

## **Teaching change by learning change**

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### **Introduction: A questioning that informs the questions**

*'To live in the third millennium, we shall need more than incremental improvements on our current rationality; we shall need new thinking joined with new ways of perceiving and visioning ourselves, others, nature and the world around us.'*

*(Laszlo, 1997)*

All life and lives are embedded in ecological cycles, with interdependencies among parts which effect dramatic changes in the whole. (Capra and Luigi, 2014) Education is a nested system within wider ecological systems. Its tutors go through cycles of action and reflection to nourish and develop their own practices and those of their learners. Fashion education, with its vocational, disciplinary, socialising, critical and creative lens on the world, has its own cycles that intertwine with the cycles of nature, industry, culture, and society. However, human cycles are not in flow with the wider cycles they are part of. Through our unnatural practices, the world is out of kilter on an environmental, ecological, and social scale.

This chapter focuses on the misalignment between the cycles of reflection, compared to the cycles of action, in fashion education. It highlights the problems that this misalignment poses, and offers solutions for a more effective, balanced system. It is informed by research with fashion educators over a three-year period, through a longitudinal co-inquiry between participants in four universities in Europe and research involving tutors in over 70 universities around the world. The results of the project, as applied to create accessible tutor-resources, can be found on an open source, online platform. This platform has been created by tutors, for tutors, and its content is open to anyone to use, adapt, apply or otherwise

explore. The ideas hatched through the process and findings of this research started with my own lived experience and that of colleagues near and far. As a collective and as individuals, we share the concern that the general focus and drive for action can limit and distract from time spent on reflection. This distraction inhibits our recourse to radically change ourselves and our own practices, which in turn places education in a tepid state of stasis that tutors seek to disrupt. (Williams, 2017) Tutors must balance the practical need to enhance their students' professional prospects, and the more implicit need to prepare them to live and work in ways congruent with truly thriving. How do we create safe spaces for questioning, reflection and unravelling the present, without coming undone? Or do we need to find ways to simultaneously unravel and knit differently our practices as tutors in order to really serve our students? Fashion is a fundamental indicator of our identities, it helps us to represent ourselves in the world, it offers livelihoods to millions, and it is a manifestation of nature's cycles (albeit fashion's cycles are often distorted by economic and cultural cycles that are mechanistic, consumerist and out of step with those of nature). In short, fashion is a big deal, and teaching fashion involves much more than might first appear. To tackle successfully such a task, it is paramount that fashion's tutors afford, and are afforded, sufficient time and resources to unpick their own practices and methods, in addition to developing the craft and capabilities of their students.

In order to manage and progress world-relevant teaching practice, tutors must consider why they are teaching at all; what specifically they are teaching; how they are teaching it, and to whom. They must also ask these same questions – the why, the what, the how – of their own learning. To understand *how* we know what we know involves moving beyond an overly rational, solutions-based approach to fashion education, into a multi-dimensional one, where ideas are emergent, context is ambiguous, and practices are relational. To achieve this shift, it is necessary to make spaces where tutors can, between each other, conduct such questioning. As Alfred Korzybski said, 'the map is not the territory'. That is to say, ideas about something are not the thing itself and unless we are open to that understanding, we limit our vision of the world and our openness to the multiple threads of life. (Gren, 1988)

The ideas presented in this chapter are also drawn from my practice in leading a community of designers, researchers and tutors at Centre for Sustainable Fashion, a University of the Arts Research Centre, based at London College of Fashion. My points of reference are multiple and diverse. As a designer and researcher, I collect interesting ideas, theories, and materials from all sorts of places, which I juxtapose to create collages of imaginings. I am continually testing my resultant ideas both with, and for, others. Fashion Education for Sustainability (FEfS) is a subset of wider study in Education for Sustainability (EfS) with exploration taking place at micro and macro scales. Resonance between what we have been doing at a disciplinary level and education wide thinking can be found in the four areas of competences for educators: learning to know; learning to do; learning to be, and learning to live together (UNESCO, 2011) defines education as the exploration of: In presenting ideas about *how* we learn to know, do, be and live together, I make the case for an expanded approach to fashion pedagogy which recognises the need to facilitate a space for tutors' own reflection and action. 'We have not yet created the conditions in schools, in institutions or in teacher education that will... tolerate the creation of uncertainty and unpredictability'; an overhaul is required to 'develop values that will support teachers and learners in those communities to engage in such activities'. (Schulman, 2004)

