design, ranging from entrepreneurial and commercial to conceptual, within high street, designer or bespoke contexts. You may be inspired by personal aspiration, established or emerging links with the knitwear industry or by investigating the intersections between art, fashion knitwear and technology. Your designs may be located in emerging or future markets, reflect your personal aesthetic response to the challenges of sustainable design by incorporating fully-fashioned, zero-waste design and renewable yarns. Alternatively, you may be inspired by the craft practices and/or needs of particular local or global cultures. Irrespective of your project aims and outcomes, you will be expected to address design responsibility by demonstrating an responsible social and ethical awareness and an understanding of the impact that your knitwear designs have on the environment.

In addition to having access to the knitwear resource, you are invited to gain from the many opportunities, provided by the MA Fashion, Textile and Knitwear (FTK) subject, to aid your personal and professional growth. As part of the master's community you will benefit from learning alongside a diverse and international cohort of fashion and textile students, about how knitted textiles perform and interact when applied and manipulated as 3D products. This holistic, multidisciplinary learning environment facilitates critical and creative thinking to help you to explore and understand the relationships between the theory and practice of fashion knitwear design, contemporary lifestyles, and, global trends and cultures, while establishing your unique skill base as a designer.

Fashion Knitwear Design offers many excellent career opportunities including creative and technical design roles in the fashion industry, buying, trend forecasting and styling. The MA enables you to develop specialist knowledge and skills in the subject through a self-initiated programme of learning. Other personal aims for learning, such as CAD and programming (Stoll & Shima Seiki) skill development, pattern cutting, garment modelling

and construction and portfolio development will be supported through specialist workshops. To further assist your progress, opportunities for sponsorship and networking are facilitated through established relationships as well as opportunities to attend professional trade events. There are possibilities to engage with collaborative live projects and competitions throughout the course and partake in short work placements as relevant to your personally negotiated project.

There are two options to select from on the course;

**Option A** – ‘Fashion Knitwear Design’. This is a year-long 180 credit module.

**Option B** – ‘Fashion Knitwear Design (option B)’. This is a year-long 160 credit module plus the 20 credit point ‘Advanced Art and Design Research’ module (Total 180 credit points).

All students are initially enrolled onto the 180 credit module during the first part of the year and you will then decide in November, with your tutors, if you are going to continue on this module (Option A), or elect to take the 160 credit module alongside a 20 credit module in ‘Advanced Art and Design Research’ (Option B).

This 20 credit module has been devised for students who are interested in further postgraduate study, or research roles following master’s study, and taking this module would support applications for further research study, such as MPhil or PhD, which you may be interested in pursuing in the future. It is designed to support your understanding of how your advanced practice can be a valid component of a research process that makes a contribution to knowledge, giving you skills which enable you to design a research enquiry as well as to carry it out systematically while giving you an overview of the traditions of research on which your creative practice may draw. The teaching and learning methods for this module include lectures, written assignments, discussions and presentations.

If you choose this 20 credit module, then as part of this option you will be moved onto the 160 credit module as only 180 credits are required for a master’s degree (see section 8 for more details).

Special features:

In addition to the learning aims of your Project Proposal, the general objectives of the course will include a multidisciplinary environment in

which personal and professional ambitions can be achieved through the practice of fashion knitwear design. Support is available through flexible and responsive teaching and learning to enable you to:

- Explore and challenge the established parameters of fashion knitwear design
- Understand research methods and apply them to a knitwear project
- Investigate links between the theory, practice and context of fashion knitwear
- Work with an allocated personal supervisor on your project
- Develop your own design identity and philosophy linked to your career aspirations
- Work with core academic and research active staff and industry professionals
- Join industry-linked projects, competitions and exhibitions
- Learn alongside a diverse and international community of fashion, textile and knitwear students
- Work within a creative and multi-disciplinary environment to generate and disseminate new ideas and knowledge
- Establish life-long learning skills

There are opportunities for sponsorships through a number of established industry and charitable links.

