Conlon, Jo and Taylor, Andrew

LinkedIn groups in higher education - Maximising community benefits for students & alumni in fashion & textiles: Establishing a tool-kit.

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LINKEDIN GROUPS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

MAXIMISING COMMUNITY BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS & ALUMNI IN FASHION & TEXTILES
THE LINKEDIN PROJECT TEAM

- **Jo Conlon:**
  - Senior Lecturer, Fashion & Textiles. ADA, University of Huddersfield

- **Andrew Taylor:**
  - Senior Lecturer, Fashion & Textiles. ADA, University of Huddersfield

- **Palveshah Ashruff:**
  - BA (Hons) Fashion Buying Management UG student currently on placement at Bonmarche

- **Laura Bird:**
  - Careers Adviser (International), Careers and Employability Service,
  - University of Huddersfield
FASHION AND TEXTILES: LINKEDIN ALUMNI GROUP

ABOUT THIS GROUP
This group is a resource for current students, staff, alumni and friends of the Fashion and Textiles subject area at the University of Huddersfield. Please feel welcome to use it to communicate job opportunities, up-and-coming events and to discuss ideas.

MEMBERS
96 members
STARTING POINTS:
BA (HONS) FASHION TEXTILES BUYING MANAGEMENT: GRADUATE HIGHLIGHTS & ROLE MODELS
DATA CAPTURED FROM 2014 T&L FUNDED PROJECT;
http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/19519/_Conlon, J. (2014)

Jordan Coventry
Assistant Buyer at Topman
London, United Kingdom | Apparel & Fashion
Previous: FSF Clothing, Tesco, Selfridges
Education: The University of Huddersfield

Amy Beresford
Graduate Buyer at Marks and Spencer
York, United Kingdom | Retail
Previous: TOPSHOP TOPMAN, Debenhams, Marks and Spencer
Education: The University of Huddersfield

Kate Jackson
Buyer - Kurt Geiger
London, Greater London, United Kingdom | Retail
Current: Kurt Geiger
Previous: Next Group PLC
Education: The University of Huddersfield

Lauren Mason
Apparel Development Manager
Sheffield, United Kingdom | Retail
Current: OO Outdoors LTD
Previous: Planet X, Mamas & Papas, BonMarche
Education: The University of Huddersfield

Roxy Brewis
Junior Buyer at Missguided Ltd
Manchester, United Kingdom | Apparel & Fashion
Current: Missguided
Previous: Missguided Ltd, Joe Browns, Diesel
Education: The University of Huddersfield
WHY LINKEDIN FOR FASHION & TEXTILES AT HUDDERSFIELD?

- 3 areas of focus in building a Fashion & Textiles Linked-in community:
  - Develop a professional identity and make and maintain contacts
  - Discover new opportunities
  - (…and be discovered – we all look up people online!)
  - Learn and share – news, inspiration and insights

What you know + Who you know = OPPORTUNITY Career & Future
Social media offers connectivity and empowerment

Linked in – possibly not the obvious – go to / favoured social platform for young professionals – yet!

Barriers are education – “business”, “professional” – i.e. not very appealing initially to creatives, encourage links to blog or e-portfolio

Plus: “… but don’t I need to have a job first?”
  - Ensure that embedded skills development (from the module LO’s) are made apparent,

Significant and on-going time investment needed coupled with overcoming the fear of putting yourself out there through confidence in attributes / abilities (LinkedIn measures “profile strength” from 0-100%)

Challenge is to make our alumni network accessible, easy and attractive
AN INTRODUCTION TO LINKEDIN

- Introduction then hands-on introduction to LinkedIn
- Developing a good LinkedIn profile – start term 1 / year 1
- Researching Companies
- Developing your networks – the alumni tool
- Finding jobs and internships – LinkedIn jobs
BUILDING A NETWORK OF CONNECTIONS

- Part of 100% profile is **50 connections** i.e. without 50 not on the radar
- LinkedIn’s algorithms and data mining make it easier
  - People on your course
  - Other people you may know
  - Import contacts
- **Groups** - a great way to find interests and connections
CONVERSATIONS AND JOBS

- Activity needed – 1 post week minimum
  - Next project stage establish a schedule of alumni guest posts
- Conversations v posts
  - News, reports, events
  - Start with a question – needs a hook to start conversation or is just a repository
  - Next project stage – recognising barriers to posting and participation
- Jobs
STUDENT FEEDBACK …SO FAR

- Great way to make contact with external contacts
  - Guest lecturers invited to join and post (not a closed group), students then likely to ask follow up questions
- Recruiters using social media to draw up short-lists – important to recognise this and to showcase your work with links to e-portfolio or blog or website
- Opportunity to be found – LinkedIn forwards relevant jobs to you
- Can use LinkedIn profile to directly import CV onto job websites
- Peer learning appreciated:
  - Demo how others are linking it to their e-portfolio or blog
  - Demo how others used it for primary research contacts
  - Share success stories
- Needed to remind students to change settings to get notification updates – otherwise “get’s lost”
GETTING STARTED - LINKEDIN HELP

- LinkedIn Series from University of Leeds Careers Centre, a series of short screencasts outlining the various ways you can use LinkedIn and tips to get the most out of it. [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLUL_viKVCUyDNsOQEaFwXovXkx3izBU](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLUL_viKVCUyDNsOQEaFwXovXkx3izBU)

- Lots of guides and help available online

- Plus for students:
  - [https://students.linkedin.com/](https://students.linkedin.com/)


