

Fashion Retail Academy

Partner Report

2022-2023



The partnership between Fashion Retail Academy and the National Saturday Club has delivered an inspirational three years of the Saturday Club for young people in your local community.

Throughout the year-long programme, these young people have connected with dedicated and inspiring educators at your institution and have gained access to the valuable resources and facilities you have to offer. This opportunity has been further supported by the national programme of events including the London Visit to cultural institutions, Masterclasses with industry, Graduation Ceremonies and the Summer Show.

Across the country, this extracurricular education movement is embodied by a powerful network of partners from the education, industry and the cultural sectors. Collectively, the network is committed to engaging young people from underrepresented backgrounds at an early stage in their learning journey. The programme framework has proven impact. It enables institutions to develop their civic engagement by engaging young people within the local community, reducing barriers to access, developing young people's vital practical skills and creative capacities, and inspiring them with the breadth of pathways open to them both at your institution and in their future careers.

The following pages highlight the successes of the Fashion&Business Saturday Club at Fashion Retail Academy in 2022–23, which were also celebrated at the National Saturday Club Summer Show at London's prestigious Somerset House in July 2023. In this document, we have drawn together evidence from our evaluation findings to demonstrate the reach and impact of your Club.



Fashion Retail Academy Fashion&Business Saturday Club



Tutors and Staff

Damla Atik
Debra Lawrence
Nathan Klinker
Ryan Brockbank

Supported by the British Fashion Council, Fashion&Business Saturday Clubs introduce a breadth of opportunities across this dynamic sector. Exploring industry's latest thinking, Clubs cover wide-ranging topics that develop members' practical skills, business acumen and approaches to creative problem-solving.

This year, the Fashion Retail Academy Club focused on sustainability and shaping future career goals. In partnership with high street brand New Look, Club members upcycled unwanted stock destined for landfill, they also tried on historical costumes at the English National Opera, developed their garment construction techniques, and took an impromptu trip to the independent fashion stores in Soho.

“Another wonderful year at FRA Fashion&Business Saturday Club. Class of 2023. What a wonderfully creative group of young people. From different walks of life, you came together like magic to create a fun, inclusive and supportive community where, judging by the outcomes, you clearly felt inspired to create. We are super proud of you.”

Debra Lawrence, Club tutor



Fashion&Business Club member demographics

88%

from a Widening Participation background*

17%

have a neurodivergence

50%

do not have a parent who has been to university

8%

have a disability

38%

are from an underrepresented ethnic background

4%

are D/deaf or hard of hearing

17%

receive free school meals

4%

have caring responsibilities (are a young carer)

17%

live in the 30% most deprived areas in England (IMD)

4%

are from a Gypsy, Roma, Traveller, Showman or Boating community

17%

have special educational needs

* The National Saturday Club identifies young people to be from a Widening Participation (WP) background if they: receive free school meals; have experience of the care system; speak English as an additional language; experience disability; parents/ guardians haven't been to university; are refugees or asylum seekers; are young carers; are from a military family; are from an underrepresented ethnic background; have special educational needs; have a neurodiversity; are D/deaf or hard of hearing; are from a Gypsy, Roma, Traveller, Showman or Boating community; and/ or those who live in the 30% most deprived areas [Index of Multiple Deprivation].

Interview with Club members

Evie and Lexi, Fashion Retail Academy

How did you find out about the Saturday Club?

We found out about the Saturday Club together and both applied. We've been friends since we were really young, and we've always been interested in such similar things. We were looking at the FRA college course and stumbled upon the Saturday Club opportunity.

Why were you interested in a Saturday Club with a Fashion&Business focus?

Lexi: I've originally been doing Textiles for GCSE at school, so it was already an interest, but I'm also thinking of doing Business as an A-level so it would like give me a bit of experience in the subject already, and I wanted to experience it a bit before I decide.

Evie: I do GCSE Textiles now, me and Lexi study it together – and I'm thinking of A-level Textiles too. But I mainly did it because I have an interest in the industry as a whole. I wanted to learn more about it, and also meet new people.

What projects have you enjoyed the most at your Saturday Club?

Lexi: The main project we've been doing is a reimagined garment. We've been up cycling old clothes to create something we'd like to wear. It's been interesting learning about sustainability and how to reuse clothes that you wouldn't usually wear and put them into something that you would buy now. I've turned some cycling shorts into a skirt and added patterns that I like.

Evie: The reimagined garment is also one of my favourites. I had an old top that I gave a sweetheart neckline, and we presented on our creations too. Also tie-dyeing excess stock. The Club tutors helped us dye white tank tops in a way none of us had done before.

Would three words you use to describe your Saturday Club?

Lexi: Inclusive, creative, and exciting. The people there and the tutors make it really inclusive and it's just a really nice community.

Evie: Eye-opening, enjoyable, and educational. It's shown me different sides to the industry that you wouldn't see in GCSE Textiles. It's been eye-opening learning about different jobs, and I've enjoyed it so much. You'd think it'd be annoying doing it on a Saturday, but no – I find it really fun.