You will also have the option to join a research trips to industry trade events to enhance your understanding of the fashion and textile design industry and market contexts. All students can apply for their work to be exhibited at industry facing exhibitions, such as, New Designers (London) during the final part of the module.

MA Fashion Knitwear Design is one of three full-time specialist awards in the MA Fashion, Textile and Knitwear (FTK) subject area. The other awards are: MA Fashion Design, MA Textile Design Innovation. A part-time 2-year course, MA Fashion and Textile Design is also offered. All our courses are designed to deliver the standard requirements of the subject benchmarks and to promote autonomous and reflective learning.

7. **Course outcomes**

Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.

**Knowledge and understanding**

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- Contextualise your specialist area of study through critical reflection within the discipline of fashion knitwear design to identify opportunities for career development, entrepreneurship, or further advanced study (B)
- Research and develop a Project Proposal by identifying research aims and objectives that will further develop creative practice and professional development (B)
- Demonstrate expertise in advanced research methods and methodologies to resolve the project
- Identify the market sector within which the work is situated through referencing relevant commercial, global and environmental practices (B)
- Build upon established theory and practice and demonstrate new knowledge in Fashion Knitwear Design to develop innovative concepts
- Evidence advanced knowledge of relevant knitted textiles, garment designing technologies

**Skills, qualities and attributes**

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- Communicate effectively through discussion, debate and formal presentations using appropriate media to a range of audiences (B)
- Evidence the ability to work independently through strategic planning, time management and professional negotiation and collaboration (B)
- Evidence skills as a reflective practitioner to record and critically analyse progress in order to make decisions, conceptualise and initiate new ideas (B)
- Complete a collection of innovative samples, prototypes and/or products that evidence advanced knitwear design and production skills

- Demonstrate skilled use of specialist machinery to generate innovative knitwear swatches
- Create a professional portfolio that effectively communicates the project outcomes in relation to your chosen market sector (B)
- Evidence design responsibility through demonstrating social and ethical awareness and an understanding of the impact that your fashion knitwear design practice can have on the environment

## 8. **Teaching and Learning Methods**

The course places emphasis on the development of professional practice, based on a platform of research, critical understanding and reflection. Through an independent and interdisciplinary approach to learning you will experience a wide range of teaching and learning practices which are embedded within the MA FTK courses to meet the needs of a diverse and international cohort with different learning styles and backgrounds.

During the early part of the course you will be appointed a personal supervisor who, along with the course leader, will provide teaching guidance and support through tutorials and seminars on the development and resolution of your Project Proposal. You will attend other relevant lectures in the Fashion, Textile and Knitwear (FTK) subject, wider School of Art and Design and University, where relevant to your study. Your contribution to the development of a stimulating learning environment through the dedicated shared studio, and in taught sessions and presentations are vital to inform the critical debate between you, the staff and your peers, which is important at Masters' level.

**MA Module:** Fashion Knitwear Design'- **180 credit points** or Fashion Knitwear Design (option B) - **160 credit points**

This module will enable you to establish your project proposal and initiate your enquiry followed by completing research and the development of your ideas and ultimately the realisation of your project proposal.

Your project should reflect your personal and professional aims as a design practitioner and should be aligned with your career aspirations. The first part of the curriculum is designed around an extended induction to enable you to understand the course and the mode of study at masters level, including an introduction to the School resources and key staff. You will also

attend specialist and multidisciplinary lectures, seminars and workshops for the MA Fashion, Textile and Knitwear (FTK) subject cluster, for example:

- Subject lectures and seminars
- Supervisory and group design tutorials
- Visual research workshops
- Market and trend research
- Trend and colour research
- CAD Knit workshops – Shima Seiki and Stoll
- 2D/3D design generation workshops
- Reflective writing workshops
- Student presentations
- Professional practice lectures and seminars
- Multidisciplinary project opportunities
- CAD Knit and In Design workshops
- Pattern cutting/ draping workshops
- Garment make-up workshops
- 3D development surgeries
- Portfolio workshops and tutorials
- Exhibition briefings and planning sessions
- CAD workshops
- 3D construction surgeries
- Portfolio tutorials

At the start of the course you will develop your Project Proposal to enable you to map your project and outline the personal aims and objectives that you intend to resolve. You will commence the course by spending a few weeks producing a body of research and initial design development ideas. You will develop 2D and 3D experimentation to progress your project and begin to address the aims stated in your Project Proposal.

