

A-Level Fashion and Textiles

Entry Requirements: 5 in Textiles or Art and Design or a visual portfolio demonstrating textile or artwork of a GCSE grade 5 standard, and a grade 5 in GCSE Maths.

Exam Board: AQA

Subject Leader: Mrs K Pilarek kpilarek@taptonschoool.co.uk

Fashion and Textiles inspires students to solve realistic design problems in a creative and independent way, and in doing so gain an in-depth knowledge of what constitutes both the function and aesthetics of a Fashion garment or Textile product.

This course provides students with an understanding of the economic, social, aesthetic and political issues of fashion and design and how these affect Textile products and Fashion trends both today and over the last 130 years on design.

Year 12:

Theory and technical understanding:

Students will spend 2-3 hours a week learning technical theory which will be assessed during the A-Level examinations in year 13, as well as in the NEA coursework.

Year 12 learning includes:

- The properties of fibres and fabrics
- Components and trimmings
- Testing of fibres and fabrics
- Target markets and the marketing of Fashion products
- Ergonomics and anthropometrics
- Product Analysis
- Fashion illustration and communication
- CAD/CAM
- History of Fashion and History of Design
- An understanding of how socio-economic trends, such as music or film impact fashion and costume design.
- Application of colour
- E-Textiles and Smart materials
- Sustainability and the environmental and social impact of textiles

Coursework in Year 12:

Students will spend 2-3 hours of lesson time a week working on coursework and project-based work, developing skills for Year 13 NEA.

These projects include:

- Children's partywear with an emphasis on creativity and decorative techniques.
- Corsetry deepening knowledge of pattern cutting and development as well as garment construction.

A-Level Specification Content:

Paper 1 Technical Principles 2 1/2 hours

2-hour exam on technical, design and making principles.

To include

- Testing of Textile Products
- Further design and illustration methods
- Use and representation of data
- CAD/CAM
- Efficient use of materials and waste minimisation
- Health and Safety

- Sustainability
- Copyright and Patent
- Marketing and Promotion
- Fashion cycles
- Designers and design movements from 20 and 21st century
- Fashion and trends
- Product analysis
- Accuracy and the use of mathematics in industry
- The work of BSI and ESO

Paper 2 Designing and Making Principles 1 ½ hours

- Yarn production
- Knitted fabrics and garments
- Blending of fibres
- Construction methods
- Fastenings
- Weaves
- Finishes
- Technical and smart textiles
- Production methods
- Pattern drafting and prototypes

NEA (Non-Exam Assessment-coursework) worth 50% of A-Level mark

To be produced as a portfolio of written or digital evidence, of a product of your choosing.

Students explore a context of their choice to solve a real-life design problem through an iterative design project.

Past projects have included:

- Japanese design and the influence on modern day outerwear
- Royal wedding dresses, rules and modern-day trends.
- Botanicals and their continued revival in fashion over the last 50 years.

Qualities Required

An interest in fashion design, current trends, historical fashion, and an eye for design.

You need to enjoy coursework and the success of creating useful and beautiful pieces of design, this may be a fashion piece or other textile item. Sketching and construction skills are important and numeracy skills are essential. A good understanding of science is also helpful but will be developed over the two-year course.

Links with other subjects

An excellent complement to Arts, Sciences and Business-related subjects. These subjects can be studied both as a means of developing a whole range of transferable skills or as a distinct route to the professions mentioned below.

Career Prospects

Fashion Buyer; Fashion Journalist; Garment Technologist; Fashion Designer; Trend Predictor; Style Consultant; Fashion Illustrator; Stylist; Interior Designer; Print Designer, Pattern Cutter, Costume designer, Historical fashion re-construction, other design careers such as architecture.

Skills in Textiles compliment the science, Dentistry and Medicine.

Extension and Enrichment Opportunities

London visit – Gallery and museum visit to support History of Fashion knowledge and design theory.

Paris Residential – a 4-day residential to Paris at the end of year 12, this trip supports Primary research for A-Level coursework, visiting a range of Art Galleries, Museums and other tourist destinations.

Visits to exhibitions and places of industrial interest are vital to the understanding of product design. Many links exist between our department and outside agencies and professional help is often sought for project work involving state of the art industrial processes.

Reading List

Textbook: AQA AS/A-Level Design and Technology: Fashion and Textiles Paperback – 23 Feb. 2018
by Amanda Dick (Author), Denise Davies (Author), Pauline Treuherz (Author)

Revision guide: My Revision Notes: AQA A-Level Design and Technology: Fashion and Textiles Paperback – 29 Mar. 2019 by Julie Drake (Author), Kate Bush (Author)

Pattern Development Books

Metric Pattern Cutting for Women's Wear, 6th Edition by Winifred Aldrich • Pattern Magic by Tomoko Nakamichi

- Pattern Magic 2: (Part of the Best-Selling Japanese Inspired Pattern Magic Series) by Tomoko Nakamichi
- Pattern Magic 3: The Latest Addition to the Cult Japanese Pattern Magic Series (Dressmaking, Pattern Design, Sewing, Fashion) by Tomoko Nakamichi

Magazines

- Vogue
- Elle
- Harper's Bazaar
- Films & Documentaries
- McQueen (2018)
- High & Low – John Galliano (2023)
- Westwood: Punk, Icon, Activist (2018)
- Dior and I (2024)
- Alexia Chung: The Future of Fashion (2015)
- The True Cost (2015)
- Period dramas such as Call the Midwife (BBC), Downton Abbey, The Crown – provides historical and contextual references to extend your knowledge.

Independent Study

- Build an interest in fashion, history and the wider world around you by visiting exhibitions, keeping up with the fashion cycles each year, viewing runway shows and making decisions about what you like and dislike within the fashion world and textiles industry.
- Make note of fashion cycles and trend changes in shops and online, as well as using social media to aid your understanding of the textile world by following fashion house pages on Instagram and Tik Tok.