Do you feel a sense of community at your Saturday Club?

Lexi: This is a bit cringe, but it's kind of like a family. We share a lot of interests so it's easy to make connections.

Evie: Yeah, it's just really fun to talk to other people because obviously at school, everyone's, like, not always interested in the same things. And we can just talk about what we love and like.

What does Fashion&Business mean to you?

Lexi: Communicating my ideas and my creativity.

Evie: Expressing everyone's individuality. I especially love going to Saturday Club and seeing what everyone's wearing. You can see everyone's personality.

Who, what or where inspires you the most?

Lexi: I normally look at social media like Pinterest, and also different celebrities. I quite like Bella Hadid, and I've been enjoying looking at the Met Gala outfits – it's really interesting seeing everyone's different styles. I also love music and going on walks.

Evie: I think the tutors at the Fashion Retail Academy. They have so much experience and knowledge in the subject, and a lot to teach us, which I find inspirational. Also watching different movies or TV shows from the 2000s to see how fashion is evolving.



If you could make one thing better in the world, what would it be?

Lexi: I'd want to improve the fast fashion issues and encourage people to shop at places that are better the environment. Shop sustainably!

Evie: I agree. In fashion at the moment there's a big thing about sustainability, and it's a trend to do big thrift shops. Lexi and I went to a car boot sale recently which was really interesting because you just rummage through and see what you get. We like these things after someone doesn't anymore, and then we could pass it on too.

What's the best thing about being your age?

Lexi: I feel like we just express ourselves creatively a lot more, and we take a lot of risks – we're less serious because we're younger.

Evie: We have so much freedom to choose what we want to do. We can go down whichever career path. I feel like when you get older and you've picked what you want to do it might be quite hard to change career paths. Right now we get to choose three or four different A-levels.

“ We had many trips to places that I would have never been to if it wasn't for the Club. We went to the Royal Opera House costume design department and went to many fabric shops, vintage stores, and Selfridges. ”

Club member



“ At the beginning I really struggled to tap into my creative side but after observing the other students and teachers I had developed new creativity that helped both my designs and my inner confidence. ”

Club member



London Visit

As part of the National Saturday Club London Visit on Saturday 19 November 2022, more than 500 young people from 37 Saturday Clubs visited cultural institutions across the capital.

During the day, Club members heard from inspiring speakers, and saw their self-portraits displayed in a pop-up exhibition at Central Saint Martins. After the welcome event, Clubs went on specially arranged visits to leading museums and galleries across London. The National Saturday Club works in partnership with a rich cross-section of cultural partners who generously open their doors to National Saturday Club members, and provide access to exhibitions, bespoke tours, and guided workshops.

Club members from Fashion Retail Academy visited English National Opera (ENO). At the London Coliseum, Club members had the opportunity to meet one of ENO's lead costume supervisors, see some costume designs and try on costumes from ENO's back catalogue. They learned about the London Coliseum and its architect Frank Matcham with a private tour of London's biggest theatre.

View the self-portraits online:
selfportraits.saturday-club.org

London Visit partners:

- Barbican
- Design Museum
- English National Opera
- London Transport Museum
- National Gallery
- Science Museum
- Somerset House
- Tate Britain
- The Courtauld
- The Photographers' Gallery
- Tower of London
- Victoria and Albert Museum
- Whitechapel Gallery
- 180 Strand



92%

of Club members said the event made them feel part of a national community of young people

95%

said the self-portrait exhibition celebrated young people's individuality and self-expression

95%

valued the cultural trip

92%

valued the welcome event at Central Saint Martins

“ I valued all of the London Visit, it was a lovely experience. ”

Club member



Masterclass with British Fashion Council

In a Masterclass with the British Fashion Council (BFC) Fashion&Business Club members from the Fashion Retail Academy learned about how the BFC uses TikTok commercially, and to promote British fashion designers. The group was tasked to create a two-week TikTok strategy to promote BFC NEWGEN, an initiative that has supported 300 designers at the beginning of their careers. Club members created content to celebrate its 30th anniversary.

100%

enjoyed the Masterclass and found meeting industry professionals inspiring

100%

gained a better understanding of job roles and career possibilities

100%

found the Masterclass giver relatable

100%

gained a better understanding of how their new skills can be transferred into the future world of work



The BFC is a not-for-profit organisation set up in 1983 with the role to strengthen British fashion in the global economy as a leader in responsible, creative businesses. The BFC Foundation brings each of the BFC's charitable initiatives together under one umbrella to support the future growth and success of the British fashion industry. The Foundation achieves this goal by supporting designers beginning at college level and extending to talent identification, business support and showcasing schemes while addressing the need to increase the diversity of the talent pool and promote those who are leading the way in terms of environmental and community impact.





“ I valued speaking to people from industry, learning from their experience and understanding more about their different job roles. ”

Club member



Summer Show and Graduation Ceremonies

The culmination of the Saturday Club year is a public exhibition of Club members' work at London's prestigious Somerset House and end-of-year Graduation Ceremonies.

