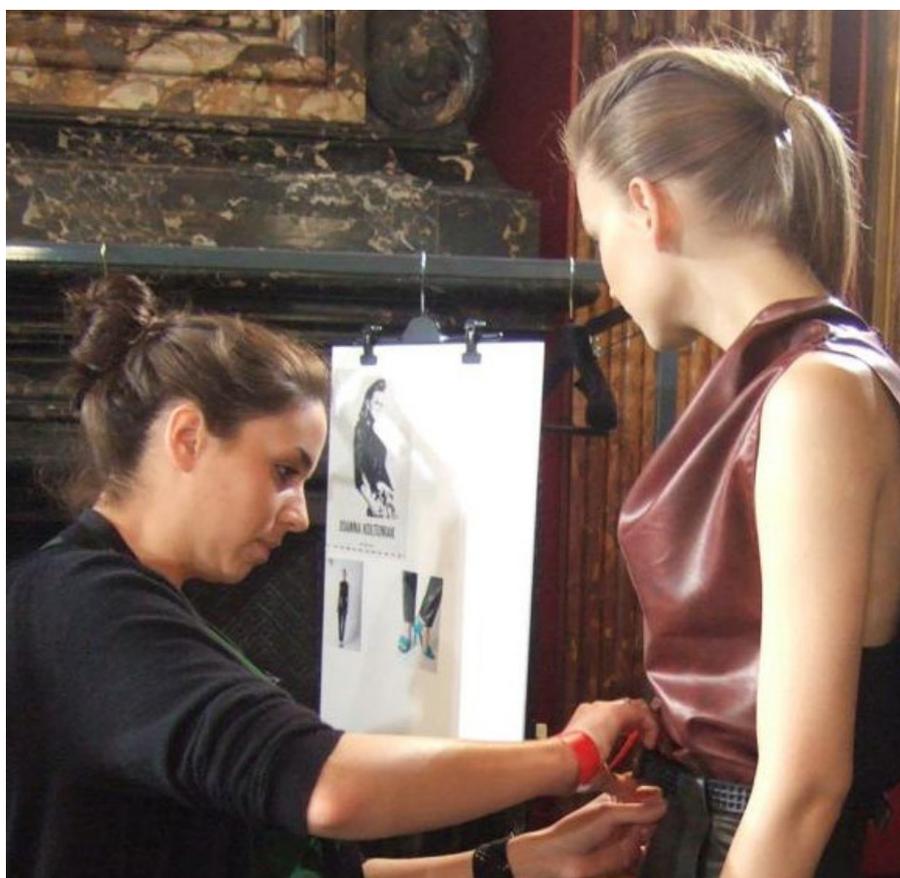


Crafts Council / Education

Craft Journey

Chloe Moore / Senior Product Engineer



Chloe Moore, backstage at Roland Mouret's Paris fashion week, catwalk show. All images courtesy of the artist.

What I do

I am a Senior Product Engineer at Burberry. I am responsible for the tailoring category - for womenswear and menswear. I work mainly on tailoring - suits, jackets, trousers and skirts and work closely with design and product developers. I come in at the sketch launch and liaise with the factory on any technical issues they are facing. When showroom samples are ready, I take over and look at the fit and launch a pre-production sample with the factory. I test the samples on a garment level once the raw materials are tested. I might be concerned with trims getting damaged during cleaning, or the fit or quality of a garment. I work with our factories on a day-to-day basis and advise on what they need to change, to get it ready for the final production.

It's a great role – technically I have learnt so much working for Burberry.



Suit, Siran.

Jobs in the fashion industry

Within Burberry itself we have many different roles. If you look at the journey of a single garment - it starts with the design team, moving onto product developers, product engineers, sourcing and the merchandising team. For the engineering side, it's me! For production there are also roles such as machinists and pattern cutters. Outside of the construction of a garment - we also have roles such as account managers, publicity and of course careers in the stores selling garments or visual merchandising.

Why craft?

I knew I wanted to work in fashion from when I was a little girl.

My grandma and my mum always had a sewing machine. I remember when I was young sitting at my grandma's sewing machine with her - looking at the different settings. I would sit with a scrap of fabric and change the settings and sew different lines. I was interested from the age of five, then maybe used the machine from around eight or nine.

Then it progressed into making little lavender pockets for underwear drawers – my grandma had lavender bushes in her garden, we'd make bags from fabrics scraps and fill them with lavender and add little bows to tie them.

