

**Nottingham Trent University**  
**School of Art & Design**  
**Course Specification**

**Basic Course Information**

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Awarding Institution:              | Nottingham Trent University                             |
| 2. School/Campus:                     | School of Art & Design                                  |
| 3. Final Award and Course Title:      | BA (Hons) Fashion Knitwear Design and Knitted Textiles. |
| 4. Mode of study and normal duration: | FT 3 years<br>SW 4 years                                |
| 5. UCAS Code:                         | W222, 4W28  |

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

**Background**

The BA (Hons) Fashion Knitwear Design and Knitted Textiles course is unique within the UK, offering you the opportunity to explore both fashion and fabric design through the medium of knitted textiles. This gives you ultimate control of designing both 3D garment / product forms as well as the diverse visual, tactile and creative 2D knitted fabrics that make them. As the course progresses and you become more aware of your personal design strengths and identity, you will be able to decide whether to focus on fashion knitwear design, knitted textile design or alternative applications such as knit for fashion accessories or interior products.

The course will support you to explore, experiment and express your ideas through creative design development in 2D and 3D. You will be introduced to the specialist materials and technologies of knitwear and knitted textile design and gain an understanding of traditional and contemporary practices. You will progressively test the performance characteristics of fibres, yarns and knitted structures and their suitability for specific product applications. You will be encouraged to integrate alternative materials and processes to enhance and compliment your design ideas. For instance, you may apply print and embroidery surface finishes and embellishment to your knitted fabrics. Through combining studio and digital media, you will be supported to develop confidence in your visual communication skills which will bring together your design thinking.

Sustainable design practice is embedded throughout the course curriculum. You will be challenged to consider the role of the designer in making responsible design decisions that impact positively on society and the world. You will be encouraged to gain an additional 'Sustainability in Practice' award from the University's Green Academy, relating to your design module work.

You will experience a dynamic, industry connected course that prepares you with a unique and valuable skillset for a career as a future focused, creative designer and thinker, fluent with current global industry practices. Course

staff are practicing professionals or research-active, enthusiastic and committed to providing a dynamic and rich learning experience. You will begin to network with an impressive rollcall of alumni as they return to speak about the industry and source new talent via live projects, placements or graduate positions. Opportunities to attend field trips to relevant national/international exhibitions and trade fairs are included in the course. The course offers the option to study 3 years full-time or to integrate a sandwich placement year between Levels 5 and 6. Students are fully supported by the course placement tutor and the employability team to find placements from local to national and international companies. The course has developed strong relationships with these companies, and they reflect the global diversity of the industry. These links enable us to connect with the global fashion landscape, so we can collaborate and develop international live projects and build relationships with a number of fashion-focused organisations: International Federation of Fashion and Textile Institutes (IFFTI); Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) in New York and the British Fashion Council (BFC).

In Level 5, a Placement Certificate in Professional Practice may be awarded to those students who are able to complete a placement totalling a minimum of 6 weeks. The Placement Diploma in Professional Practice requires a minimum of 36 weeks taken during the sandwich placement year between Level 5 and Level 6. The Placement International Diploma in Professional Practice requires a minimum of 36 weeks in one or more international companies located abroad. These are optional awards and are in addition to the Honours degree award.

To support further personalisation of learning, the course offers a number of progression routes both onto and on from the course. At Level 5 students from BA (Hons) Textile Design and BA (Hons) Fashion Design, who have completed knit tasters at Level 4 have the opportunity to transfer to the course. The course also participates in overseas exchange programmes with the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York and the ERASMUS student exchange programme. Several international students from partner academic institutions join the course at Level 5 which enriches the student group experience at Level 5. This international perspective is embedded within modules and reinforced by optional overseas visits to fashion and textiles industry, trade and/or other professional events

During the final year, you are able to negotiate the balance of theory and practice and develop an extended research project into a publishable and exhibitable outcome with career relevance. There is also the opportunity for you to transfer to Level 6 of BA (Hons) International Fashion Business if you have become interested in the wider fashion and textile industry business.

## **Course aims**

Overall the course aims to facilitate:

- Your development as a fashion and textile designer with a unique creative voice, demonstrating aesthetic sensitivity and high levels of technical skill in resolved collections / outcomes.
- Your ability to contextualise design within broad contextual frameworks to inform design decisions and communicate ideas and concepts
- Your understanding of the role and agency of a knit designer to integrate future thinking and responsible design practices within your design applications.
- Flexibility and options for you to personalize your learning/degree to align with your individual career plans as a professional practitioner and future industry leader.
- Preparation to operate professionally for a career in the global fashion knitwear and knitted textile industry and/or related fashion and consumer industries.

