

## Functional Skills Certificate FUNCTIONAL ENGLISH

Component 1 Reading Level 2

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### Insert

The three sources that follow are:

- **Source A:** a fact sheet about fashion degrees
- **Source B:** an online article about fast fashion
- **Source C:** a blog by a student in fashion journalism

**Please open the insert fully  
to see all three sources**

**Source A**

## What Can I Do With A Fashion Degree?

<b>Jobs directly related to your degree include:</b>	<b>Jobs where your degree would be useful:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Fashion designer</li> <li>★ Retail buyer</li> <li>★ Retail manager</li> <li>★ Retail merchandiser</li> <li>★ Textile designer</li> <li>★ Visual merchandiser</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Clothing/textile technologist</li> <li>★ Event organiser</li> <li>★ Jewellery designer</li> <li>★ Magazine journalist</li> <li>★ Newspaper journalist</li> <li>★ Public relations officer</li> </ul>

### What do fashion graduates do?

85% of fashion graduates are in employment six months after graduating. Just under 5% go on to further study, either full time or part time while working. Around one in seven graduates in employment in the UK are working as clothing designers.

### Work experience

Work experience of any kind in a design studio is highly desirable. Experience in retail can also be useful. Contact fashion houses, designers, department and other retail stores and supermarket fashion labels to ask for work experience, and look for opportunities on the websites of fashion companies.

There may also be opportunities to take an optional work placement in industry or to work abroad. Taking part in fashion shows can also help you to promote yourself and build up your contacts. Consider other less obvious areas, too, such as costume design within the television and film industry, the fashion media, and internet companies.

### Skills for your CV

During your degree you develop a range of practical fashion design skills, including illustration techniques, sewing and the use of digital technology in fashion. You also gain an understanding of fashion trends. In addition to this, you develop a range of transferable skills, including effective communication and the ability to work as part of a team.

Learning to “sell” yourself and your portfolio of work will be key to success. The folder you will have started during your degree is the most vital tool you have in your search for a job in fashion. Your folder should contain your coursework as a starting point but should also be continually developed.



**Source B****What is “Fast Fashion”?**

It isn't the name of the latest high street clothing chain. It's a system where trendy clothes are manufactured and rushed into stores as quickly as possible at very cheap prices. My friends and I love stylish, affordable stores like H&M because their clothes are trendy, hit every style, and most significantly, fit into our budget. But the convenience, selection, and low costs come at a price.

**Unacceptable Working Practices**

To keep their expenses low, fast-fashion brands rely on low-wage, overseas labour. H&M is the biggest garment-producer in Bangladesh, where in April 2013, the Rana Plaza garment factory collapsed, killing 1,100 and injuring 2,500. This tragedy drew attention to the dreadful conditions of clothes manufacturing in the country.

**Compromising On Quality**

All my friends buy H&M clothes knowing they won't last. We're all obsessed with jogger pants right now, but in a month, they'll be out of style and lying forgotten in our drawers. This is clearly promoting a throwaway culture and women who have a wardrobe full of clothes but “nothing to wear”.



Isn't the answer simple? Just give away our unused clothes! Shockingly, centres such as the Salvation Army actually receive too many low-quality donations. Many of these items tend to be so undesirable they're thrown away and end up in special landfill sites. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the “recovery rate” for all textiles in 2012 was a mere 15.7%.

**Polluting the Planet**

Many fast-fashion items are made from polyester. Unfortunately, polyester is made from petroleum and produces harmful emissions and gases which can cause breathing difficulties and diseases. Plus, many of the harmful by-products of this process are released into the water.

Cotton isn't man-made. However, it requires the use of large amounts of pesticides. Greenpeace published a report called “Dirty Laundry”, which revealed the shocking amount of toxic water pollution linked to companies including H&M. Not only does this harm the environment, but it also poisons water supplies.

And all these chemicals cause relatively high rates of many cancers among textiles workers as if their dreadful working conditions aren't enough.

**Source C**

## Interning at London Fashion Week

By Alannah Francis

Just like almost every other person interested in fashion, it was a dream of mine to attend London Fashion Week. So, this year, I finally took the plunge.

If you're interested in interning (unpaid work experience) for fashion week, keep checking the UK Fashion Industry website for opportunities; you can also approach publications directly. Make sure you have an up-to-date CV and include a link to your blog and examples of your work. That way the publication can see your abilities straight away.

I was scheduled to attend six shows over the week. I had a backstage pass so that I could interview the designer after the show. I took notes during the show which helped me to think of relevant questions for the interview, and remind me of garment details when writing up the show report in the evening. It's really important to check show timelines and ensure you're not late.

On day two, I attended three shows at different locations across London. The first show took place in the Savoy Hotel and was full of interesting and eye-catching designs. As individual experiences go, this was probably the most intense because I had to choose several collections to write about in more detail. This meant talking to quite a few designers to find out more about their collections – everything from the fabrics and techniques to the inspiration and theme.

It was a pretty manic experience, but Google maps reduced the stress of getting around, and helped me get to shows on time. Make sure your phone is charged (and your laptop too!). Wearing 'flats' makes walking and standing for long periods much more bearable. It's also a good idea to get yourself some business cards to hand out and ask others for theirs.

I really enjoyed being fully immersed in fashion for a week. I would definitely recommend interning at London Fashion Week, whatever your speciality. It's intense, but a lot of fun.

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**Open out this page to see  
Source A and Source B**

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