UNIVERSITY OF
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PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	**BA (Hons) Fashion Buying Management** The BA (Hons) Fashion Buying Management is a BA degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA first cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	BA Fashion Buying Management Diploma of Higher Education Fashion Buying Management Certificate of Higher Education Fashion Buying Management
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Westminster School of Media Arts and Design
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month:	Four year full time sandwich course. (I year sandwich placement)
QAA subject benchmarking group(s):	Art and Design. General Business and Management
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	None
Date of course validation/review:	2007, 2012, 2015
Date of programme specification approval:	2015
Valid for cohorts:	2018-19
Course Leader:	Kate Hopkin
Westminster course code:	BAFAS01F (FT)
UCAS code and URL:	N590, http://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate
JACS code:	W230 (Clothing/Fashion Design) N100 (Business Studies)

Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all undergraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information.

For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements.

More information can be found here: westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/how-to-apply

Aims of the course

The Fashion Buying management course has been designed to directly meet the needs of the Fashion Retail Industry. It aims to deliver relevant and current course content blending academic theory, creative skills, industry knowledge and direct business experience. The course has an excellent reputation and has strong industry links to support the placement programme and graduate employment prospects. Students benefit from an extensive and high calibre programme of guest speakers and industry related projects.

The emphasis is on building both creative and commercial skills. These vocational skills are supported by a rigorous academic focus on strategic business management in order to enable students to progress quickly upon graduation.

The focus of the course is global, to reflect the nature of the industry, and specifically develops the interpersonal, creative, technical and commercial skills and knowledge of the retail fashion buying environment. The additional opportunity to advance language skills and study abroad is offered to meet the increasing standards of global competition and the needs of the business environment.

The business placement, in year 3, is considered an integral part of the course, which provides essential practical experience; thus greatly increasing knowledge and understanding of the business environment. It is regarded as a critical factor in ensuring subsequent graduate career progression.

Students wishing to develop their global business and cultural awareness can choose an alternative sandwich year pathway by combining a six month work placement with a 6 month exchange programme with one of our international academic partners in America, Canada and Hong Kong.

What will you be expected to achieve?

The subject benchmarks for Art and Design and General Business and Management (www.qaa.ac.uk) are reflected in the course structure and content. They have been instrumental in guiding the specific learning outcomes and ensure that the general expectations of a course of this kind have been met. They also provide support in the pursuit of internal quality assurance by the University.

One of defining principles of Art and design, as stated, is to develop the capacity to be creative and to use the creative imagination to identify and solve problems. In this course this capacity is combined with the threefold purpose of a General Business and Management programme:

- The study of organisations, their management and the changing external environment in which they operate.
- Preparation for and development of a career in business and management.
- Enhancement of lifelong learning skills and personal development to contribute to society at large.

The Fashion Buying Management course aims to create graduates who have the following graduate attributes:

- Demonstrate a detailed knowledge and practical experience of the global fashion and retail industry; the buying and product development function.
- Critically evaluate the environmental and social impact of the fashion industry on a global scale and have a commitment to social and environmental improvement within an ethical framework.
- Have the confidence to progress within the industry with a commitment to on going professional learning and development. Apply strong reflective skills to enable a reflective approach to understanding personal learning, group participation and self-development. To shape a career through flexibility, resilience and professional mobility.
- Apply an entrepreneurial and enterprising outlook in working with and leading teams; in collaboration within organisations and between businesses, the supply chain and other stakeholders.
- Demonstrate a range of professional skills required within the fashion and retail industry through the completion of an extended period of professional practice in the work placement year. For example: product development, production sourcing and technology, marketing and promotional campaigns.
- Critically evaluate current and future scenarios in relation to the fashion industry and consumer facing retail businesses. Identify the macro and micro factors that impact upon and are affected by the fashion industry to formulate strategy.
- Formulate creative solutions to fashion industry problems using strong verbal, written, creative and digital communication skills.
- Combine strong numerical and analytical skills to evaluate and formulate profitable commercial outcomes.
- Present a highly tuned global awareness and appreciation of the international industry trends and drivers. Be equipped to work with and across a high level of cultures and diversity.