In November, at the first interim evaluation point, you will receive formal formative feedback on how your project has progressed to date to enable you to evaluate your project to identify the key areas for further research and development. At this point, you will also start to discuss with your tutors the 2 module options available to you and confirm your final decision by the beginning of December. If you opt to take the 20 credit module option 'Advanced Art and Design Research' (and therefore change to the 160 credit module) you will evaluate your proposal and project outcomes with your supervisor and the Course Leader to meet the expectations of the 160 credit module.

During your main module (180 or 160 credit points), you will spend time developing, experimenting and testing your ideas while continuing to acquire specialist textile design skills. Professional practice is a key focus of this module, supported through opportunities to join multidisciplinary group projects, complete live projects, national and international competitions and

lectures and seminars delivered by core staff, industry specialists and the School's Employability team, as well as through organising your own short work based learning as appropriate to your project.

Following formal formative feedback in April on how your project has developed during the middle part of the project, you will begin to realise the aims of your Project Proposal and the presentation of your project outcomes. You will focus on completing your textile collection and portfolio using the skills you have learnt so far in the module, and planning how to promote your work and present yourself to the industry. The curriculum is designed around working towards key industry facing exhibitions such as: New Designers, London (June) and the MA Exhibition at NTU (July).

#### 9. **Assessment Methods**

Formal formative feedback will take place at three stipulated interim assessment points during the module to enable you to reflect on what you have achieved so far and to establish how you are meeting the learning outcomes and your project aims.

This will include all of your coursework to date – the Project Proposal, theoretical and practical research which may include: visual research/sketchbook; 2D and 3D design generation including pattern cutting and drape; initial knitwear designs; experimental samples; technical file (containing CAD notes, materials, toiles, tests); contextual and market research and evidence of reflective practice to evidence understanding of research methods and design responsibility. You will give a formal presentation about your work to your supervisor, course leader and peers that will contextualise your project and help to summarise your progress.

All module learning outcomes have assessment and grading criteria that describe the level of learning being achieved against each learning outcome. At the formal formative feedback stages you will receive written feedback. This will indicate the strengths of the work being assessed and the areas that are considered to require improvement, together with an indication of the level that you currently achieving at against each of the learning outcomes. You will therefore receive an overall indicative grade. You will have a feedback tutorial with your supervisor at which you can discuss the detail of your feedback.

At each tutorial you and your supervisor will complete a tutorial record form which will help you evaluate how your work is progressing. It is also important to note that you will receive feedback from staff and students during group tutorials, presentations, workshops and seminars.

Summative assessment takes place at the end of the module and will focus on your level of achievement against each of the module's learning outcomes. The grade at Summative assessment is your final grade and determines the level to which you have met following study on either the 180 credit module or combined 160 and 20 credit modules.

**Formal Formative Feedback 180/160 credit module** – please see module guide for dates.

**Summative Assessment 20 credit point module**

This is assessed through coursework. You will prepare and give short presentations that respond to guided reading, to underpin the research enquiry that your practice points towards. For the end of the module you will write up these responses to the research methods you have explored by producing a report.

**Summative Assessment 180/160 credit point module**

At the end of the module you will submit all of your coursework as described in your project proposal and give a formal presentation that summarises your project.

At the end of the course you are assessed against the learning outcomes of the 180 credit module, or the 160 and 20 credit modules (option B) to determine whether you have passed the Master's course. All course learning outcomes have assessment and grading criteria that describe the level of learning you have achieved, against each learning outcome. Your work is assessed against the learning outcomes to determine your award; for example Distinction, Commendation, Pass or Fail, according to your level of achievement.