These epistemological and ontological questions formed the basis of our enquiry. Conversations that – through the range of universities surveyed as well as through the individual diversity within each institution – spanned a range of experience, courses, geographic locations, and cultures. Whilst there is a burgeoning network of fashion educators and researchers seeking and enacting change, this study is the first, to our knowledge, longitudinal co-inquiry and action research project into teaching practice involving fashion tutors, digital learning experts, early career researchers, programme leaders, education for sustainability leaders and experienced professors in exploring change in tutors and in students learning fashion. It uses a four-dimensional framework of sustainability (Williams, 2019) to develop pedagogies and reflection practices which are themselves practiced and reflected upon through the course of the study. This co-inquiry was made possible through the support of the Erasmus+ Strategic partnerships. It responds to societal and localised needs to develop practices for thriving, and inspects the tutor's role, but also their own needs, in responding to these issues. At present, we are

enriched by our students' ever-developing progress on the path toward sustainable possibility but are also ever more concerned by the nature of the world that awaits them. It was this dichotomy which inspired us to examine the possibility and need for systemic change across fashion education. We wanted to find out if our personal interest and concern, and the ideas that this tension inspired, were more widespread than across our four university settings.

Our ambition was to create a heuristic for fashion education, where tutors act as agents in the process of discovery. (Jicking and Sterling, 2017) Through their experiences, ideas, visions, and doings all drawn from a range of source-types, tutors are well placed to act as the intermediaries between imagination and praxis. The practical importance of this longitudinal co-inquiry between tutors and researchers from universities with distinctions in geographic location, university ethos, history, structure, and size, is its creation of an evidence-base, real-life reference points for the conceiving and developing of practical guides by educators, for educators. This chapter contextualises the pedagogies and reflection resources as leverage points in radically re-purposing education, seeking ways to contribute to co-existence.

An education that recognises our ecological and social context is an education that is anticipatory, emergent, and participatory. (Sterling, 2021) This approach challenges the present expectation that education must provide definitive answers, solutions, and hierarchies. It takes humility to recognize how much we don't know about how to contribute in the world; it is humanity's arrogance which has led to our current predicament. (Ehredfeld 2019) Whilst we have developed breath-taking technologies that enable us do things unimagined in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we have yet to learn the fundamental lessons of how to live well together on a finite planet. (Escrigas, 2016)

Fashion, design, and sustainability education and practice can involve sources of knowledge that are felt, passed on and experienced; they do not always start with recorded and referenceable theory. Polanyi (1962) states that 'we can know more than we can tell'. He describes a pre-logical phase of knowing that can be visual, conceptual, and channelled through mindsets that involve communicating

and sharing understanding. It is in this way that craft tradition and other skills have realised discoveries through creation that are not published in peer reviewed journals and books held in libraries. As a fashion tutor, researcher, and designer myself, I have found great assurance in listening to the experiences of other fashion tutors as they share tacit knowledge. I sometimes find myself working both forwards and backwards, from a doing to a reading, from a practice to a theory. My practice-based approach to learning often invokes ideas better communicated through sketches, notes, photographs, or reciprocal interactions. I see this need for a range of expression in students' work too. This project recognised these iterative and oscillating elements of fashion education. In a world where information overload has created new obstacles to gaining true clarity, the project set out to establish how best to channel the potential of experience and exchange.

### **Questions emerging from a questioning**

The long-term objective of this research is to develop practices that contribute to an equity and earth-centred ethos, infrastructure, and culture in fashion and wider art and design education. The immediate objective of the project was to highlight the critical role of tutors as intermediaries in this shift. University is simultaneously a space for students to acquire practical skills to apply in their livelihoods, and a space for students to discover novel ways of thinking and transform themselves in a more innate manner. A tutor's presence during the tension between these strands creates great possibility. A second objective, with the ambition of making the research usable and relevant to as many tutors as possible, was to develop and apply a framework for teaching fashion and sustainability with a series of underpinning pillars, a range of pedagogical approaches, a range of ways to increase tutor agency and a range reference points for recognising change. The study was guided by the following two questions:

*What conditions and resources do fashion tutors need in order to be able to change curriculum, change themselves and demonstrate the value of fashion and wider art and design practices to climate and social justice?*

*What kind of learning and change is needed, so that equity and earth-centred practices are more likely to be fostered and amplified amongst tutors and students?*

## **Research Design**

Having identified tutors as the focus of the enquiry, a mixed-methods approach to research design was developed, using a co-inquiry methodology within the research team, drawing on the work of (Heron and Reason, 1986, 2001). This ongoing reflection and action created content that was prototyped, tested, and refined through the accompanying research phases. The first phase involved a mapping of fashion education and sustainability with reference to the project's core concepts, using online questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups. This phase involved reaching out to tutors in universities around the world. Thematic and granular findings were synthesised through the application of qualitative and quantitative data analysis to produce a Benchmarking Report (Williams et al., 2019). This was followed by the development of a prototype, immersive, co-learning experience with a group of tutors from across the four partner universities. New findings were drawn from the content produced in these workshops via feedback from participants and a review of existing resources and tools of relevance to participatory learning, design, fashion, and sustainability. Research phases also included questionnaires and focus groups involving potential employers, Non-Governmental Organizations, government departments, and civil society organisations, to develop a Future Skills Foresight Document that could inform the project's development. (Williams et al., 2021) A second round of research was undertaken to delve more deeply into tutor needs, engaging a more targeted group of tutors, through questionnaires and focus groups in the partner locations. (Williams et al., 2021)

Developmental phases involved the collation, design and testing of a range of resources of relevance to tutors across locations and teaching levels, based on the project's core concepts and research findings. These resources spanned the teaching cycle from unit or course ideation to quick reference points for a workshop or tutorial group. The final phase of research and development led to a review of the set of trialed pedagogies and their potential application and the creation of peer to peer and group reflection guides.

*Figure 1. The Fashion Education system (Williams and Stevenson, 2012).*

*From: Williams et al. (2021). Education and Research Framework Document for Design-led Sustainability Education Fashion Seeds Platform [Online] <https://www.fashionseeds.org/>*

#### **Four Pillars of Sustainability**

The four pillars of sustainability draw on the fashion design for sustainability framework (Williams, 2019) As such, the four pillars of sustainability have been applied throughout the project outlined in this chapter, including in workshop content, course, curriculum and learning design and in the consideration of pedagogies and peer and group reflection guides. For humans to learn how to live, in relation to more than human life, a mindedness towards culture is as critical as environmental, social and economic considerations. The word culture is highly contested; its interpretation in the English language alone has many complexities as it involves deeply held, non-verbal, as well as verbal signs. Culture is ways of life; customs, beliefs, and rituals; codes of manners manifest in dress, photography, ceramics, science, and technology. Culture takes place in communities and institutions, in courses and in how we each teach and learn. Through and beyond fashion, culture is the social production and communication of identities, meanings, knowledge, values, aspirations, memories, attitudes and understandings of the world - its consideration is fundamental to our ability to live well together.

However, culture was only introduced into policy documents as a fourth dimension of sustainable development in 2001. (UNESCO, 2001) 11 years later, culture is still only predominantly talked about in western centric discourse in terms of something to preserve, rather than the means to thrive together.

By drawing on cultures, ideas and belief systems from a wider range of knowledges, cultures can inform our perceptions of ourselves in relation to other life forms. The teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh reference interbeing, a simple yet profound explanation of life (Hanh. 2017) The following descriptors have been used in this project:

**Economic sustainability:** refers to the ability of citizens to enjoy living conditions within agreed boundaries in terms of wage levels relative to costs of living and the gap between lowest and highest wages. It refers to regional and inter-regional access to investment and to a healthy relationship between productivity, employment, and economic status.

**Environmental sustainability:** refers to our ability to live within biosphere limits, recognising the earth's carrying capacity. It draws on ecological principles and practices that see people as part of nature. It involves ways to preserve and regenerate the quality of the natural world on a long-term basis. It recognises the rights of all living beings.

