HSBC-AUW School of Apparel
Leading the Future of Fashion
Academic Excellence | Industry Relevance | Social Significance

MASTER OF SCIENCE
APPAREL AND RETAIL MANAGEMENT

ASIAN UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN
20/A M. M. ALI ROAD
CHATTOSTORAM 4000, BANGLADESH
Background

According to the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) data, Bangladesh earned $35.81 billion in 2021, reestablishing its position as the world’s second largest apparel exporter. The Ready Made Garments (RMG) sector in Bangladesh accounts for more than 80% of the country’s total export revenue with 4M+ workers, of which more than 65% are women, most of whom work on the shop floor. There is a need for partnerships between education and business with rigorous academic and institutionalized training that nurtures professional development, and elevates local talent, specifically women, to take over managerial roles. This School intends to create an avenue for women to become industry leaders with the highest levels of skills to make decisions and implement policies that will have a lasting and positive impact for the future of the community, the environment and the RMG sector.

HSBC

HSBC has a longstanding commitment to supporting the communities in which it operates and a significant portion of HSBC’s work is directed towards helping people develop the employability skills they need to thrive. Through an initiative called ‘Future Skills’, HSBC provides 21st century skills to the community. The HSBC-AUW School of Apparel aims to address current gaps in developing management resources in partnership with international universities and also to drive women leadership for the apparel sector. The HSBC-AUW management education program will be tailored for Apparel industry leadership roles, incorporating aspects of Environment, Social and Governance (ESG). HSBC will support the program through providing initial setup support for the School of Apparel, HSBC Scholarships to AUW graduates, engagement with apparel industry stakeholders to drive thought leadership, and instituting an Advisory Board with key stakeholders from the industry.

Asian University for Women

The Asian University for Women (referred to as ‘AUW’) is an independent, international university based in Bangladesh. AUW is dedicated to excellence in women’s education and leadership development through both a technical and humanistic liberal arts and sciences curriculum. It was conceived in 2000 following the publication of “Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise” by The World Bank/UN Task Force on Higher Education and Society, and it was later established through the Asian University for Women Act, 2006, when the Parliament of Bangladesh ratified the Charter of the Asian University for Women. AUW seeks to graduate women who are skilled and innovative professionals, service-oriented leaders in the businesses and communities in which they serve, and promoters of intercultural understanding and sustainable human and economic development in Asia and throughout the world. AUW currently has over 1300 students from 20 countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Palestine, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Syria and Vietnam), who are mostly first generation learners from diverse socio-economic backgrounds.
“Bangladesh has achieved remarkable economic and social progress in the past few decades. A major pillar of the economic growth story has been the Apparel industry and Bangladesh has now become a reckoning force in the global supply chain. This industry historically had a multiplier effect on uplifting our society through employment generation, women empowerment and poverty alleviation. The apparel sector contributes more than 80% of the country’s export and is now even more crucial from a macro economic perspective.

What brought us here will not take us where we want to be. This industry remains dynamic owing to changing consumption patterns and evolving global trends for sustainability, thus, the necessity to future-proof the sector by equipping the next-gen with the technology, knowledge and a global mindset.

At HSBC, Female empowerment and Future Skills are two of the pillars that our corporate sustainability agenda is built on, the HSBC-AUW School of Apparel is a natural alignment for us. We are proud to be associated with AUW with a vision to co-create a learning environment in collaboration between industry and academia of international standard with an aim to deliver professionals in leading the future of fashion. I am certain the School will play a pivotal role in imparting world class education aiming to build the future leaders in an industry where we have a competitive advantage in leading the future of fashion.”

- Md Mahbub ur Rahman, CEO, HSBC Bangladesh

“With Bangladesh’s readymade garment export market touching $40 billion a year, and with the export economy being 80% dependent on this particular industry, it’s time we engage with creating a group of young women ready to take charge of what lies ahead.

While empowerment of women continues to remain as a central focus for us in Bangladesh, real empowerment is yet to happen. Women in readymade garment sector have not been able to graduate beyond the sewing machines or at the maximum, supervisory position. This is a regular phenomenon at a time when the top positions are either being occupied by mostly men or by expats, who are mostly men.

Today, the Apparel industry in Bangladesh needs a homegrown talent pool, which will service the needs of the sector.

Therefore, in order to prepare cohorts ready to take on the challenge of employability in Bangladesh, Asian University for Women is happy to launch the Master’s program on Apparel and Retail Management in collaboration with HSBC Bangladesh, complete with required courses on industry specific areas.”