If you have not met the MA learning outcomes you may be offered a further attempt, in accordance with the University's Common Assessment Regulations. If after this point you have still not met the learning outcomes for the MA award, your work will then be assessed against the learning outcomes for the interim awards of; Postgraduate Certificate in Fashion Knitwear Design (equivalent to 60 credit points at Masters level), or

Postgraduate Diploma in Fashion Knitwear Design (equivalent to 120 credit points at Masters level).

This decision will be made by the Board of Examiners at the end of the course, and will be confirmed by an External Examiner.

10. **Course structure and curriculum**

MA Fashion Knitwear Design is a full-time course, delivered over one academic year and is worth 180 credits. The course runs from September to July. There is also an option to study a 20 credit 'Advanced Art and Design Research' module that will be offered in the second term (January – April). The decision to opt for this route will need to be made following the interim evaluation in November. If you are interested in having a deeper and more thorough understanding of research methodologies and philosophy in relation to your subject area, with the possibility of undertaking a research degree in the future, then you might be interested in considering this option.

<b>MA Fashion Knitwear Design</b>	
Option A	Option B
<b>'Fashion Knitwear Design'</b> 180 credits	<b>'Fashion Knitwear Design'</b> 160 credits
	<b>'Advanced Art &amp; Design Research'</b> 20 credits
45 weeks	45 weeks

In September you will begin work on your Fashion Knitwear Design project through developing your initial - idea into a Project Proposal. Early on, you will also be provided with an induction to the University, health and safety regulations, the Master's Fashion, Textiles and Knitwear (FTK) community and to Master's level learning and teaching methods. These include an introduction to subject specific research methods to support you to: develop a research-based practice, set personal research aims, map out the territory of your Fashion Knitwear Design project and use time planning skills to help you successfully meet deadlines. You will be asked to reflect

upon your progress through discussion with your supervisor and establish if your aims for the year include taking the option to study on the 'Advanced Research in Art and Design' 20 credit module.

If you wish to undertake a short work placement, this can be negotiated as part of your learning through your own research into textile and knitwear companies or organisations outside NTU. For students interested in building on their entrepreneurship skills there is the opportunity to apply for a place on a business incubation course (e.g. with NTU's HIVE) to seek professional mentoring, or to join live industry, multi-disciplinary or cross-School projects to experience working to briefs, and to enhance team working and work-based learning skills.

In April, you will revise your Project Proposal and determine the final set of targets for the MA award. You will use the knowledge and skills gained from your research into the contemporary theory and practice of fashion knitwear design, and apply subject specialist techniques and technologies to complete your fashion knitwear design project.

Briefing lectures, seminars and tutorials will continue to provide you with opportunities to present and critique your work and that of others, to support you in the successful and professional resolution of your project. You will be invited to join industry facing exhibitions such as, New Designers and an MA Exhibition to present your innovative knitwear designs and products to the Industry and general public.

**11. Admission to the course**

**Entry requirements**

For current information regarding all entry requirements for this course, please see the 'Applying' tab on the NTU course information web page.

**12. Support for Learning**

The School is committed to assisting you in achieving the best results possible during your studies, providing you with a wide range of academic support and advice. A comprehensive learner support system is adopted by the School, which also can include input from the University and student union, tailored to meet your needs.

The School is keen that all students, irrespective of background and characteristics such as age and nationality, have equal opportunities to succeed with their studies. There is a section in NTU's Online Workspace (NOW) for students within the school to access materials to help you with your studies.

On arrival, you will be issued with a hard copy of the Student Handbook (electronic version can be accessed through the NOW portal). The handbook contains academic information and student support information in line with university guidelines. This includes: Course and Module specifications, staff contact details, courses assessment and feedback plan, consent forms and ethics forms.

Your Student Handbook will contain details of the support available to you. Should there be an interruption in your studies, due to circumstances outside of your control, or through other factors affecting your academic performance. The School provides three options for requesting consideration and these are found in the section on Extenuating Circumstances.

The course has an induction session at the start of the academic year where new students undertake a range of group and individual activities, which foster a sense of community and develop an understanding of Nottingham Trent University postgraduate attributes.

