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BA (HONS) FASHION STYLING AND CREATIVE DIRECTION

The School of Creative Industries at Southampton Solent University is delighted to take this opportunity to welcome you to the University and hope you have a rewarding and memorable time whilst studying with us. This letter will provide you with all the information on the requirements for your course in advance, so you arrive ready and fully prepared.

We hope you enjoy your summer break and look forward to meeting you for Welcome Week starting Monday 21st September 2026.

To help you prepare for your first few weeks of study and to get you thinking like a Fashion Styling and Creative Direction student, we have devised a summer homework brief. The project will allow you to translate abstract ideas into a practical application, and to consider visual research creatively. You will need to be ready to show this research task on the first day of Welcome Week.

NETWORKING

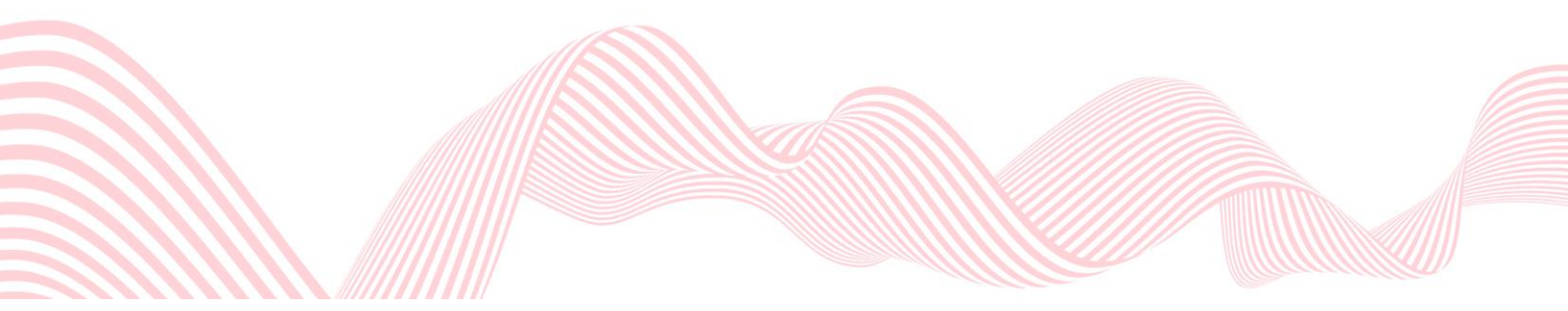
There is a lot of important information detailed within this pack. Please take the time to read over it carefully so you are fully prepared for your first week. BUT, before you continue, please take a few minutes to join our Instagram course account **Styled by Solent**.

SUMMER PROJECT

This summer we would like you to think creatively around what we named “The White Shirt Project”.

Consider how a white shirt can be used in photo shoots from season to season, from trend to trend. How is the white shirt used throughout catwalk looks, music videos, films, etc.? What does it represent?

Think about how it can be worn, does it have to be just a ‘shirt’, or can it be converted into a headpiece, trousers or skirt?





Left to right: Billy Porter, Lauren Bacall, Beyoncé Knowles-Carter and Malcolm McLaren

Your mission is to research this trend and develop one look, Autumn/Winter 2026 or Spring/Summer 2027. Consider the whole look, including make-up and hair. Create two mood boards to support your styling and art direction for a shoot, think about what magazines or photographers inspire you?

Think about how it could be worn and how you can make it look 'different' or 'special'.

Please create a final digital document, using PowerPoint, InDesign or Word to show your visual ideas.

You will be expected to bring your ideas and storyboards/mood-boards along to your first day of Welcome Week. Please be ready to show your work on a laptop, iPad or printed out in colour on A4 paper. You will also be expected to bring a white shirt to use during your first shoot (nothing too expensive, in case you would like to get creative with it! Charity shops finds and second-hand shirts are great).

READING LIST

We hope you are feeling excited about starting your studies and would you like to start doing some research over the summer. Here are a few films and books that all stylists, creative directors and fashion photographers should be aware of:

Films:

- *Paris is burning* (1990): Where does voguing come from, and what, exactly, is throwing shade? This landmark documentary provides a vibrant snapshot of the 1980s through the eyes of New York City's African American and Latinx Harlem drag-ball scene. Made

over seven years, *Paris Is Burning* offers an intimate portrait of rival fashion “houses,” from fierce contests for trophies to house mothers offering sustenance in a world rampant with homophobia, transphobia, racism, AIDS, and poverty. Featuring legendary voguers, drag queens, and trans women – including Willi Ninja, Pepper LaBeija, Dorian Corey, and Venus Xtravaganza – *Paris Is Burning* brings it, celebrating the joy of movement, the force of eloquence, and the draw of community.

- *McQueen*: This moving documentary looks at the legacy of Lee A McQueen, the mercurial, anti-establishment fashion designer better known as Alexander McQueen. Co-directed by Ian Bonhôte and Peter Ettedgui, it divides his life into chapters or “tapes” titled after his most iconic collections. It’s a thrill to relive McQueen’s shows, from Jack the Ripper Stalks His Victims to Highland Rape and Plato’s Atlantis. Their theatrics have a tense, cinematic quality.
- *Blade Runner* (1982): An iconic film which has gained a huge cult following both science fiction and film noir. Set in Los Angeles in the year 2019, the city has become dark, dreary, and full of decay. This American metropolis looks like it is set in Asia, with Chinese lamps, noodle bars, and Japanese billboards. The film’s costumes are trans-historic, demonstrating the universality of time by simultaneously incorporating the past, present, and future into the wardrobe of the main characters – with examples of 1940’s hair, Punk make-up, 60’s knee-high boots and 80’s suits. This confusing anachronism reveals little about the characters themselves, and instead adds to the film’s existential themes of life, morality, and the future of technology.
- *Grey Gardens*: little Edie’s style has influenced fashion designers, photographers, stylists and personalities. Notably Steven Miesel’s shoot for Vogue Italia with Amber Valetta in May 1999. It’s a great example of how important clothes are in the construction of self, even when one lives in a world of one’s own... (ok, not completely alone but with an equally eccentric Mother) and a glimpse into the intimate world of a fascinating and tragic character.
- *Black Panther*: the film **marked a defining moment for black America**. But it was a moment that also reverberated throughout the world, not least on the African continent



itself, where the Basotho blankets and Ndebele neck-rings were instantly recognised for the items of rich heritage they are. It was a moment of pride that for so long had been denied to Africans portrayed on screen in Hollywood productions.

Books:

- Aletti, V., 2019. *Issues – A History of Photography in Fashion Magazines*. London: Phaidon
- Barnard, M., 2014. *Fashion Theory: An Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Entwistle, J., 2000. *The Fashioned Body*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Heiferman, M., 2012. *Photography Changes Everything*. London: Aperture.
- Kaiser, S.B., 2012. *Fashion and Cultural Studies*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Rees-Roberts, N., 2018, *Fashion Film*. London: Bloomsbury
- Rocamora, A. and Smelik, A. (eds.), 2016. *Thinking Through Fashion: A Guide to Key Theorists*. London: I.B. Tauris
- Sontag, S., 1977. *On Photography*. London: Penguin Books

YOUR MAKE-UP AND HAIR KIT

You are about to embark on an exciting new chapter of your life whilst you study on BA (Hons) Fashion Styling and Creative Direction. The make-up kit has been carefully designed by the course team to include all the essentials required for your first year of study. The content has been selected to align with all the skills that will be taught and the project briefs that you cover during your first year of study.

More details about the kit will be sent to you prior to your arrival in September.

We look forward to meeting you all, but in the meantime, please do feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

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