- Dr Rubana Huq, Vice Chancellor, Asian University for Women
The MS in Apparel and Retail Management program seeks to create a pool of expertly trained women from Bangladesh who will go on to manage local businesses. The program will build executive talent and enable enduring skill formation within the country while contributing towards the social goals of sustainability and women empowerment. Academic Excellence, Industry Relevance and Social Significance will be the defining features of the program and success will be measured in terms of number and quality of applicants, renowned faculty and curriculum, and full time graduate placements in leading RMG organizations.

The Program is designed and delivered in association with leading international Universities and Institutions renowned in the area of Fashion Management and Apparel Manufacturing education. Although RMG companies, including manufacturers, vendors, and global retailers, would be prospective recruiters of graduates, the knowledge and skills acquired would be transferable too other industries.

AUW’s mandate of women empowerment and leadership development through tertiary education has successfully provided a path for women from underserved communities to break cycles of adversity and oppression. Visionary in its approach to recruitment, the university specifically seeks out talented women often overlooked by society, including from refugee contexts, conflict zones, and from the factory floors in Bangladesh. In order to accommodate their educational and individual needs, AUW created a two-year pre-undergraduate program to prepare students to pass college-level requirements before moving on to the undergraduate program, giving special attention to mental health support, and English language instruction. Students enter into the pre-university or undergraduate program based on the results of the entrance exam.

The MS in Apparel and Retail Management becomes a logical progression for undergraduate students to be RMG sector ready in leadership positions, where they will have access to ample opportunities for growth, building financial independence, and where they can make decisions for the long-term development of both the business and local community.
The MS in Apparel and Retail Management program will be offered to AUW students who have completed their three-year undergraduate degree. Students will be selected based on their cumulative GPA and faculty recommendations. Successful applicants will then be interviewed by a selection committee to identify their managerial potential and interest in the apparel sector.

The one-year program will be delivered through on-campus and online teaching, with the majority of classes delivered in-person. The structure will consist of ten months academic instruction, a two month internship in an RMG company and completion of a capstone project. The students will return to campus at the end of the internship to present their experiences and share their learnings. All students will undergo a two-week industry immersion before starting the program.

The program will have 13 core courses covering functional areas of management, apparel, design, apparel manufacturing, retailing and merchandising, and 12 intensive modules covering a range of management concepts, skills and tools. These courses are carefully curated to impart relevant state-of-the-art knowledge and skills. Academic learning will be supplemented through periodic guest lectures from leaders in both industry and academia. All students will be awarded an MS in Apparel and Retail Management degree on successful completion of the program.

Through curated courses, the young professionals will develop technological know-how, superior communication skills and contemporary knowledge needed for Apparel and Retail Management, enabling them to directly enter the RMG industry in middle and senior leadership roles. The ideal outcome would be for local companies to hire the students upon graduation. For the employing companies, these graduates offer a sustainable solution to their people and talent needs at managerial levels and minimize costs and lead times involved in hiring overseas executives. Each graduate will also have a mentor who will formally review their performance, for a period of time. The program will be refined and adjusted in partnership with feedback from the RMG companies.

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Program Outcomes

The program will have 13 core courses covering functional areas of management, apparel, design, apparel manufacturing, retailing and merchandising, and 12 intensive modules covering a range of management concepts, skills and tools. These courses are carefully curated to impart relevant state-of-the-art knowledge and skills. Academic learning will be supplemented through periodic guest lectures from leaders in both industry and academia. All students will be awarded an MS in Apparel and Retail Management degree on successful completion of the program.
## Courses & Modules

### Core Courses

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<td>Marketing Management &amp; Marketing Research</td>
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<td>Advertising &amp; Brand Management</td>
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### Intensive Modules

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Business Communication &amp; Negotiation Skills</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Comparative Labor Rights and Occupational Health &amp; Safety</td>
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<td>Project Management</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Master Class in Marketing</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Business Ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Strategic Thinking</td>
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<td>Export-Import Documentation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Business Plan Writing</td>
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Course Descriptions: Core Courses

Marketing Management & Marketing Research
This course covers planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services. Topics include identifying and measuring consumers' needs and desires, assessing the competition, conducting research, selecting the most appropriate customer targets and developing a strategy and delivery that satisfies consumers' needs better than competing retailers. The course also dissects the marketing research process including problem formulation, research design, primary data collection, information and measurement scales, and evaluation and utilization of secondary data. Students will explore data collection and analysis techniques of marketing research such as structured and unstructured interviews, focus groups, exploratory research, causal research, sampling, survey design, qualitative versus quantitative data analyses, and interpretation.