My grandma liked knitting a lot. We had lots of hand knitted jumpers! My mum made us dresses and dungarees. They also did all the wallpapering and carpet laying together at home. Everything around the house they did themselves and I grew up with it.

What I studied at school

I chose GCSE Textiles and Art and Design, as two separate GCSE's, alongside all the core subjects. Instead of A Levels, I went onto North West Kent College to study a BTEC National Diploma in Fashion & Clothing; Womenswear.

I knew from an early age that I wanted to work in fashion, so instead of doing A Levels I went straight to a local college to study fashion and clothing.

What I studied after school

At North Kent College I studied for a BTEC National Diploma in Fashion & Clothing; Womenswear, gaining a triple distinction.

For my BA in Fashion Design; Womenswear, I studied at Northbrook college. It had good emphasis on the workroom environment. While doing my BA I did work experience with Amanda Wakeley, Whistles and Giles.

I did an MA in Fashion Design & Technology; Womenswear at London College of Fashion.



Dresses, Siran.

Including my BTEC, I studied for 7 years in total, however I am a big believer in lifelong learning and I am always developing skills through my work or independently. I learnt so much through my work experience placements and from each role along the way. You get out what you put in! More recently I have trained in interior design and property development.

My career path

Work experience gave me a lot of opportunities. It's important to work hard but make yourself memorable. It's all about networking and being in touch and staying in touch – it's a cycle, if you can help other people, they will help you at some point too. I still have contacts from work experience at 18 and I'm 35 now.

I learnt so much about myself and what area I was most suited to by working in industry. I did a work placement with Roland Mouret and ended up working there for 6 years. Roland was a drapiest, he didn't sketch and I really clicked with his way of working, He got straight on the mannequin and it was my role to put that into work with the pattern cutters and machinists. I found out that I'm more passionate about the product development – I like to elevate the design into a finished product.

Important decisions

When I look back - I think doing a BTEC was a key moment, they were incredible platforms and North West Kent college was a really good college. Doing contextual studies was fantastic. Learning about Cubism, Renaissance and design influences as well as learning about research skills and having your mind opened up to places like the V&A at a young age. At sixteen and seventeen I started going to exhibitions and getting to know London – going to vintage stores and this carried on throughout my BA.

I lost my freelance work at a small luxury brand called Siran, as a result of the pandemic. Although I was in a vulnerable position, being freelance enabled me to learn about other things like interior design and property development. I had previously done some freelance with Burberry – so after the pandemic I reached out to Burberry and got a job in no time at all. Nurturing your contacts in the fashion industry is so important.

Challenges

I found my studies were too focused on design and portfolio when I would have benefitted from learning more industry specific technical skills and more on production and manufacturing. I'm more passionate about taking the design from a designer and working on the development cycle through to production rather than the design itself.

In industry there are a lot of technical skills you need and you are



Dress, Siran.

working with people in different countries - delivering technical information in specific formats. None of this is taught at college and university - but when I got to work in industry, I just slotted into the roles I wanted. I was lucky to find Roland Mouret, by the time I left I was Atelier Manager.

Burnout is very common in fashion. Overtime and weekend working is often required. Big companies do 6-8 collections a year, mid level 2-4 collections a year. The cycles are very intense. There are more conversations now about mental health and wellbeing and the industry is looking at how much they are churning out. Burberry are one of the global leaders in the sustainability conversation for fashion.

My advice to you

Do your research and try and speak to different people in industry as much as you can to find out about jobs in your area of interest. There are a lot of jobs in technical and production roles, as well as design. It's a hidden area within education. At college you are pushed towards pattern cutting, but there are so many important skills to learn, like producing tech packs, lay plans, placement and engineering. Understanding all the roles in industry is so important.

If I was starting again now, I wouldn't necessarily do an MA. I loved my time at London College of Fashion. I wanted to study there from when I was a little girl, so when they invited me to do an MA after seeing my degree show, I jumped at the chance but it was an indulgence and there was more design content than I really needed. I could have progressed in my career without it. I prefer to design by draping on the stand and I only learnt that on the job!

Use platforms like LinkedIn as much as you can to network and to understand developments within the industry.

Craft Careers

Craft generates £3.4 billion for the UK economy each year, with the contribution of the wider creative industries now growing at twice the rate of the UK economy. British craft has never been so sought-after and craft skills are revolutionising industries from aerospace to architecture.

To learn more about craft careers visit:

www.craftscouncil.org.uk/learning/craft-careers



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