Course Learning Outcomes

The BA Fashion Buying Management course ensures that attainment of the learning outcomes in each year of study will result in the development of the necessary knowledge and skills to become an effective Buying Professional within the Retail Industry. The learning outcomes for the course reflect the learning outcomes for the 'core modules'. In level 6 (the final year) students have an extensive suite of option modules in order develop their specific career aspirations.

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These are threshold statements of achievement the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

- The overall **knowledge and understanding** you will gain from your course (KU).
- **Graduate attributes** are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course (GA).

- **Professional and personal practice learning** outcomes are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (PPP).
- **Key transferable skills** that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (KTS).

Level 4 Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of level 4 (first year) the successful student will be able to:

L4.1 Identify and analyse the range planning and product development cycle. Evaluate the commercial interpretation of concepts from designer level to the high street. (KU)
L4.2 Identify and distinguish between the key textile categories, sources and processes of textile and garment production and apply technical considerations in the garment fit process. (KU)
L4.3 Propose a personal development plan based on an understanding of personal learning style, team participation and leadership styles. (TS)
L4. 4 Develop strong team working and leadership skills to negotiate positive group outcomes. (GA)
L4. 5 Apply a knowledge of the disciplines and roles within fashion business to develop a strong CV to gain professional work experience. (PPP)
L4. 6 Identify where and how to gather key economic and market data, interpret basic financial reports and to and debate contemporary commercial and ethical issues the UK and global fashion and retail business. (PPP)
L4. 7 Apply creative technologies to produce mood boards and design solutions to industry problems. (PPP)
L4. 8 Apply a knowledge of where and how to gather data on fashion businesses and evaluate their strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats in relation to the marketing mix. (KU)
L4.9 Recognise and discuss the breadth of social, cultural and historical factors that affect the fashion industry. Apply knowledge of how trends develop from macro to market level. (PPP)

Level 5 Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of level 5 (years two and three) the successful student will be able to

L5.1 Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the range planning process. Apply product development, sourcing and selection knowledge to develop business and trading solutions and manage critical paths. (KU)
L5.2 Explore and evaluate the global nature of textile and garment manufacture, and debate its impact on the environment and the community within an ethical Framework. (PPP)
L5. 3 Identify and reflect on the key industry skills required for the placement year. Target the employer market by critically assessing personal strengths and development needs. Develop a range of tools such as the C.V., covering letter and interview techniques to secure an extended period of work placement. (KTS)
L5.4 Demonstrate professional team working and leadership skills to develop new business concepts and resolve industry problems. Identify and develop collaborative skills to enhance team performance. (GA)
L5.5 Demonstrate a range of professional skills required within the fashion and retail industry through the completion of an extended period of professional practice in the work placement year. For example: product development, production sourcing and technology, marketing and promotional campaigns. (PPP)
L5.6 Evaluate current business practice and identify future trends to develop business opportunities and formulate retail propositions. (KU)
L5.7 Apply creative and technical solutions to the development of new concepts for

the fashion industry; accounting for the structure, positioning and promotion of the range. (PPP)

L5.8 Interpret and analyse key trading calculations and performance measures to propose commercial action plans to drive profit in the buying and merchandising function. (KU)

L5.9 Understand the global pipeline for fashion and the impact on the critical path. Identifying and assess key drivers and trends within the retail industry, textile and garment manufacture. (KU)

Level 6 learning outcomes: Upon completion of level 6 (fourth year) the successful student will be able to

L6.1 Critically apply theoretical models to the solution of fashion industry problems in sectors such as the fashion supply chain, consumer behaviour and branding and communication. (KU)

L6.2 Critically evaluate the environmental, social and economic impact and drivers of the fashion industry on a global scale. (KU)

L6.3 Have the confidence to progress within the industry with a commitment to ongoing professional learning and development. Develop a reflective approach to understanding personal learning, group participation and self-development. To shape a career through flexibility resilience and professional mobility. (GA)

L6.4 Apply an entrepreneurial and enterprising outlook in working with and leading teams; in collaboration within organisations and between businesses, the supply chain and other stakeholders. (GA)