## **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.

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

1. Demonstrate skills in the analysis and application of relevant research sources and methodologies within your work. (B)
2. Locate your own work within the global context of fashion knitwear design and knitted textiles, its associated practices and technologies. (B)
3. Critically evaluate design styles and theories through cultural, historical, and economic issues. (B)
4. Reflect upon design responsibility and sustainability issues in relation to your own work. (B)
5. Generate concepts and solutions in response to set briefs and/or self-initiated activities to support your chosen professional career aspirations. (B)
6. Define, test and critically appraise appropriate materials and technical processes in relation to design briefs. (B)
7. Analyse information and experiences, formulating independent judgements through reflection, review and evaluation. (B)

8. Construct reasoned responses to peer feedback and the critical judgement of others through self-evaluation. (B)
9. Formulate creative solutions to 2D and 3D problems, selecting and applying materials and technical processes accordingly. (B)
10. Employ creative and enquiring approaches to fashion trends and influences and articulate your design concepts. (B)
11. Communicate ideas and information comprehensively in a range of situations through visual, oral and written forms. (B)
12. Initiate and manage your own learning and workloads through independent and self-directed study. (B)

QAA Art & Design (2017) benchmark informed outcomes are indicated '(B)'

#### 8. **Learning and teaching methods**

Teaching on the course involves a broad range of learning experiences that build through from first to final year with the aim of ensuring that you become an independent practitioner. In the first half of your degree, you can expect teaching to occur mostly between the studio and workshops as you are introduced to the specialist materials and technologies of the knit designer. Structured practice-based activities and workshop demonstrations will support you to develop fundamental 2D and 3D fashion and textile design skills. Seminars, lectures and tutorials will actively engage you in discussion with peers, tutors and industry professionals as you start to make connections between your fashion and textile practice and the wider design and cultural context. As you progress through the course, you will be offered more personalised learning opportunities in the form of master classes and optional workshops / modules, accessing University facilities independently and collaboratively to carry out your design practice. You will develop the autonomy to follow self-determined research interests, guided by tutorial support, that align with your career progression aspirations.

The course encourages you to recognise the need for designers to use their initiative and to be well organised. Problem solving, team working and critical awareness are developed through a mainly project-based approach where practice and theory are integrated.

As part of our commitment to develop personalisation in our curricula, you will be offered a choice of modules at Level 5, from which you will pick one. The module options presented have been selected by the course team in order to compliment your study, and to give you the opportunity to follow and deepen your interests, and study with students from other courses.

Teaching and learning is conducted in an atmosphere that is informed by professional practice, creative awareness and a respect for personal

viewpoints. In addition to the fulltime staff, external experts, specialist industry professionals and researchers with national and international experience are invited to contribute to the teaching and learning environment through guest lectures, masterclasses and surgery sessions. This enriches the learning experience and you are encouraged to attend these sessions and participate fully in study visits, live projects and external competitions and extracurricular events to make best use of the opportunities on offer by the University.

The University also provides a framework of support for independent learning and the achievement of goals through the NOW (NTU's Online Workspace) and Professional Development (PD) tutorials. This helps you to take responsibility for your learning and development through a number of staff-supported and self-directed activities.

The course provides a comprehensive range of specialist equipment and materials and you are encouraged to utilise these resources to explore and experiment with ideas through the making process. Discovering ways of working with the materials and processes and building specialist knowledge and expertise in the generation of creative ideas and their refinement is key to your success.

#### **9. Assessment methods**

The course includes a variety of assessment activities. You will engage with tutor supported peer / self-evaluation activities to develop your understanding of module learning outcomes and their relationship to your work and module tasks. At key developmental stages throughout the year, you will present / hand in your work. You will receive timely feedback in a variety of verbal, written, audio formats and have opportunities three times a year to discuss feedback in a 1-1 tutorial with your personal tutor.

At Level 4, module learning experiences are designed to create a strong connection between theory and practice through a series of design toolkits. Assessment tasks bring together teaching from both modules so that creative research and exploration informs fashion and textile development and application. During Level 5 and 6, live projects will provide the opportunity to have work reviewed at interim stages by industry professionals. You will also present final team design outcomes and receive industry and tutor feedback. At Level 6, there will be a summative opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of connections between different aspects of your learning in a final synoptic assessment task.