**Social sustainability:** refers to the ability of a community to interact and collaborate in ways that create and exemplify social cohesion. It considers places, communities, and organisations, formal and informal, and their resources, opportunities, and challenges. It involves agency of diverse participants, voicing and acting with autonomy and harmony with other earth citizens.

**Cultural sustainability:** refers to tolerant systems that recognise and cultivate diversity. It promotes inclusion to ensure that fashion is representative of and represented by diverse communities, locations, and belief systems. It includes active ways to be anti-racist, to ensure gender-based equity and to preserve and safeguard First Nations' cultural heritage, beliefs, practices, and histories in connection with place, resources, and ancestral lands.

Fashion Seeds Reader Williams et al 2019

Recognising and articulating these four principles in teaching and learning fashion offers a clear grounding for considering why we teach; it provides reference points for the content, outcomes, and



assessment. However, the epistemological error (Bateson, 1972) requires a deeper exploration of the causes, as opposed to just the symptoms, of exploitation, resource depletion, climate change and biodiversity loss. Whole systems-change, as outlined in fig 1, involves change in belief systems, world views and in economic, social, ecological, and cultural value systems. The climate crisis is recognised as a crisis of perception, an existential crisis. Recognising the epistemological error of extractivist economies is difficult; our everyday lives are rung with linguistic references that enforce its supposed legitimacy, through objectivist descriptions (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) Through the lens of the four pillars, we unravel not just what we think, but why we think what we think. This introspection is challenging at personal and professional levels. The process of unravelling is one that, I would argue, requires conditions of trust and safe spaces, where we can reflect on entrenched ideas originally shared with us by trusted guardians, teachers, and leaders.

### **Exploring cultures of sustainability through a layered approach.**

We saw evidence of a very high level of interest in exploring new approaches to teaching and learning, with relational, participatory pedagogy. However, if fashion and wider education is to really contribute to co-existence, then universities must contribute to change beyond the academy, so that conditions within which our graduates go on to live and work are conducive to the application of sustainability learning. This is a huge challenge for tutors as socially accepted practices and collective patterns of behaviour currently avoid accepting the implications of climate change and other environmental threats. Art and design, including fashion education, has a history of questioning the status quo. Upholding that tradition might be more important than ever before. Tutors sit in the tension between encouraging ways to disrupt the status quo and preparing students to work in industry. We have a duty of care, to our students' present and future prospects. To achieve this end involves a layered approach to change which, when explored through pedagogy that is congruent with sustainability, offers ways to 'change how we think' (Bateson, 1972) Such a transformation in habits of mind requires us to let go of outmoded ways of thinking, but to do so without perceiving the old and the new paradigm in direct opposition. To

detach from outmoded thinking should not involve an aversion to all that it entailed, but rather to learn from what has gone before.

### **Trialling Pedagogies**

Taking a constructivist approach that understands fashion design for sustainability as possibility-creating as well as problem-solving (Williams, 2015), the project draws on lived experiences of teaching, learning, and living. The pedagogies explored through this project expand on a long-standing exploration into teaching fashion and sustainability at undergraduate, postgraduate and in-work training levels of study. The project applied the pedagogies to workshop content and courses, curriculum and learning design. The pedagogies are based upon the three dimensions of Shulman's signature pedagogy: surface structure, deep structure, and an implicit structure. (Shulman, 2005) These dimensions cover the operational 'what' of teaching and learning, with understandings relating to 'how' to put pedagogies into practice. For tutors to reflect on and discuss moral beliefs relating to values and professional attitudes involves the 'why' that is often squeezed out of staff and course development time.

### ***Systemic Thinking***

This is a foundational pedagogy in fashion design for sustainability. It encourages a recognition of the living systems (Capra & Luisi, 2014) of which we are a part. It supports integrative and adaptive processes of thinking and practice (Ryan and Tilbury, 2013) which, at a deep structure level, involves exploring relationships between people, places, and environments. At implicit level, it draws on participants' belief systems and perceptions of interbeing (Hahn, 2017) in the world, whilst at surface level, it is about drawing feedback loops to visualise cause and effect of actions.

