UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

school *of* design digest



Graduation Issue

Sept 2026

Introduction

This special edition of our Digest marks a milestone moment for the **Class of 2026**. Over the past months, our students have brought their ideas to life through the **Degree Show**, represented the School at **Graduate Fashion Week,** and received recognition through prestigious **undergraduate and industry awards**. Most importantly, in July, we gathered as a community to celebrate their graduation. The day captured the **School of Design's** spirit: creative, collaborative and forward-looking.

In the pages that follow, you'll find highlights from the **Degree Show**, student successes at **Graduate Fashion Week**, recognition of **award-winning work** and snapshots from graduation itself. Together, these moments tell the story of a talented, resilient and ambitious graduating class.

On behalf of the **School of Design**, we wish our new graduates every success as they take their next steps, and we look forward to welcoming them back as part of our growing alumni community.



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Degree Show

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BA Graphic and
Communication
Design

2026 Degree Show

Final Year Exhibition

On **Friday 5th June, the School of Design** welcomed students, staff, family, friends and industry guests to the opening night of the **2026 Degree Show**, celebrating the creativity, dedication and achievements of our graduating students.

The exhibition showcased work from across **BA Art & Design, BA Sustainable Fashion, BA Fashion Design Innovation, BA Fashion Marketing and BA Graphic & Communication Design**. Bringing together a diverse range of illustrations, prints, digital works, objects, animations and fashion projects, the Degree Show offered insight into the ideas, perspectives and ambitions of the next generation of creative professionals.

For our graduating students, the exhibition marked the culmination of months of research, experimentation, problem-solving and creative development. Each project reflected an individual journey and the opportunity to develop not only technical skills, but also a distinctive creative voice.

As **Professor Muhammad Tausif**, Head of School, reflected:

> *The works you see here are the product of dedication, experimentation and genuine creative development. Throughout their studies, our graduating students have not only refined their technical craft but have found their own voices, their own ways of seeing, making and communicating through design. These pieces mark the end of one chapter and the beginning of the next.*

This year's **Degree Show** also provided an additional reason to celebrate, with the School of Design recognised as a recipient of the **Queen Elizabeth Prize**, awarded in recognition of its pioneering research and education in textiles, fashion and colour.

Thank you to everyone who joined us to celebrate the Class of 2026 and support our graduating students. If you could not attend in person, the work remains available to view online at our Degree Show website.

Visit website →





Student Awards

2026 Undergraduate Awards

We are proud to celebrate the outstanding **achievements of our undergraduate students**, whose creativity, commitment and talent have been recognised through this year's **School of Design awards**.

Kisby Prize – Isobel Brown, BA Fashion Design Innovation
Best undergraduate student in the area of Fashion and Textiles.



Crabtree Nomination – Ruby Brookman, BSc Textile Innovation and Sustainability
Awarded to the highest-achieving Level 1 undergraduate student in the school.

Peter Ryley Award – Diya Ghataura, BA Art & Design
For the student who, in the opinion of the examinations committee, has made the greatest effort to improve their performance.

The School of Design Prize

Recognising the best undergraduate show or project.
1st Prize – Emily Naylor – BA Fashion Marketing
2nd Prize – Ellie Hindley – BA Sustainable Fashion

Tibor Reich Prize – Hannah Green, BA Art and Design
For the most innovative use of colour or colour theory in a final undergraduate project.



2026 FUAM Graduate Art Prize Exhibition

We are delighted to celebrate our students' achievements at the **FUAM Graduate Art Prize 2026**, now in its 14th year. This annual exhibition at **The Stanley & Audrey Burton Gallery** showcases outstanding emerging talent from across the **University of Leeds**.

The School of Design is proud to have two students among this year's four finalists: **Marcus Hills (BA Art & Design) and Laura Gooch (BA Art & Design).** Their innovative, thought-provoking work reflects the creativity, skill and ambition nurtured within the School. Laura Gooch advocates for interspecies entanglement and the potential of human-fungal integration, whilst Marcus Hills' humorous projects expose the absurdity in our treatment of the natural world.

The **FUAM Graduate Art Prize** provides a valuable platform for our graduates, offering professional exposure to curators, critics and the wider public. We are thrilled to see their work recognised alongside peers in Fine Art and look forward to celebrating their continued success as the judges select the overall winner and visitors vote for the People's Choice Award.

Read more →



Laura Gooch (BA Art & Design)



Marcus Hills (BA Art & Design)

Graduate Fashion Week


UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS
schoolofdesign
BA Fashion Design Innovation
BA Fashion Marketing
BA Sustainable Fashion
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University of Leeds

Graduate Fashion Week

2026 Awards Winners

We are thrilled to celebrate our students' remarkable achievements at **Graduate Fashion Week 2026**, held at the iconic **Truman Brewery** in London. The School of Design was delighted to participate again in this globally renowned event, which champions the next generation of creative talent and innovation in the fashion industry.