L6.5 Design and implement a major piece of research that draws on the critical thinking, knowledge and creative problem solving and skills gained through the course. (KTS)

L 6.6 Critically evaluate current and future scenarios in consumer facing retail businesses. Identify the environmental, social and economic macro and micro trends to understand the future consumer, formulate strategy and manage risk. (PPP)

L6.7 Formulate creative solutions to fashion industry problems using strong verbal, written, creative and digital communication skills. (KTS)

L6.8 Combine strong numerical and analytical skills to evaluate and generate profitable and sustainable commercial outcomes (KTS)

L 6.9 Present a highly tuned global awareness and appreciation of the international industry trends and drivers. Be equipped to work with and across a high level of cultures and diversity (GA).

How will you learn?

Learning

The Fashion Buying Management course is modular with interactive sessions covering the academic, practical and applied elements of the subject. Students have the opportunity to attend guest lecture sessions and participate in live industry projects in partnership with key fashion industry personnel to add to their cultural and commercial awareness. Students are encouraged to attend key shows and lectures and events both in London and internationally through both university and student organised trips.

The year business placement provides the practical commercial and global experience, which is central to the ethos of the course.

Students will be supported and encouraged to develop into largely autonomous, self-

directed learners through experiential, reflective and research- based learning.

Teaching
Teaching takes place in the lectures, projects, seminars, individual tutorials, work placements, off site visits and via the on-line learning system Blackboard. This on-line learning system is used as a central communication point for e-mails between staff and students and between the students themselves along with course or module announcements. Lecture slides and hand- outs are made available electronically and discussion threads/forums, group working and links to external research sources are all hosted through this site.

The teaching is delivered by a team of core staff, all with substantial industry experience along with additional expertise from practitioners in specific fields. We are very proud of our extensive network of industry speakers and experts who support our course and our students throughout the four years of the Fashion Buying Course.

How will you be assessed?

The course offers a variety of assessment to students which aim to develop both professional and transferable skills required for academic and professional success. The following methods of assessment are employed on the Fashion Buying Management Degree:

- The Learning Log
- The industry project. The Report – Individual The Report - Group The Essay
- The Presentation
- The Presentation –Group
- The Portfolio
- The Design Realisation
- The in-class test
- The Exam

Developmental Logs, Career Planning and ongoing self-reflection and analysis of your own work form a major part of your Personal Development Plan.

Methods of assessment vary depending on the type of module and the required learning outcomes. For example a more creative module may use a portfolio or design realisation, whereas a business based module may use a report supported by a presentation. Each method of assessment is chosen because it is regarded as the most effective way of matching and measuring the specific learning outcomes.

Employment and further study opportunities
University of Westminster graduates will be able to demonstrate the following five Graduate Attributes which are reflected in the aims of the Fashion Buying Management course.

- Critical and creative thinkers
- Literate and effective communicator
- Entrepreneurial
- Global in outlook and engaged in communities
- Social, ethically and environmentally aware

The prime focus of the Fashion Buying course is to develop the academic, aesthetic, practical and commercial skills required for the fashion buying role. However, students

are also equipped for careers in product development and supply chain management, brand management, wholesale, trend forecasting, E-commerce, retail management and marketing roles. This is reflected in the varied nature of both student placements and graduate employment destinations.

The sandwich structure of the course incorporates both either a years work placement or a six month overseas academic exchange programme combined with a six month work placement. These two pathways enable students to apply their fashion business knowledge and understanding and employability and gain global experience.

This structure is designed to specifically equip students with the skills, knowledge and practical experience, along with the development of a professional demeanor that is the key to successful employment. The skills and knowledge gained on the course will, therefore, all be directly relevant to a retail buying and merchandising head office as well as applicable to a wider business environment and will directly reflect the University's ethos 'educating for a professional life'. It is now widely recognised within the industry that students coming from a course, which offers a significant business placement are highly favoured, with many retailers recruiting from the students they took on placement.

