

A pedagogic approach to digital pattern cutting

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Abstract: Digital transformation of the fashion industry came to the fore during the COVID-19 pandemic. Gonzalo et al (2019), advised it was ‘now or never’ for the industry to adopt digital methods across all aspects of the value chain. This paper considers an educational approach to one aspect of this; the development of 3D digital pattern cutting skills. Traditionally pattern cutting uses paper blocks and calico toiles as the means of fitting 2D patterns to a 3D form. At De Montfort University, Fashion Design students have been undertaking this teaching using Clo3D software for digital pattern cutting and visualisation. The pedagogy employed emulates traditional teaching methods with a library of digitised 2D pattern blocks and a virtual UK size 12 female avatar as a mannequin. Students use the digitised blocks for a full range of pattern cutting exercises; patterns are draped on the avatar, with calico fabric properties assigned and assessed on screen. This enables a comprehensive pattern cutting curriculum to be explored while reducing the amount of physical calico required. A mixed method survey has been used to gather student feedback, which was positive. The results show that students are integrating digital methods into their workflow and developing corresponding green skills related to a reduction in physical sampling. The paper concludes by highlighting aspects of good pedagogic practice to consider when integrating digital practice into an analogue curriculum.