This year's GFW offered invaluable opportunities for all our participating students, who benefited from extensive exposure and direct feedback from key industry representatives.

Throughout the event, our stand attracted attention from recruiters and buyers from **Vivienne Westwood, Boden, M&S, NEXT, Pentex, River Island, Liberty, ASOS, Topshop** and many other respected retailers and suppliers.

Their feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing admiration for the professionalism, creativity, and innovation in our students' portfolios. Our graduates impressed audiences, recruiters, and industry leaders with their portfolios, catwalk collections, and forward-thinking concepts. From bold design innovation to thoughtful marketing strategies and sustainability concepts, the talent on display from our students was exceptional.

We're incredibly proud that more of our students were shortlisted for awards than ever before, a testament to the creativity, innovation and professionalism of this year's graduating cohort.

2026 Awards Shortlist

BA Fashion Design Innovation:

- **The Childrenswear Award (Boden):** Isobel Brown and Mia Shaw
- **The Considered Fashion Award:** Polly Adams
- **The Fashion Illustration Award:** Estella Jenkins
- **The Fashion Portfolio Award:** Estella Jenkins and Isobel Brown
- **The Pattern Cutting Award:** Amy Beckett
- **The Inclusive Fashion Award:** Estella Jenkins
- **The Sportswear and Leisurewear Award:** Amy Beckett
- **The Knit Portfolio Award:** Izzy Lambert
- **F&F Competition:** El Taylor

BA Fashion Marketing:

- **The Digital Fashion Media Award:** Annika Ho
- **The Fashion Communication Portfolio Award:** Annika Ho and Poppy Fenwick
- **The New Business Award:** Ellie Barnes

BA Sustainable Fashion:

- **Digital Fashion Media Award**: Tanaya Rayna
- **Project Pitch – Fashion Business Category:**
  - Aimee Soller
  - Ellie Hindley
  - Emily Einhorn
  - Florence Pfeffer
  - Vivienne Li

Alongside the award shortlisting, Ruby Johnson had one of her outfits selected for the Graduate Fashion Week entrance display, showcasing her work to thousands of visitors throughout the event.

2026 Award Winners & Catwalks

Annika Ho, BA Fashion Marketing
Winner of the Digital Fashion Media Award





Poppy Fenwick, BA Fashion Marketing
Winner of the Fashion Communication Portfolio Award

Estella Jenkins, BA Fashion Design Innovation
Winner of the Fashion Portfolio Award

Our students also showcased their work on some of Graduate Fashion Week's biggest stages:

Menswear Catwalk:

- **Amy Beckett**
- **Estella Jenkins**

Liberty Competition & Catwalk:

- **Izzy Lambert (Shortlisted)**


Estella Jenkins
University of Leeds
GRADUATE FASHION WEEK
F&F


Amy Beckett
University of Leeds
F&F

Summer Graduation

04


Investing
in the future
of campus

2026 Summer Graduation

In July, we came together to celebrate the achievements of the **School of Design Class of 2026** at our Graduation ceremony. The day brought students, families and staff together to recognise years of hard work, creativity and dedication.

Graduates crossed the stage in front of proud family and friends, marking the end of their studies and the beginning of the next stage in their journeys. It was also a chance for staff and peers to reflect on the contributions students have made to the **School of Design**, both academically and within the wider community.

We extend our warmest congratulations to all our graduates and look forward to seeing where your skills, ideas and ambition take you next. As part of the celebrations, our graduates shared their favourite aspects of their course and of studying at the School of Design. Here are some of their reflections:

> *My placement was my favourite part; I feel like I've come out of Uni with so much more confidence and much more aware of the industry. I think I just enjoy it, and I know what sector of fashion I want to go into, and I've come out with a job, so win-win. I think the course really prepped me for that.*

Eleanor Taylor
BA Fashion Design Innovation

My favourite part was definitely the relevance to industry and the lab-based things we did in our second year.

Emelia Briggs
BA Sustainable Fashion

I really enjoyed the final semester; our major project was the best, we had so much creative freedom but also so much support.

Elizabeth Boardman
BA Art & Design

My favourite part was in first and second year experimenting with different printing techniques and getting to learn Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign.'

Ewan Brocklesby
BA Graphic and Communication Design

My favourite part was in final year and the freedom with my final projects. I was able to choose what direction I wanted to go in, make my own brand, and it was really exciting.'

Aimee Soller
BA Sustainable Fashion



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