Career development skills are firmly embedded throughout the course:

- At level 4 students are supported and encouraged to take part time work or short term internships or work experience across all sectors and roles within the fashion industry and most succeed in achieving high quality internships towards the end of their first year. All students are supported by a number of study and work skills lectures and tutorials which support the development of a personal development plan including a professional C.V.
- At level 5 students have dedicated modules in which they reflect on their personal skill sets and career objectives. There is a continuing focus on self-awareness through reflective practice. Students are advised how to source and develop the appropriate materials and skills to develop a successful application and assessment centre strategy.
- The placement year or combined sandwich year (placement and study abroad) experience means that returning students can build substantially on their basic skills and allows level 6 to be geared towards the more senior positions within the fashion industry that our students are capable of achieving in the years after graduation.

Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Undergraduate students study 120 credits per year. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

Credit Level 4				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
4FAMN010W	The Fashion Business	Core	20	10
4FAMN009W	The Buying Process	Core	20	10
4FAMN008W	Fashion Trends and Consumer Culture	Core	20	10
4FAMN003W	Fashion Marketing	Core	20	10
4FAMN007W	Fabrics and Garment Technology	Core	20	10
4FAMN006W	Range design and CAD	Option	20	10
	Westminster Plus elective	Elective	20	10
	Study Skills and personal development workshops	Core	0	0
Award of Certificate of Higher Education available				
Credit Level 5				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
5FAMN009W	Trading and Concept development	Core	40	20
5FAMN007W	Textiles and Garment Sourcing and Manufacture	Core	20	10
5FAMN006W	Career Development	Core	20	10
5FAMN010W	Global retailing	Option	20	10
5FAMN008W	Fashion Promotion	Option	20	10
5FAMN011W	Visual Merchandising and Styling	Option	20	10
TBC	Creative Encounters	Elective	20	10
	Westminster Plus elective	Elective	20	10
Award of Diploma of Higher Education available				
Credit Level 5- Placement year				
5FAMN012W	Fashion Business Acumen (Placement year)	Option	20	10
5FAMN013W	Fashion Business Sandwich Year (Placement year)	Option	20	10
Credit Level 6				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
6FAMN001W	Major Project	Core	60	30
6FAMN002W	Trends and Change Implementation for Fashion Retail	Core	20	10
6FAMN004W	Fashion Branding	Option	20	10
6FAMN009W	Luxury Fashion Management	Option	20	10
6FAMN008W	Fashion Consumer Behavior	Option	20	10
6FAMN003W	Fashion Entrepreneurship	Option	20	10
6FAMN006W	Commercial skills	Option	20	10
6FAMN007W	Global Sourcing Strategies for Fashion	Option	20	10
6FAMN005W	Sustainable Fashion	Option	20	10
	Westminster Plus elective	Elective	20	10
Award of BA, BA (Hons) available				

Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations

How will you be supported in your studies?

Course Management

The Fashion Buying Management Degree is housed in the Faculty of Media Art and design within the fashion cluster. The faculty has one away day per year to identify and address ways of improving the design and delivery of its courses. The department holds monthly course leaders meetings and the individual course teams run regular meetings.

Annual Monitoring enables a reflective and proactive process of course development. All staff carryout annual appraisals and peer observation, and undertake staff development through course attendance and research activity.

Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Faculty Registry Office. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students

Learning Support

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students[1] can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services

The University of Westminster Student Affairs department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing

[1] Students enrolled at Collaborative partners may have differing access due to licence agreements.

multi-faith guidance. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University.

How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2007 and revalidated in 2015. The panel included internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers.

The course is also monitored each year by the Faculty to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from Course Committees, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. Each Faculty puts in to place an action plan. This may for example include making changes on the way the module is taught, assessed or even how the course is structured in order to improve the course, in such cases an approval process is in place.

A Course review takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with review panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years e.g. from Course Committees is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through Course Committees students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to Committee to expressly represent the views of their peer. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.

- Each Faculty also has its own Faculty Student Forum with student representatives; this enables wider discussions across the Faculty. Student representatives are also represented on key Faculty and university committees.

- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.

- The University also has an annual Student Experience Survey which seeks the opinions of students about their course and University experience. Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.

Please note: This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks, which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.

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