

# FASHION APPRENTICESHIP STANDARD

## OCCUPATION: FASHION STUDIO ASSISTANT

Britain is world renowned for our creativity and design talent. British designers capture the mood of the moment, cascading it into the high street, creating a multi-billion pound industry. The direct value of the UK fashion industry to the UK economy is £26 billion. Fashion’s total contribution to the economy is estimated to have risen to over £46 billion in 2014.

The key to creating further growth in the fashion industry is to professionalise and offer better career paths throughout the industry, not just in design talent. This apprenticeship will deliver specific skills that will ultimately contribute to all levels of a fashion business, developing leaders and teams to work alongside our design talent, as well as making Britain the best place to incubate a new business from initial excitement to commercial sustainability.

A Fashion Studio Assistant is a key position in the designer industry, working with the team that creates a collection. This apprenticeship will introduce candidates to the designer fashion industry, with experience gained in both the product and commercial sides of a brand. In a large company, this role would be more focussed on the studio, but in a smaller company this role may also be involved in many other areas of the business.

Busy, challenging, and exciting, the apprenticeship will encompass a wide variety of tasks, and will give a broad education in the reality of day-to-day life in a designer business. The apprenticeship starts in the heart of a designer business: The Studio, to learn about how a collection is created. It will then lead to 12 months in a more focussed area of the business: Product development or Production, Sales and Operations, or Fashion Marketing and Communications. In order to go on to many roles in this diverse industry, a foundation in understanding how a collection is created, marketed and sold is invaluable.

On successful completion of the Apprenticeship Standard, a Fashion Studio Assistant would possess the following Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours:

### TYPICAL DURATION: Foundation Core of 6 months + 12 months in 1 of 3 pathway options

#### FOUNDATION CORE

FOUNDATION CORE	KNOWLEDGE	THE DESIGNER FASHION INDUSTRY AND THE YEARLY CYCLE	What it looks like, how it works. Understanding of the seasonal cycle. Understanding of a product journey: conception, design, sample, sales, delivery, in store, marketing, PR. Understanding of the basic business cycle: cashflow, buying, producing, shipping, budgeting. How the different departments are involved in the creation and selling of a collection.
			CRITICAL PATH
		STUDIO WORK PLACE	Working as part of a wide team. Understanding of health and safety issues. Awareness of how different departments contribute to a company’s goals.
	SKILLS	TIME MANAGEMENT	Able to work to a strict deadline, and to deal with simple project management.
		COMMUNICATION	Communication skills both written and verbal. Professional emails, diary management. Working as part of a team. Communicating with people internal and external to the organisation. Representing the organisation.
		OFFICE ADMIN	Basic invoicing or ordering, diary management, planning and preparation for meetings, admin and data entry.

### PATHWAY 1: PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT and PRODUCTION

<b>PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION</b>	<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>STUDIO MANAGEMENT</b>	Working in a studio team, dealing with designers, manufacturers, technical staff, suppliers, production team, freelancers and clients.
		<b>MATERIALS</b>	Basic understanding of different fabrics, yarns and trims, how they work, how they are priced, where they may be sourced from. Learning about ways to handle, cut and store materials. Potential to learn about designer specific techniques, such as print, embroidery, knit, jacquard and leather work.
		<b>PATTERN KNOWLEDGE</b>	A basic understanding of pattern cutting and grading and the importance of fit. How to take measurements and cost a garment. Awareness of how CAD/CAM may be part of the process.
		<b>GARMENT CONSTRUCTION</b>	Good basic knowledge of garment construction. Knowledge of the proto development stage, and the sealing of samples. Be able to cut and sew a toile.
	<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>BUYING AND SOURCING</b>	Researching or sourcing of fabric/components. Placing orders and assistance with controlling inventory. Awareness of leadtimes and minimums for bulk ordering. Consideration of ethical and environmental factors when working with suppliers and factories.
		<b>PRODUCT MANAGEMENT</b>	How to cost garments, ability to create a layplan and a bill of materials, how to enter information onto a product management system for use in sales and production. Understanding of the importance of an accurate technical sheet for manufacturers.
		<b>QUALITY CONTROL</b>	Able to quality control garments, fabrics or accessories. Good eye for detail, awareness of what to look for, how to report and communicate issues. How to prepare garments ready for sale or presentation: steaming, labelling, packing, storing.

