

Undergraduate

2026

Programme Guide

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fedisa FASHION
SCHOOL
Member of
HONORIS UNITED UNIVERSITIES

Higher Certificate in Applied
Fashion

HIGHER CERTIFICATE IN APPLIED FASHION

Overview

The Higher Certificate in Applied Fashion at FEDISA is a one-year entry-level programme designed to provide students with a foundational understanding of the fashion industry. It serves as a gateway for candidates who may not have achieved a bachelor's pass in matric or its international equivalent, while also offers qualifying students an opportunity to explore aspects of both the BA: Fashion and BA in Applied Fashion Retail degrees before selecting their academic pathways. Covering essential aspects of both fashion creation and retail, the programme equips students with the necessary skills and knowledge to pursue further studies or entry-level roles in fashion-related fields.

This programme is ideal for individuals with a passion for fashion, creativity, and retail who seek to develop their skills and expand their understanding of the industry. Emphasis is placed on personal and professional development, ensuring that graduates acquire a versatile skill set applicable to various career paths in the fashion industry.

Prospective students who are eager to immerse themselves in the dynamic world of fashion and retail will find this programme an excellent starting point for their journey.

Programme Structure

The Higher Certificate in Applied Fashion programme consists of four major non-elective courses, namely, Fashion Theory, Fashion Design, Fashion Construction and Fashion Business. All components of this programme are accommodated on a weekly rotation. Certain components of this programme may be presented online in conjunction with on-campus studies.

PLEASE NOTE

All courses of the programme are compulsory, and credit bearing as indicated. No electives are offered.

FASHION THEORY

Fashion History & Theory and Fashion Trends & Forecasting.

Develops an understanding of fashion within a historical and cultural context while equipping students with essential research, communication and presentation skills. This course covers key moments in fashion history through a comprehensive timeline, explores the evolution of trends and introduces students to digital fashion communication, including social media platforms like instagram. Emphasis is placed on refining writing skills, mastering the foundations of academic referencing and developing effective presentation techniques to ensure that students can critically engage with fashion discourse and communicate their ideas clearly within industry.

FASHION DESIGN

Fashion Design Principles & Concepts and Fashion Drawing & Illustration.

Develops an understanding of the fundamentals of fashion design, including silhouette and balance, while exploring creative expression through various design techniques. This course introduces students to fashion rendering, encouraging experimentation with mixed-media and template-based sketching to enhance their illustration skills. Additionally, students gain hands-on experience with computer-aided design, learning to create basic mood boards and style/trend boards that translate their creative vision into industry-ready presentations.

FASHION CONSTRUCTION

Textiles & Technology and Pattern Making & Garment Construction.

Develops an understanding of fundamental techniques in fashion construction, from textiles and drapery to pattern drafting and garment construction. This course introduces students to textiles, where they will explore basic fabric manipulation techniques such as tie-dyeing, beading, and re-fabrication. Pattern making covers essential principles such as interpreting patterns and understanding seam allowances. Students are also introduced to the basics of sewing which will provide them with experience with stitching samples and constructing basic garments and building a strong foundation in garment creation.

FASHION BUSINESS

Fashion Marketing & Merchandising and Ethical & Sustainable Practices in Fashion Business.

Develops an understanding of the business side of fashion, covering key aspects of marketing, merchandising, retail management, and ethical industry practices. This course introduces students to creating engaging displays to target various markets, provides insight into the structure of the retail industry and introduces students to a comprehensive foundation in the commercial and ethical considerations in the fashion industry.

All course components are facilitated in the most subject appropriate manner within the academic environment and contextual framework, depending on the specific assignment content. There is a strong focus on structured group sessions, in order to maximise student-centric peer-learning opportunities, as well as several elements of independent knowledge development and online learning.

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) may take various forms including simulated learning, work- directed theoretical learning, problem-based learning and project-based learning, **but does not include workplace-based learning** at Higher Certificate level at FEDISA. However, candidates are encouraged to participate in casual retail work opportunities on their own initiative, wherever possible. This experience will be invaluable to their fuller understanding of the fashion retail industry and may significantly contribute to developing first-hand knowledge and experience in support of the candidate's deeper understanding of the commercial fashion environment.

Mode of Instruction

Students on the Higher Certificate in Applied Fashion at FEDISA engage with their studies in various ways, which may include Theory sessions, Practical sessions, independent studio sessions and online sessions.

Theory sessions are offered as large group contact sessions in the FEDISA auditorium or online, where all students attend simultaneously, and will include such modules as Fashion History & Theory and Fashion Trends & Forecasting.

Practical sessions are conducted in assigned studios, where smaller class groups of students enjoy one-on-one interactions with lecturers in tutorial groups as they develop their knowledge of the practical components of the programme. Modules here will typically include Fashion Drawing & Illustration as well as Pattern Making & Construction.

Studio sessions are designed to allow students to develop their professional practice independently and are considered non-lecturing sessions. While lecturers are available for consultation, students are encouraged to rely on their acquired knowledge and understanding of the subject matter to fulfil all briefed requirements in various modules of the Higher Certificate in Applied Fashion. Studio sessions are also ideally suited to the conducting of independent enquiry, which will be a consistent requirement of studies at FEDISA.

