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# Facilitating a creative community

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# Facilitating a creative community – workshop

## 10 minutes

- Introduction to The School of Fashion and Textiles
- Activities of the School during lockdown to create a community
- Current research theories
- Introduction to workshop activity

## 25 minutes – workshop

10 mins activity

10 mins feedback

5 mins key takeaways

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# Introduction to The School of Fashion and Textiles

De Montfort University School of Fashion and Textiles



The Best  
Fashion Schools  
in the World  
2019

[www.businessoffashion.com](http://www.businessoffashion.com)



EXPO  
2020  
DUBAI  
UAE

DMU placed amongst 50 top fashion schools worldwide



Green Gown  
Awards 2021

FINALIST

Embedded sustainability content in all courses

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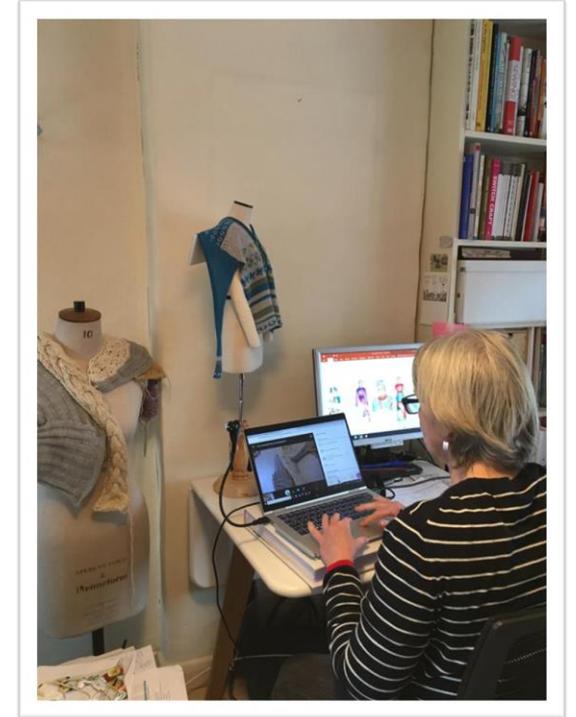
# Context - Activities of the School during lockdown to create a community

## Challenges

Teaching a practical subject in a virtual environment  
(maintaining the same face to face standards)

Maintaining student engagement

Replicating creative community



# Context - Activities of the School during lockdown to create a community-

## Community and Wellbeing

- School meetings
- Art Club
- Textinction

## Knowledge Construction

- Bureau service
- Workbooks
- Detailed lesson plans
- Online guest lectures and projects
- 'How to' films
- Studio 'extra' packs

# WE JOINED IN!



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# Current research theories - Abbie Swinfield

## **Belonging** (Karthikeyen, 2013; Fromm, 1955)

- Feeling like a designer, not just a student
- Shared appreciation and building of connection / identity / community culture

## **Reality pedagogy** (Pierre Bourdieu)

- Community based learning
- Taking from experiences and giving back

## **Intrinsic motivation** (Knowles, 1988)

- Self esteem enabling more supportive networks through the increased experience of staff (scaffolding, experiences & exposure = resilience)

## **Self-actualisation; belonging & connection**

- Staff taking part in lockdown activities (alongside students) strengthening connection between them and their practice

# Introduction to workshop activity

- Why we want to do this- keep the practice of reflecting on our own creativity
- Acknowledge the importance of feeding our creativity as it enhances teaching the students
- What we hope to get- start to share ideas on ‘intrinsic motivation’
- Takeaway ideas on motivation
- How we are going to do this

# Introduction to workshop activity

25 minutes – workshop

10 mins activity – take a pen, there are 5/6 key themes – write everything and anything you can think prompted by the question on post it notes and stick to relevant sheet

10 mins feedback – read all the ideas – pick out key ideas relevant to you

5 mins key takeaways- take your 3 activities to enhance your own practice

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# 5 key themes

- How do you start your own thinking process? What materials do you use (music? Reading other experts ? Talking to friends?)
- How do you have the freedom to let rip, do what you want, make mistakes
- How do you overcome being too self critical? How do you evaluate your work?
- When was the last thing you tried something new? What was it?
- What gets you excited about your work? What does joy in your own practice/ subject area look like?
- What do you wish you spent more time doing – do you ask enough questions or do you settle for what you know? What would you do differently ?

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# Conclusions – ideas to takeaway

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FACILITATING A CREATIVE COMMUNITY - Delegate Responses to workshop activity

Q1: How do you start your own thinking process? What materials do you use (music? Reading other experts? Talking to friends?)