Summer Show

The Summer Show took place from 15–18 July and it was a joyous celebration of the year's achievements. Each Club had their own display, curated by expert exhibition designers, to showcase their Club members' work. Special events were hosted including Private Views for Club members and a VIP Private View for network guests, industry, the cultural sector, government and policy-makers.

Graduation Ceremonies

Graduation Ceremonies were hosted at Bush House, King's College London. These provided an important moment for Club members to recognise their achievements throughout the programme and to look ahead to future possibilities. During the ceremonies, tutors and inspiring guest speakers addressed the young people and each Club member received a Certificate of Achievement, in front of their family, friends, peers and tutors.

The Summer Show is also presented as an online exhibition with all Clubs represented: show.saturday-club.org

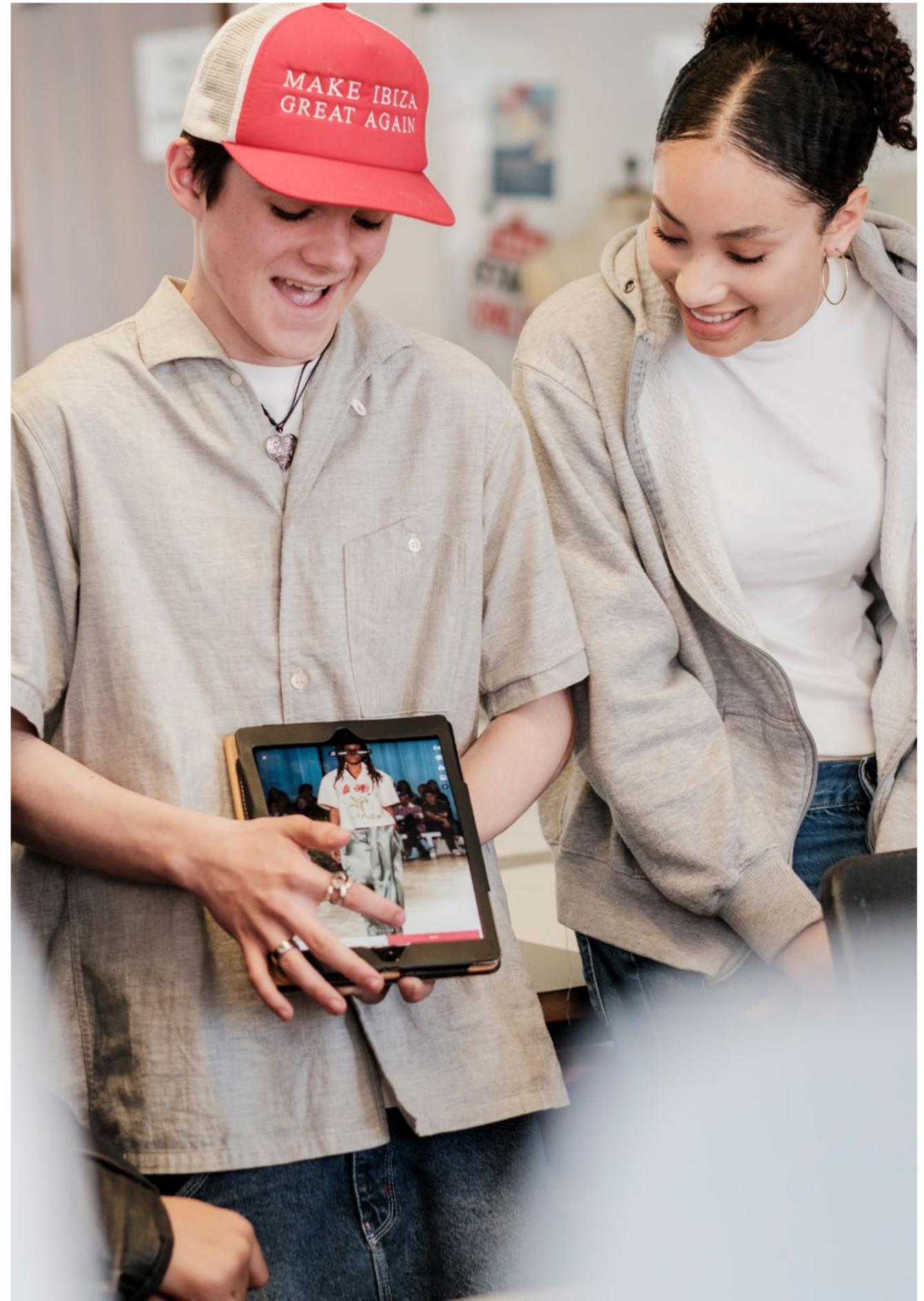
“ It was great to see all the different Clubs and get to experience being in a creative community. ”

Club member



“ Saturday Club has become a second home for my daughter and she’s gained such a lot of confidence during her time there. ”

Parent/ Guardian



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