Minimum Duration of Studies

The Higher Certificate in Applied Fashion programme can be completed in one year on a two-semester basis, where each semester includes Fashion Theory, Fashion Design, Fashion Construction and Fashion Retail.

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) does not officially form part of the Higher Certificate in Applied Fashion programme.

Career Opportunities

- Assistant Fashion Merchandiser
- Junior Fashion Journalist
- Media Stylist Assistant
- Assistant Trend Researcher
- Assistant Event Organiser
- Assistant Market Researcher
- Retail Store Salesperson

Method of Assessment

The method of assessment is continuous evaluation, which will include both formative and summative assessment.

Course lecturers will assess all work internally and these evaluations will be moderated by an internal staff panel at the completion of each term, and by an independent/external subject specialist, at the completion of the final semester.

A FEDISA pass is a moderated 50% or above, whilst a FEDISA distinction is 75%, which again is a moderated mark.

An academic transcript is issued following each semester, in June and December.

A student will not be permitted to graduate without a 50% aggregate being obtained for all courses of the Higher Certificate in Applied Fashion.

ADMISSIONS

Prospective students are urged to apply as early as possible, to enable them to attend an evaluation and selection session.

Closing Dates for Application

The closing date for preliminary applications is 30th November each year.

Should you have missed this closing date, local applications will be considered until 15 January of the respective year for which you wish to enrol, provided that there are still seats available. A late application fee will be payable. Please refer to the Fees Schedule attached.

The result of the application will be communicated to you once the selection committee has made their decision.

Minimum Requirements

In order for applicants to be considered for the Higher Certificate in Applied Fashion prospective students must comply with certain minimum requirements.

Minimum Academic Requirements

- National Senior Certificate, National Certificate Vocational or international equivalent, with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement.
- Recognition of Prior Learning

Language Requirements

- Applicants must pass English at the High School level as a prerequisite for applications with English being one of South Africa's official languages.
- English will be the primary medium of tuition at FEDISA and students cannot be guaranteed that instruction will necessarily be in their language of choice.

Applicants should further note that the above admission requirements are the minimum requirements only. Admission to all programmes is subject to selection procedures and meeting the minimum admission requirements will not necessarily ensure admission to a programme.

Admission to all programmes is subject to an entrance evaluation and a rigorous selection process.

Basic Computer Literacy Requirements

All Students must demonstrate basic computer literacy skills. This includes proficiency in:

- Using a computer and navigating different operating systems such as Windows and/or Apple OS,
- Managing files and folders efficiently,
- Sending, receiving and organising emails,
- Using basic software applications such as Microsoft Office Suite, ie MS Word, MS Excel or the Google Equivalent.

These skills are essential for engaging with the academic course work, accessing learning material and effectively participating in the online learning platforms.

Required Secondary School Subjects

No specific subjects are required at secondary school level for admission to FEDISA.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application Procedure

Please complete the online application form via the link on the website **www.fedisa.co.za** or the link received in the main body of the email.

Completed application forms, together with the following documentation, must be submitted to the Admission Office via the online application portal:

- Certified copy of ID Document/Passport
- Certified copy of most recent exam results
- One (X1) black and white ID photo
- Application fee or proof of payment thereof

FEDISA will in turn acknowledge receipt of applications. Incomplete application forms will not be processed.

Please note that such an acknowledgment in no way implies that the applicant has been accepted to study at FEDISA.

International applicants should apply by no later than 30 November each year in order to facilitate study visa applications.

Entrance Evaluation

Entrance evaluation sessions are scheduled by appointment. All students who live within 150km of Cape Town are required to attend an entrance evaluation session.

Applicants will receive confirmation of the date of their evaluation session or submission of portfolio, after his/her application has been received and the relevant application fees have been paid.

Requirements for Portfolio Submissions

Portfolio submission is only applicable to applicants who live further than 150km from Cape Town or who are residing outside of South Africa at the time of making application to FEDISA.

Applicants, residing within South Africa, are required to prepare portfolios within the prescribed format and mail these together with their application, should they not be unable to attend the entrance evaluation in person.

Foreign applicants or South African residents living abroad will be allowed to submit electronic copies of their portfolios, provided that these can be substantiated with the original if so required at a later stage.

Applicants are required to submit the following as part of the portfolio:

1) Personal Motivational Letter (1 Page)

- What inspired you to apply for this programme?
- Which specific subjects are you excited about, and why?
- What skills, experience, or qualities make you a strong candidate for this programme?
- How will they contribute to your success?
- What are your future ambitions related to this programme?
- What do you hope to achieve after completing it?

2) Written Submission

- In your own words, write an essay explaining how fashion influences your daily life. Discuss how your clothing choices reflect your personality culture and lifestyle. Consider what influences your style, such as trends, social media, or personal experiences.
- The essay should not exceed **500 words**

3) Concept Poster

Create an **A3 concept poster** that represents your:

- Vision for the future of fashion.
- Include ideas like sustainability, digital fashion or trends that inspire you.
- Include a short explanation (**50-100 words**) on the back of the poster, describing your • concept and why it matters to you.

Note:

Ensure the submission is professional and visually appealing. Any work supported or generated by AI will be automatically considered unsuccessful and declined.

Interview:

Shortlisted applicants may be invited to an interview (in-person or online for international applicants).

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