- Reading – stimulates thinking of my own, challenge: containing and harnessing my own thoughts (when does my 'play' become 'work?'); staying with the thoughts of others (the romance of my own ideas)
- Everything sparks my thinking process – capturing and acting (confidence) I need to work on.
- Reflect, research, discuss – YouTube papers
- Reading around a subject, reading other peoples' stuff
- Music, calm, peacefulness, notebooks, tidy to messy, materials, practical
- Reading on the subject and talking to friends and colleagues

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# Q1: Continued

- Reasonable stress – deadlines/pressure
  - Silence
  - Having conversations with myself
  - Being creative and thinking about pedagogies
  - Happier
  - Motivated by pressure and panic
  - Read others' work to inspire – experts/colleagues
  - Specs/outcomes – what sounds fun?
  - Reflecting on now learning through others (videos/kids)
  - Stop and think, get a cup of tea, quiet space
  - Think about what I would like the impact of the outcome to be, then work backwards
  - Talking to others – collaborative brainstorming
  - Reading widely
  - Sharing with colleagues
  - Bath time
  - Remove from De Montfort -- distance to see the 'whole board'
- Scaffolding on existing knowledge/theories
- Ask myself: What would I need as a student?
  - Look at what peers and experts in field have done to inform me

## Q2: How do you have to freedom to let rip, do what you want, make mistakes? How do you overcome being too self-critical? How do you evaluate your work?

- Human mutuality, self-aware
- Work in shed, permission to make mistakes to learn. Non-perfection – evaluate your process, feeling possibilities
- Reflection on drive home
- Be brave to try and enjoy learning from the reflection (rather than judge)
- Giving something of yourself – self-awareness
- Honesty, humour, sharing
- Evaluation – student feedback, module feedback, reflection
- Realising that the potential of trying outweighs the risk of not (work in progress...)
- Curriculum/outcomes as the vessel, not the content for a learning experience
- There is no time to be self-critical on 'let rip', deadlines are too pressing! Student feedback is my go-to evaluation tool!
- Authentic – be yourself, be conversational in seeking student feedback
- Happy to take a risk to try new ideas
- Don't deliberately – but recognise value of mistakes made and learn from this
- Listening to your own recordings
- Feedback from others
- Modify learning materials
- Change teaching style/mode on the hoof due to behaviour of the students
- Ignore it, trying not to be perfectionist, empower students for own learning
- Peer observation, peer review
- By having supportive colleagues, by convincing myself that I do actually know what I'm talking about
- It doesn't have to be perfect – sometimes if it is 'good enough'
- It's ok to say 'no' to things

# Q3: When was the last thing you tried something new? What was it?

- Development for new VLE
- Writing an autoethnographic account of my education development and school experiences (for PhD research)
- Vevox training – already thinking how will use in week 1
- Walking, making perfume
- During the lockdown, moving teaching online
- Setting up quizzes (competitive ones) for students
- NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programme?)
- Cooking, gardening, swimming, beekeeping, Kahoot, gaming tools, teaching online using digital tools
- Leicester print workshop
- Brightspace
- Online classes, Padlet, IT – out of comfort zone

# Q4: What gets you excited about your work? What does joy in your own practice/subject area look like?

- Making a difference and contributing to the dreams of others
- Knowledge exchange (sharing experiences)
- Students doing well, being able to develop teaching
- I feel joyful when students evaluate teaching positively – sense of fulfilment
- When staff put into practice things that they have consulted me about
- Joy = working with others to create a better education experience for students and staff
- Building confidence, teaching students to be problem solvers
- Joy! Finish successfully, feedback from students
- Buzz in a classroom
- Novelty
- Interaction
- Sharing students' excitement when they understand their own ideas and their value
- When you feel a student has really understood and you've had an impact, no matter how small
- Helping people to adopt new approaches to teaching online and using digital stuff for teaching
- A piece of work that gives me goose bumps

# Q4: Continued

- Creating
- Researching
- Students demonstrating high levels of knowledge and understanding
- Receiving positive feedback from placement about students
- Seeing the lightbulb moment as the student/participant 'gets it'
- Gin
- Enhancement of student experience
- Interactions with students – watching them learn/evolve
- Doing something new or in a new way and its really successful
- Working in a team and individually
- Small to very large – national to global
- Supporting students to find their voice, express themselves and understand they can be part of 'the conversation' and contribute to their field/discipline
- Teaching as improvisory art, the thrill of enacting new thinking alongside students
- 'Teaching jazz' – book form, opportunity for soloing
- Transforming the dull-but-necessary into a source of energy for a student
- Students commenting on real world issues and responding to this/challenging this
- Working together in equal partnership towards a meaningful socially just outcome
- When students realise they have a critical thinking ability and can contribute original ideas
- Students engaging in simulations/role play and moving forward in their understanding of practice

Q5: What do you wish you spent more time doing? Do you ask enough questions or do you settle for what you know? What would you do differently?

- Really knowing my learners
- Treating myself to development opportunities (rather than getting through emails)
- Thinking and reflecting
- Preparing! Also creating, thinking, innovating, trying new things
- Be more creative in my teaching – time to experiment
- More pro-active, less questioning, more doing
- Reading and writing (instead of procrastinating by playing Xbox games)
- More time to be creative and think
- More time being creative. I always apply a critical eye to what I do. Sometimes this can prevent me making decisions
- Developing teaching
- Making, creating, discussing creatively spreading joy. Joy of making. Opening up possibilities to students
- No need to ask more questions. What if? It's an evolution – don't settle for what I know

# References

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# Thank you!

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