During the induction period new students are made aware of the university's student safety handbook and the School safety code of practice. Those parts relevant to the course will be discussed as part of the Health & Safety Induction. The University central Student Support Services also offers a range of general, specialist and professional support services for students.

Each course has a dedicated Course Leader; you will also be allocated a personal supervisor, both of whom will provide academic and pastoral support as appropriate. School and University Resources, including dyslexia support, counselling services and language support, are available if required. Subject specialists from careers service, and library and learning resources are also available to support you during your studies.

NOW is used by all courses in the School of Art and Design and allows key information about your studies and a variety of learning material to be accessed and shared. You can also access your results through NOW.

**13. Graduate destinations / employability**

A wide range of career opportunities are available in Fashion Knitwear Design and the related industries. Recent graduates have set up their own successful businesses; progressed to further study; worked within related careers in the fashion, knitwear and textile design and education sector and also returned to their previous occupations, to a new, often higher level role, with a new focus and vigour.

Future careers for those studying MA Fashion Knitwear Design can include: knitwear designer, knitted textile/swatch designer, knitwear technologist, buyer, merchandiser, production manager, trend forecaster and stylist within national and international fashion/knitwear companies and brands. Some graduates use master's study to support careers in teaching, lecturing, fashion journalism and academic research or MPhil/PhD study.

Crucially, the MA gives you the ability to re-examine future ambitions; some students have entirely refocused their careers. The independent learning and autonomy you achieve encourages you to develop your full potential to effectively present yourself to potential employers. All project work undertaken on the course, including multi-disciplinary and industry-linked projects expand your knowledge, skills and professional awareness. The ability to work in a team and communicate effectively are valued by employers in the fashion and textile industry.

**14. Course standards and quality**

All courses conform to University requirements. There are well-established systems for managing the quality of the curriculum within the School. External examiners are appointed to each course and report on the appropriateness of the curriculum, the quality of student work and the assessment process.

The School reviews, defines and updates its courses and modules regularly; dialogue between staff and students plays an important part in this process. Whilst there are good informal relationships between staff and students, the School and University, we also have formal channels for student feedback. A student/staff liaison committee is held three times a year and formal

module evaluation is gathered by a questionnaire. Student representatives, elected by the student group, attend and contribute to discussion at course committee meetings, also three times a year. An External Examiner with specialist knowledge is also appointed to monitor the quality and standards of the provision and to support the course team in further developing the course. Part of their role is to review samples of assessed work and confirm at the Board of Examiners that the internal assessment and moderation practices are fair and in line with the School and NTU's policies. The external examiner also writes a report at the end of each academic year and this will be available to you via NOW, together with a response written by the Course Team and the Course Committee.

At the end of each year the course team write an evaluative Interim Course Report (ICR), informed by external examiner, staff and student feedback. This is then discussed by the School Academic Standards and Quality Committee and actions are identified. A School report is then passed to the University and key points then inform new policy which is fed back to the School and to the External Examiner.

15. **Assessment regulations**

This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in its [Academic Standards and Quality Handbook](#)).

16. **Additional Information**

Collaborative partner(s):	None
Course referenced to national QAA Benchmark Statements:	Master of Art
Course recognised by:	Art and Design
Date implemented:	1 September 2016
	SASQC Approval: 21 February 2018.
	Approval for PCR/Curriculum Refresh
	Modification Course Change and updates

Any additional information:

MA Fashion Knitwear Design encourages students to develop an individual design philosophy and identity, evidenced through a directional portfolio of work that demonstrates the ability to research and practice both creatively and sustainably in a conceptual or commercial fashion knitwear context.

The course supports the development of existing fashion knitwear design and knit/ garment construction skills through a self-defined project targeted at a specific market level and context and inspired by personal aspiration,

links with industry and/or the intersections between art, fashion and diverse knitting technologies.

Advanced and/or traditional design approaches may be focused on high street, designer, haute couture or bespoke markets. Innovative samples and garments can be designed by developing hand, hand flat, machine and CAD/3D knitted fabrics in combination with creative fashion design and pattern cutting methods.