

BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

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BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL LAUNCHES FASHION STUDIO APPRENTICESHIP

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Today, the British Fashion Council (BFC) launched its Fashion Studio Apprenticeship during a visit at Prendergast Vale School in Lewisham with BFC Chief Executive Caroline Rush, BFC Ambassadorial President David Beckham and BFC Ambassador for Positive Fashion Adwoah Aboah.

The Fashion Studio Apprenticeship is part of the BFC's Education Pillar which gives young people a clear understanding of how to train for a plethora of industry roles within the creative industries. BFC Ambassadorial President David Beckham and BFC Positive Fashion Ambassador Adwoah Aboah play an integral part in inspiring a young audience from different backgrounds to consider arts education and the creative industries when making decisions about their future.

Caroline Rush, BFC Chief Executive commented: *"It is incredible to be able to support career opportunities for young people who might not want to pursue higher education. There are a lot of roles out there that need to be filled by skilled workers; the fashion industry is highly dependent on those roles and we hope that this will strengthen our industry and make it more accessible by being able to offer this exciting new Fashion Studio Apprenticeship."*

David Beckham, BFC Ambassadorial President commented: *"Fashion is an industry that should be open to everyone - no matter what their background is or where they are from. I hope that this new apprenticeship programme from the BFC will give even more kids the chance to thrive and be creative. We have such an amazing fashion industry in this country, it's something we should really be proud of and protect. These kids are the future, it's been an inspiring morning."*

Adwoa Aboah, BFC Ambassador for Positive Fashion: *"I am proud to be part of an industry that has so many facets to it. The Fashion Studio Apprenticeship is proof that not every role in fashion needs an academic degree and that our industry is one that is open to everyone, no matter their background. It is fantastic to be able to support this initiative as part of my role as BFC Ambassador for Positive Fashion."*

Joining the visit, BFC NEWGEN designers Richard Quinn and Rosh Mahtani (Alighieri) and Paolina Russo, part of *MakerLab Presents: Here to Create* project, a partnership with adidas, David Beckham and BFC, a creative platform giving emerging designers a global stage to showcase their work; and Adam Mansell, Chief Executive UK Fashion & Textile Association.

The Fashion Studio Apprenticeship was announced in February 2019 and is the Government's 400th new approved for use apprenticeship.

Designed by a group of fashion employers, with the BFC, the apprenticeship starts in the heart of a designer business: the studio, to learn how a collection is created. The Fashion Studio Assistant is a key position in the designer industry, working with the team that creates a collection. For the first six months, the apprentice will complete a foundation which will include core elements of the job role such as critical path management and health & safety measure. This will lead to 12 months in a more focussed area of the business, with the apprentice choosing to specialise in one of three pathways:

- Product Development and Production
- Sales and Operations
- Fashion Marketing and Communications

Following on from the 18-month training the apprentice will undertake an Independent End-Point Assessment that has been derived by industry experts in this field. The assessment will be taken in 2 steps:

- Work Based Project (Including Presentation and Discussion)
- Practical Test

The grades for both elements will be combined to confirm the overall achievement of Fail, Pass or Distinction.

-ENDS-

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Background

Education is a key pillar of the BFC strategy and is led by Pillar Presidents Sarah Mower and Meribeth Parker, with the aim of attracting the best talent to the industry by giving students a clear understanding of how to study and train for a plethora of industry roles. The BFC Education Foundation raises funds to support students with the ability and potential to make an exceptional contribution to the fashion industry. Its initiatives include the Fashion Studio Apprenticeship, the National Fashion & Business Saturday Clubs, the BFC Colleges Council, the BFC Education Foundation and the Graduate Traineeships Programme. The BFC also works on the fashion industry's skills agenda with UKFT to promote skills development in the fashion sector.

Talent is key in fashion, not just design talent, which is traditionally developed through fashion and arts degrees, but also through skilled workers and business leaders that are vital to fashion's ecosystem. The creation of new apprenticeships, developed to broaden opportunities and training in those roles that are vital to supporting the Creative Director(s)/Designer(s) in a business, is instrumental in supporting the future of the industry. For employers, apprenticeships enable them to train individuals in the workplace, developing their own talent that directly fills business needs, often leading to increased employee retention rates. For the apprentices, it offers opportunities for those who would rather not, or could not, study further education as they are able to learn whilst in employment. The cumulative benefits to the industry are even greater: it enables the industry to attract new talent, ultimately improving productivity.

What is an Apprentice? - Employing an apprentice is just like taking on any new employee. The job role is advertised (the apprenticeship standard), candidates are interviewed and then taken onto the payroll. The key difference is that the job role is largely predefined as part of the chosen apprenticeship standard and the employer commits to their training on the job, both in the workplace and at a college/training organisation. Apprentices must be employed in a real job that gives them the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills they need to pass their End-Point Assessment. In summary:

- Apprentices are aged 16 or over and combine working with studying to gain skills and knowledge in a specific job
- The apprentice must be paid at least the minimum wage
- The apprentice must:
 - Work with experienced staff
 - Learn job-specific skills
 - Study during their working week (for example, at a college or training organisation)

Hiring a Fashion Studio Apprentice

The employer must sign an apprenticeship agreement with their Apprentice. This gives details of what they agree to do for the apprentice, including: how long will they employ them for, the training they will give them, their working conditions and the qualifications they are working towards. A training provider/college will need to confirm they will accredit the Apprentice.

Fashion Studio Apprentices must be offered the same conditions as other employees working at similar grades or in similar roles. This includes:

- Paid holidays
- Sick pay
- Any benefits offered such as childcare voucher schemes
- Any support offered such as coaching or mentoring

ABOUT BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL

The British Fashion Council (BFC) was set up in 1983 to promote British fashion internationally and co-ordinate this promotion through fashion weeks, exhibitions and showcasing events. The BFC now supports designers beginning at college level and extending to talent identification, business support and showcasing schemes to help British designer businesses develop their profiles and business globally and promote British fashion and its influential role in Britain and London. The BFC Colleges Council offers support to students through its Foundation, BA and MA scholarships, links with industry through design competitions and Graduate Preview Day. Talent identification and business support schemes include BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund, BFC/GQ Designer Fashion Fund and NEWGEN which includes womenswear, menswear and accessories. The BFC also runs and owns charities including the BFC Fashion Arts Foundation, the BFC Fashion Trust and the BFC Education Foundation. Showcasing initiatives and events include London Fashion Week, London Fashion Week Men's, LONDON show ROOMS, International Fashion Showcase, London Fashion Week Festival and the annual celebration of creativity and innovation in the fashion industry: The Fashion Awards.