### PATHWAY 2: SALES and OPERATIONS

<b>SALES AND OPERATIONS</b>	<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>SALES STRATEGY</b>	Awareness of the different selling channels open to designers: wholesale, retail, online, via a franchisor, licensor, with agents and distributors. Understanding of how a strategy will be created and followed for targeting a market. Understanding in more detail of how either wholesale, ecommerce or retail works.
		<b>MARKET AWARENESS</b>	Develop knowledge of a specific market, either domestic or international. Gain the ability to describe who a brand's customer is and to be able to undertake basic market and competitor research.
		<b>MERCHANDISING</b>	Understanding of the importance of range planning, price architecture and sales analysis. Involvement in sales analysis, gathering sell through information, assistance in report creation.
	<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>LOGISTICS</b>	Packaging, dispatch and shipping, including an awareness of basic international regulations. Dealing with couriers and deliveries, to and from suppliers and customers.
		<b>SHOWROOM</b>	How to present a collection, look after a space, greet clients, maintain a required standard of visual merchandising. Involvement in preparing documents for sales such as linesheets.
		<b>CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT</b>	Ability to manage customer data in a responsible way. Awareness of how it is used, and how it should be protected. Knowledge of the importance of customer service and an ability to deal with certain customer service issues. Assistance with clienteling or chasing sales leads.

### PATHWAY 3: FASHION MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

<b>COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>PR STRATEGY</b>	Understanding of how and why a brand is promoted in different channels and markets. Awareness of how a strategy is created for a brand or product and what the marketing calendar will be.
		<b>ONLINE BRAND COMMUNICATION</b>	Involvement in digital marketing: social media, mailers, websites. Understanding of how the channels work, how they contribute to brand awareness and how to effectively use them for communication. Ability to create basic reports on traffic and growth in brand following.
		<b>OFFLINE BRAND COMMUNICATION</b>	Understanding of the role played by print media, and events. May include fashion shows, VIP dressing, collaborations with other brands and partnerships with retailers.
	<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>EVENTS</b>	Involvement with events preparation and coordination. This could be fashion shows, sales showrooms, tradeshow, photoshoots or press days. Helping to set up and run a showroom space, manage an appointment diary, and coordinate samples.
		<b>MEDIA AND INFLUENCER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT</b>	Developing relationships with clients, press or fashion organisations. Understanding of the role of influencers from different spheres and how to engage them with the brand.
		<b>CONTENT CREATION</b>	Assistance in writing copy and creating presentations. Involvement in preparing professional documents such as press releases or event invitations. Potential involvement in social media uploading, and manipulation of images and graphics for on or offline marketing.

### CORE BEHAVIOURS for all pathways

<b>ADAPTABILITY</b>	Able to work to strict deadlines and to cope with a work pace varying considerably throughout the year. Ability to think on feet, be resourceful, and have a flexible attitude toward changes in work plans.
<b>SELF MOTIVATION</b>	Hardworking, able to work independently without supervision, hands on attitude and drive to succeed in a competitive environment. Interested in self-development.
<b>PROFESSIONALISM</b>	Shows maturity in coping with a fast paced, pressured environment. Professional approach to job, and in dealings with other members of staff and external company contacts.

### ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

English and Mathematics GCSE at Grade C or above or equivalent functional skills are expected on entry. If not set as an entry criterion, candidates will achieve English and Mathematics level 2 by the end of their apprenticeship.

**DURATION:** Typically 18 months

**LEVEL:** 3

**REVIEW:** This standard will be reviewed in 3 years