### ***Creative, critical thinking***

This is a foundational pedagogy in art and design, where learners question and explore new and distinctive ways to extend the scope of a discipline or practice itself. At a deep structural level, this involves questioning structures in society and forms that fashion can take, at implicit level it is a

searching of self in relation to other human and more than human lives and related power dynamics, whilst at surface level it takes the form of diaries and sketchbooks reflecting thinking and action.

### ***Participation***

Participation is part of an underlying ethos of inclusion, belonging and equity that actively seeks to eliminate discrimination and barriers to learning. At deep structural level, it is part of an ethic of care, recognised by activity that maintains and regenerates our world. (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017) It involves emancipatory education, education as praxis, drawing on wide sources of knowledge. At implicit level, it is the elements that create agency for voicing concern and taking part and at surface level, it is in the wording of briefs, reading lists and references used in class activity.

### ***Informed decision-making***

This pedagogy is an approach to identifying, analysing, and applying valid data into the creation of products, services, and systems. It presents a challenge to art and design education, which does not specialise in complex quantitative data analysis. At deep structural level, informed decision making is connecting trusted, meta level data to situated contexts (connecting across system levels). At implicit level, it is the discourse between disciplines as a co-inquiry that explores different disciplinary practices. At surface level, it is a decision-making process to analyse the validity and applicability of data available.

### ***Futures thinking***

Futures thinking integrates signature experiential learning pedagogy with speculative design practices (e.g., Dunne and Raby, 2013). At deep structural level, it challenges the ontology of fashion activities through multi-sensory, multi-modal, multi-timescale approaches to design. At implicit level, it expands horizons of time, it invites thinking beyond the human and current socio-economic structures of production and consumption. At surface level, it involves methodologies such as scenario planning, (Wilkinson and Kupers, 2013) inclusive design, transformation design and conventional units of assessment.

### ***Place-based learning***

Place-based learning connects the signature pedagogy of situated learning and localism. It can be practiced in teaching and learning from early childhood to lifelong learning environments. At deep structural level, it contextualises design within community in soil, culture and societal terms and involves learning that is embedded within activity, context and culture. The dynamic, non-static, emergent dimensions of this learning involve unintentional rather than deliberate aspects (Lave and Wenger, 1991). At implicit level, it involves moving beyond the classroom and engaging in community, which at surface level includes field work and partnership projects that extend beyond the confines of fashion networks and uses practices of deep listening, direct observation, and multi-sensory data capture. (Williams, 2018)

### ***Interdisciplinarity***

As a pedagogy, interdisciplinarity is the consideration of how learners with different approaches, methods, and processes, in different disciplinary, cultural, and other settings can learn with each other. At deep structural level, it's about hybridity, where education avoids essentialism, pure identities of nation, race, or role, extending capacity for understanding multiplicity and diversity in knowledge production. At implicit level, it is pluralism in approach and perspective to offer a rich learning opportunity, a discourse with multiple perspectives. At surface level, project-based learning, a longstanding art, and design pedagogical approach (Yin, 2008), lends itself to the intertwining of ideas from a range of disciplines, cultures, and perspectives.

### ***Learning through making***

Making as a location and practice of learning is a foundational pedagogy in fashion, and wider art and design education. At deep structural level, this involves equity for contributors as the basis for mutual learning, explored through traditions of making, including craft and indigenous knowledge. At implicit level, this is about learning to know, learning to do, and learning to live together (UNESCO, 2011) and at surface level, it is about developing capabilities and skills for livelihoods.

## **Changing ourselves as we guide others**

Through the semi-structured conversations about our own practices, the project allowed for the sharing of experiences and ideas through convivial interaction. Evidence demonstrated that these sessions supported a sense of shared purpose and confidence in work done outside of the project. The process was not always comfortable or easy, with team members at different stages in their careers, and different institutional expectations. A further major challenge was, of course, the restrictions created by the pandemic; however, the limitations of meeting online were mitigated by the design of interactive sessions, including using online visual tools. The observations of the longitudinal study chimed with those of the research findings of the first and second round of data collection; (Williams et al 2021) it became evident that tutors respond positively to opportunities to share experiences with each other, and that purposeful practice change is enabled and enhanced when tutors work together. (Williams et al 2021) These findings led to the designing of resources that are based on semi-structured peer-to-peer interaction with the aim of enhancing and amplifying tutor reflection and action cycles to deepen knowledge and agency. A final element was developed for the project platform: 'The Fashion Tutor as Sustainability in Practice', a three-part resource that can be engaged with separately or in tandem.