To ensure that you have a clear understanding of the way in which you are progressing within the modules, you will receive feedback on the progress that you are making at key points. Feedback will occur both during (formative) and at the end of the module (summative) and may be written. Group tutorials are also an important opportunity to receive feedback from

your tutors and fellow students as well as for you to reflect upon your own progress.

Assessment of the course is 100% coursework. Throughout the course, this will be required in a variety of formats depending on the module. Examples include presented design collections with supporting research in the form of sketchbooks, 2D and 3D design development, technical documentation and contextual research; digital formats of workbooks / reports / reflective practice including professional development; essays / visual essays / production synopsis and a dissertation / visual product at Level 6.

## 10. Course structure and curriculum

The course is studied on a full-time (3 years) basis, with the option of a sandwich placement between years two and three.

<b>Level 4 (Year 1)</b>	Core / Optional	Credits
Curiosity: Creative exploration and research	Core	40 credits
Curiosity: Creative Development and Application for Fashion Knitwear Design and Knitted Textiles	Core	80 credits

### Level 4

Provides a thorough foundation for understanding the key principles of contextual and visual research, visual development for design, knitting, pattern cutting, knitwear construction and communication. You will develop communities of learning across the department through the development of design toolkits in concept, drawing, materials, colour and future thinking. These skills are aligned and synchronised with your discipline and will inform your creative investigation and experimentation from visual research to materials and media exploration, technical methods and processes and ways of seeing and thinking. You will begin to develop your own methods of working and consider the wider cultural context. During the year, you will have the opportunity to engage in short collaborative projects with your peers across the School of Art and Design.

<b>Level 5 (Year 2)</b>	Core / Optional	Credits
Directions: Industry and Context for Fashion Knitwear Design and Knitted Textiles	Core	40
*Material Stories	Optional	20
*Buying, Merchandising and Product Fundamentals	Optional	20
*Trend Forecasting	Optional	20
*Publishing: Experimental Formats	Optional	20

Directions: Innovation and Transition for Fashion Knitwear Design and Knitted Textiles	Core	40
Co Lab: Research, Exploration and Risk-Taking	Core	20

\* students must select 1 module (20 credits) from the suite of optional modules

### Level 5

During Level 5 you will build on the knowledge, skill and understanding established in Level 4 and broaden your appreciation of fashion knitwear and knitted textiles in the context of the consumer market and industry practices. Live projects with local and global fashion brands, yarn suppliers and competitions will provide you with opportunities to work both as individuals and in teams, on external projects and diverse contexts and product applications.

The course enables you to personalise your learning to support your interests and career direction and at Level 5 the choice of optional modules have been considered by the course team to compliment your core modules and aim to give you the opportunity to follow and deepen your own personal interests. The Co Lab (collaborative) module will support you to work across disciplinary boundaries and to extend and challenge your own discipline design thinking and practice. A further transitions project in the second half of the year will encourage you to reflect on your learning experiences and prepare concepts for further exploration at Level 6 that align with your future professional development aspirations. This includes your chosen route of fashion garments for catwalk or textiles or product for exhibition.

Level 6 (Year 3/4)	Core / Optional	Credits
Resolutions: Culture and Context	Core	20/40 credits
Resolutions: Practice and Context for Fashion Knitwear Design and Knitted Textiles	Core	100/80 credits

### Level 6

The final year supports you to further develop your personal approaches and professional practice in readiness for employment and/or postgraduate study. This is an opportunity for you to build upon and bring together your earlier course and industry experiences and apply this to your personal project in greater depth. The initiation, development and resolution of final year projects should be guided by your future professional career aspirations and you will have a choice as to the weighting of your modules, depending on the emphasis you want to place on your work.

Experimentation, analysis and reflection and independent learning through critical and reflexive enquiry is emphasised. You will be encouraged to research and explore ideas in greater depth and through focused

development show dexterity with materials and processes to refine original and innovative design outcomes and their presentation and articulates the wider contextual and cultural framework where your ideas are situated.

You will be encouraged to link theoretical themes that you define in the 'Resolutions: Culture and Context' module to inform concept development for practice-based projects in the Fashion Knitwear Design and Knitted Textile collections module 'Resolutions: Practice and Context'. With guidance from your tutors, you will negotiate project outcomes for each module that reflect the module weighting you have selected.

