



Embedding student voices in the design and evaluation of a new Masters unit: Fashion Practices for Social Change

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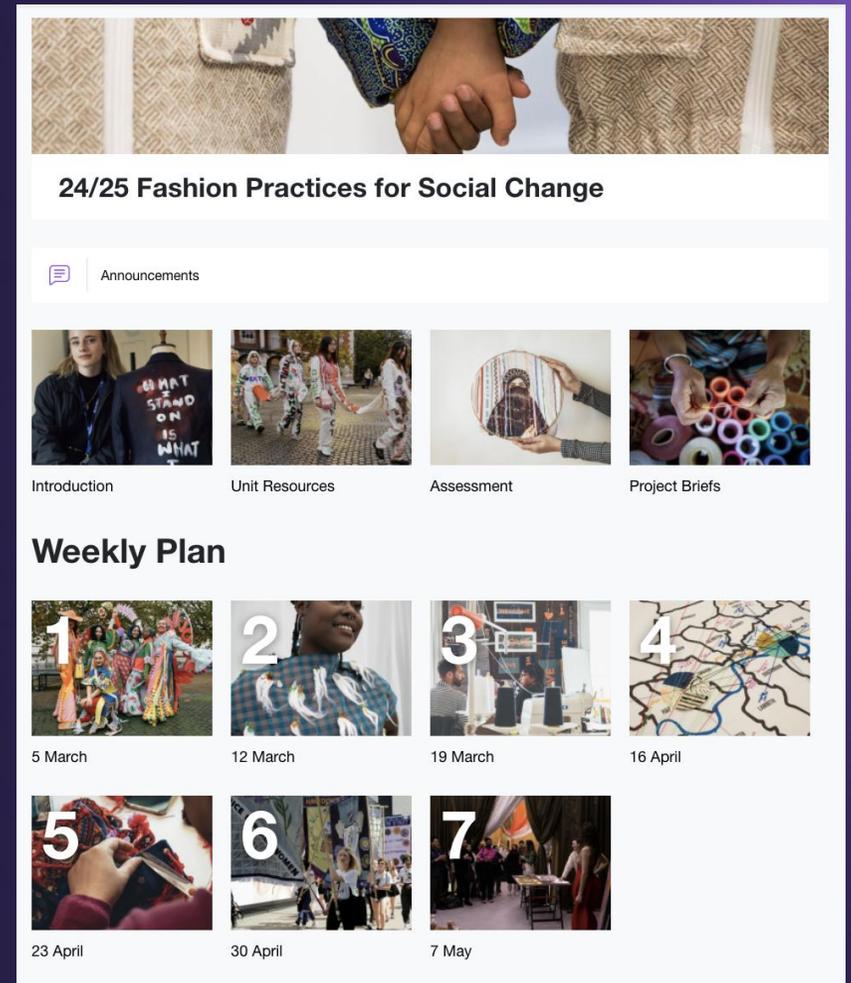
Fashion Practices for Social Change

- New unit designed for a.y. 2024-2025
- Encourages students to think about issues such as:
 - The relationship between fashion and societies
 - The impacts of fashion on societies
 - How fashion may be used to catalyse social change in the context of a just transition



Unit Overview

- 7-week elective unit in Spring term
- 20 credits
- Consciously embeds the UAL Principles for Climate, Social and Racial Justice
- Combination of lectures, seminars, cross-disciplinary group projects
- Live briefs set by external partners



24/25 Fashion Practices for Social Change

Announcements

Introduction Unit Resources Assessment Project Briefs

Weekly Plan

 1 5 March	 2 12 March	 3 19 March	 4 16 April
 5 23 April	 6 30 April	 7 7 May	

Student Voice in Development of the Unit

We have embedded student voice at 3 levels:

- In the initial design through email exchange with 4 graduates
- In an evaluation of the unit through interviews
- In data analysis and recommendations for the next iteration

Student Feedback to the Unit Descriptor

“It sounds fantastic and covers content that I find to be very important. I especially love that you have decided to include co-creation, impact assessment and communicating social change. I believe these are very practical and valuable things to learn that will benefit the students in the future” (Graduate 01)

*“I would be so excited as a student to have this elective unit as an option”
(Graduate 02)*

Project Briefs



Victoria Ho
Fashion4Freedom



Kristen Caron
Future Artisan Cooperative



Laura Nyahuye
I Migrated

Student Responses to the Briefs



Evaluation Design

- Qualitative data
- All students invited to take part in 1:1 interviews
- Some targeting recruitment to address gaps in the data
- Interviewed 10 students
- Each interview ranged 45-60 mins
- 1:1 over MS Teams
- Audio was automatically transcribed, then screened for errors

Student Voice in Data Analysis

- Employed 3 students / recent graduates
- Students were given an anonymised transcripts to read
- Attended 3 analysis workshops with the Evaluation Manager
- Talked about key insights, developed themes together



Student Reflections on Data Analysis

- 3 UAL graduates from diverse backgrounds, courses, levels
- Equally distributed workload with regular check-ins
- Some team members were new to data analysis
- Hands-on development of research skills through iterative observations
- Shared identity as UAL students informed theme identification
- Provided a transdisciplinary, culturally-specific and context-sensitive perspective on the research

Key Findings: Cross Disciplinary Collaborations

“I really enjoyed it personally, because it's also how I think like businesses would be because [...] you're not all from the same background [...] I'm not always gonna be dealing with people who understand the topic as much as I do, and so I think it was a great way to have, like, more real-life experience because sometimes you're not working with all marketing people”

(Student 6)

New Understanding of 'Dark Side' of Fashion

“The thing I did is to collect clothes from their warehouse, and when I went inside of the warehouse, it's just the image, it's just the same image that I had before, so basically there was a kind of garbage mountain. [...] I was really happy to experience that like that kind of thing directly”
(Student 5)

Working Directly with Values-based Industry Partners

“Yeah, I thought what she was doing was amazing. I thought the idea of creating a business or creating a business out of like a need rather than profit was really inspiring and I would have loved to have actually delved into it more”

(Student 10)

Exploring Different Careers in Fashion

“I’ve started to see my practice less as ‘creative direction’ and more as cultural stewardship, holding space for knowledge systems that are endangered not because they’re obsolete, but because the global economy refuses to slow down to see them. In future, I aim to deepen this ethic by bringing more participatory methods into my visual practice, working more closely with community-based researchers, and challenging the colonial templates still embedded in design education”

(Student 1)

Teamwork Challenges

“The issue was about keeping up motivation or moral, or excitement about it. It just felt like we could just dwindle and do our own thing and if no one in your group is doing anything, then that just keeps diminishing and diminishing. There's just no motivation to get anything done by the end of it because no one was like, there was no excitement. Oh, let's do this. We can do that”

(Student 10)

Student Voice in Next Iteration of the Unit

- Project briefs with new partners
- Set up online bidding system for briefs
- Added extra session on sustaining social change + tutorial
- New brief focusing on socio-ecological sustainability
- Added Teamwork Agreement





Thank you!

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