The process of developing these resources has been iterative, based on real life experience with reference to theory and practice in co-learning and reflection (Heron and Reason, 2001, Murray, 2011) Three resources have been developed, they connect with learning to know, learning to do, learning to live well together. (UNESCO, 2011) This three-dimensional approach to change also draws on transformation design, (Sterling, 2009) meditation practice and ecological practices, including the three ecologies (Guattari, 2014) and soil, soul, society (Kumar, 2015). These guides seek to gather tutors together to consider change as a dual (but not dualistic) process taking place within themselves and within learners with whom they interact. In making these practices explicit, it is also hoped that these and other practices of co-learning can be recognised as part of what is valued in teaching and thus included in workplans, rather than as additional, optional time and work.

### Three Ways of Tutor as Sustainability in Action

<b><i>Ways of Being:</i></b>
<i>Sustainability self-development by connecting and co-learning: Creating shared empathic understanding</i>
<b><i>Ways of Knowing:</i></b>
<i>fashion and sustainability related inquiry towards a deepening of knowledge: Expanding horizons of time</i>
<b><i>Ways of Doing:</i></b>
<i>connecting self and wider change through bridging thinking into doing: Transformation</i>

Williams (2019) in The Fashion Reader

#### **Ways of Being**

The 'ways of being framework' was developed to create conditions for a shared learning experience. It offers a light touch guide usable in informal and movable settings. It uses a diary format, for two people to engage in listening, reflecting and taking action in ways that are supportive and enjoyable. What is shared and the intention of the process is decided upon by the participants. This mutual learning process where two people come together to develop their own sense-making via discussion, decision-making and care is not limited to fashion tutors and does not limit the conversation to teaching, but rather explores the situated context of the tutor, recognising that self-care is intertwined with the care of others and wider activities that replenish life and lives, human and beyond human, in an interdependent world.

#### **Ways of Knowing**

The 'ways of knowing framework' draws on a co-operative inquiry methodology, adapted for use in the longitudinal study of the project and adapted again to be applicable as an open-source resource. It references 'By the Fire', a tutor co-learning project led by Liz Parker, and Lizzie Harrison (2016), and other learning design programmes. It involves inquiry comprising an intentional interplay

between reflection ‘sense-making’ and action and integrates four ways of knowing, based on the work of Heron and Reason (2001) and Fashion SEEDS platform:

- *experiential knowing* i.e., via experience, discourse, and other interactions
- *presentational knowing* i.e., via visual, audio /other sensory, aesthetic forms
- *propositional knowing*, i.e., via articulation of concepts, statements, and ideas
- *practical knowing* i.e., via doing and making, realized in studio and other spaces

It is designed for a small group of tutors wishing to explore an area of shared enquiry through listening, reflecting and taking action. The resource responds specifically to the findings from the study relating to the need to ‘make time’ to learn from others and to find resources that are can be trusted and are relevant. It is also designed to be integrated into workplans, making it accessible to tutors who are full time, part time or visiting tutors working in a range of roles. By making the process explicit, it seeks to give recognition to the process of tutor as learner, encouraging teams and management to plan co-learning into work plans. The practice of co-operative inquiry is a way of working with people who have similar concerns and interests to oneself to understand the world and develop new and creative ways of looking at things, and to learn how to take action to change things and find ways to do things better (Heron and Reason, 2001). This methodology is particularly apt for fashion and sustainability learning, as it encourages a range of sources of knowledge, reference points, and inclusion of ways to share tacit knowledge, non-text contributions, including performative elements of knowledge sharing.

### **Ways of Doing**

The ‘ways of doing’ element of the resources for tutors involves a less explicit approach to condition creating. Through developing a user journey or navigation system for the online platform, it encourages tutors to take routes most suited to their needs. The ways of doing route-mapping and content creation responds to the research findings that, at times, tutors need the immediacy of materials that can be nimbly applied. It is important for tutors to be able to have resources that match the pace and stage at which they are working. The user design means that the resources can be approached in multiple ways,

thereby acting as a guide that can be referenced, adapted, applied, and used to gather teams together in transforming what it means to teach and learn fashion in an ecological and equity context.