### **Placement awards**

Students undertaking the sandwich placement may achieve a Placement Diploma in Professional Practice, and students undertaking placements of shorter duration may be eligible for a Placement Certificate in Professional Practice.

### **Interim awards**

Students who do not progress to the final stage may be eligible for an interim award of Certificate of Higher Education, Diploma of Higher Education or Ordinary Degree.

## **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 to achieve the best results possible during your studies, providing a wide range of academic and pastoral help and advice. In addition to the course leader, module leaders, course administrator and student support advisor, a member of staff will also be assigned to you at the start of the course as your personal tutor.

As part of your Induction, you will be introduced to the Student Handbook which includes information on how to access Employability Services, Disability Services, Language Support, Fees and Student Finance Services, the Student Union, Health and Wellbeing Services, International Students Support, Study Support and Individual Support.

NTU's Online Workspace is referred to as 'NOW'. All course and module information is posted on this site for you to access remotely or on campus at any time.

Personal tutors will be identified during induction. You will meet your personal tutor at the start of term 1, to set academic and personal goals for the year ahead. This will allow you to discuss any extra support for learning



requirements you may have. You will have follow on meetings each term to discuss progress. Extra sessions are integrated at key points in the modules to support module learning and enhance development. Your personal tutor also supports you in professional development planning sessions as you explore and develop career directions and aspirations throughout the course. Your personal tutor is your first point of contact when circumstances affect your ability to study and engage with the course. You can e-mail them at any time to make an appointment beyond scheduled contact times.

The School trains second and third year students to become Student Mentors enabling them to support first year students. The Fashion Knitwear Student Mentors will be identified during induction and opportunities to meet with them promoted and integrated within key sessions. They offer support and advice from academic and practical perspectives.

### **13. Graduate destinations/employability**

One of the key focus areas of our course is our commitment to the employability of our graduates and we have an exceptional record of successful employment. Projects are developed for you to enhance your understanding of industry practices and contextualise your learning to stimulate your curiosity to investigate the breadth of industry approaches, markets and products. The course placement tutor together with the Employment Team provide taught sessions, seminars and surgeries to prepare you for work placement interviews and graduate employment job applications.

You are supported at all levels through the course to seek out work placement and work shadowing experiences and develop your own network of industry contacts to make links with industry and designers for future collaborations and job opportunities. Students who return to their final year of study after placement have an extensive understanding of the value of work-based projects and enhance their employability. In addition to the placement live projects and industrially focussed competitions, participation in study trips and trade shows and events are additional opportunities for you to develop networks and secure graduate employment.

Many of the courses' graduates now occupy a range of senior positions within major fashion and textiles retail companies and brands around the world. Our graduates find employment in the wider fashion and textile industry as designers, buyers, swatch designers, technical roles as product developers or alternatively become self-employed as designer-makers or enter teaching through PGCE or other post graduate study opportunities.

### **14. Course standards and quality**

There are well established systems for overseeing the quality of the curriculum within the School.

Module feedback questionnaires and annual surveys are used to gather feedback from students on their learning experiences.

Termly course committee meetings, attended by student representatives and academic staff, provide opportunities to raise and discuss matters contributing to the quality, standards and continuing development of the course.

The outcomes of the above inform an annual report highlighting positive features and areas to address which are further included in a course development plan. The plan is monitored through course committees and students have the opportunity to talk through the impact of any changes made.

Informally, course and individual tutorials additionally provide a further means of gathering student feedback and enable staff to address matters as soon as they arise.

Externally, the School consult with industry representatives as part of the course review and development process to ensure continued relevance of the curriculum to the creative and cultural industries. An external examiner is appointed to provide advice and monitor the academic standards of the course and student achievement in relation to those standards.

#### 15. **Assessment regulations**

This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in Section 16A of the Quality Handbook).

#### 16. **Additional information**

Collaborative partner(s):

Course referenced to national (QAA)                      Art and Design (2017)

Benchmark Statements:

Course recognised by:

NTIC progression route(s):                      Foundation Certificate in Art,  
Design & Media

Date this course specification approved:              DAG 13/11/19

Any additional information:

The course supports direct entry into the course from the BA (Hons) Textile Design and the BA (Hons) Fashion Design courses at Level 5.

The course offers opportunities to transfer to BA (Hons) International Fashion Business at Level 6.