## **In Conclusion**

*Teaching is a complex, intricate and challenging vocation that labours in the tensions between the public and the personal.* (UNESCO, 2021)

Life on earth involves multiple interactions; we depend on the relationships between elements inside our bodies, our environments, communities, and wider world. Fashion involves interactions that are cognitive, practical, and emotional in a system that is regulated through professionally accepted knowledge, practical shaping of material into form expressive and responses to perceived context. By changing what is routinely included in fashion education, what is recognised as knowledge and how we think about ourselves in the world in terms of place, time and relationships, tutors and students can start to think with, rather than about life. Perhaps one of the advantages of teaching fashion at a time of deep planetary and societal upheaval is that it is a discipline that can adapt to change – its practitioners often imagine and make ideas come to life before the theory around the activity is formed. Rather than diminish the rootedness of these practices, a balance between the head, hand and heart elements of fashion education creates a fundamental understanding of an evolving, not-static set of practices. Signature pedagogies, according to Schulman (2005), nearly always involve active performance by learners, which emphasises the importance of participation and visibility of learners, mediated through the creation of safe spaces where experimentation and co-learning can take place. We are in the midst of unprecedented change, it is vital that tutors and students learn with change, not just about it.

Fashion education is about learning with life; it prepares learners to think, know and live together while also being a professional education. As such, what we teach becomes the ways in which future fashion sector is recognised. Teaching shapes how fashion professionals think, how they perform in the professional sphere and their sense of integrity, played out through their actions. (Schulman, 2004).



Thus, signature pedagogy helps to shape a profession, its code of conduct and the mindsets of those taking part. The pedagogies, practices and ideas presented in this chapter seek to unravel some of the assumptions that no longer serve us, but in so doing, to interweave teaching practices of head, heart and hands that are congruent with sustainability and art and design (including fashion) education.

Fashion tutors face the challenge of measuring up against student, organisational, sector and societal expectations, each with their own yardsticks. They can expand the influence of education beyond the development of knowledge alone. Fashion education is professional education, it is preparation for accomplished and responsible practice in the service of others. This involves ‘developing pedagogies to link ideas, practices, and values under conditions of inherent uncertainty that necessitate not only judgment in order to act, but also cognizance of the consequences of one’s action. (Schulman, 2004) Thus fashion education becomes a practice of relational understanding, developed through a discursive, critical consideration of the purpose and intention of the practitioner, as well as of the product, service, system, or organisation it represents. This ongoing, evolutionary process can reveal new perspectives, insights, and ideas in all involved. I, for one, am revelling in the unravelling, but only if, and when I am supporting and supported by others in relationships based on curiosity, integrity and trust.

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### **Professor Dilys Williams bio:**

Professor Dilys Williams FRSA is founder and Director of Centre for Sustainable Fashion, a University of the Arts London Research Centre, based at London College of Fashion. Dilys' work explores fashion's relational ecological, social, economic and cultural elements to contribute to sustainability in and through its artistic, business and educational practices.

Trained at Manchester Metropolitan University and holding a UAL professorship in Fashion Design for Sustainability, Dilys publishes widely on fashion and sustainability in peer reviewed academic journals and published books. Dilys' work draws on extensive experience in lead womenswear designer roles for international collections, including at Katharine Hamnett, Liberty and Whistles. This industry experience is complimented by a longstanding internationally recognised teaching and research portfolio focused on the development of sustainability centred design practices, based on principles of holism, participation and transformation design.

Dilys is a member of the UNFCCC Global Climate Action in Fashion and sits on advisory committees for Positive Luxury and the Global Fashion Agenda. She is currently acting as a Special Adviser for All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Ethics and Sustainability in Fashion and is a member of the jury for Vogue YOOX Challenge - The Future of Responsible Fashion.

Her place on the Evening Standard London's Progress 1000 list in 2015, 2016 and 2017 evidences the public and academic influence of her work alongside regular appearances on broadcast television, radio and magazines including recent appearances on BBC World, Sky News, Radio 4, WWD, the Gentlewoman, Vogue and Elle magazine. In 2020, she was named Drapers' Sustainable Fashion Champion.