Financial Accounting & Managerial Accounting
Financial Accounting covers business bookkeeping and the recording of detailed business transactions including IFRS and US GAAP accounting concepts and procedures. Topics include debits and credits, the accounting cycle, the control of cash, payroll, sales, purchases, balance sheets, income statements, statement of cash flows, and financial statements. Managerial Accounting develops an introductory understanding of accounting information for use by management in planning and controlling operations. Students will understand frameworks for measuring managerial performance in terms of cost behavior using tools such as job costing, process costing, activity based costing, variable costing, cost estimation, cost volume profit analysis, budgeting, standard costing, differential costing, and capital budgeting. The course highlights use of costs in decision making contexts.

Financial Management
This unit covers the corporate finance concepts and applications starting with a brief introduction to the financial environment in which firms raise capital, a review of time value of money concepts, and basic stock and bond valuation models. It then deepens the focus on decisions related to capital budgeting, measurement of risk and return, the cost of capital, dividend policy, and capital structure. The course also briefly introduces mergers & acquisitions, derivatives and risk management, and introduces students to the analysis of financial statements not covered under the Financial Accounting course.

Apparel Manufacturing Technology
This course is an overview of the textile and garment industries and their relationships. Topics will include backward and forward linkages tailoring and industrial systems of garment making, general working of a garment industry, tech parks, samples, patterns, markers, spreading, cutting, sewing, finishing, value adding process, departments in woven, cut and sew knit and fully fashioned knit garment factories. Students will also learn the activities and structures of stores including product design, merchandising, research and product development and quality control.
Textile Science

This course teaches students about varieties of fibers, both natural and human-made, and covers their basic characteristics, their importance with regards to product development and environment, the end applications or outcomes, the fundamental concepts of polymerization techniques and production. The course further details the mechanisms of yarn formation starting from fiber opening-cleaning through individualization, parallelization, combing, spinning to final yarn packaging, comparing the characteristics of yarns produced by different spinning systems, the concepts and principles of various techniques of fabric formation, and the technical distinctions among fabrics manufactured through various techniques.

Industrial Engineering

In this unit students will learn basic industrial engineering concepts including systems optimization, variability in systems, and production systems. The course includes understanding the tools needed to plan, design, install, and adapt to an integrated system of people, machines and materials for the purpose of maximizing operational efficiency. Topics include method study, work measurement, ergonomics, process optimization and process improvement.

Operations Management

This course covers the theories, principles, problems, and practices of operations management in the Apparel industry. Students will understand the managerial processes needed for effective operations in apparel production organizations including operations strategy, process design, capacity planning, facilities location and design, forecasting, production scheduling, inventory control and quality assurance, integrated using a systems model of the operations of an apparel production organization.

Advertising & Brand Management

In this course, students will learn strategies for driving profitable and memorable brands and how brand equity can influence a company’s ability to withstand competitive pressures and thrive in dynamic market conditions. Brand management is studied from the consumer perspective to highlight the importance of customer perceptions in bringing brands to life and the role of brand knowledge in building brand equity. The course covers frameworks, theories and tools that have been adopted across industries and around the globe to build lucrative brand franchises. The course also includes the role of marketing communication vehicles and platforms in effective brand management. The Advertising part of the course includes topics on the principles and practices of advertising that emphasize creative/media strategy and historical, social, and economic influences.
Merchandising
In this course, students will learn how to plan and organize retail buying (timing, product details and quantity) by considering factors such as pricing, developing resources and inventory, promotional planning and controls, and supervision of sales and supporting staff.

Fashion Product Development
This course covers product development in the fashion industry from concept to consumer, introducing fashion research, research inputs to design, fashion trends and cycles, consumer behavior, social, political, and economic influences on fashion trends.

Supply Chain Management
This course focuses on the unique structure of the fashion supply chain, from raw materials to the various retail venues. Students will understand the movement of products, utilizing business resources, the flow of information, and the deployment of services in the fashion value chain - creation and management of innovative flow systems spanning procurement, operations, transportation and distribution. The topics covered include an overview of the business processes, value-creating activities, and best practices for a supply chain--from forecasting and demand management to sourcing and procurement to sales and operations planning, and logistics.

Sustainability Management
This course covers the historical, social, and environmental aspects of the global fashion industry and the current tools and methodologies available to improve it. It enables understanding the connection between sustainable development and the apparel industry; helping students to think critically about both the common and less discussed aspects, including consumption, durability, and sustainable design; appreciate the complexities of the economic impacts of externalities both positive and negative on the industry; and explore the tools available to monitor and measure the social and environmental impact.

Retailing
This course covers retail mix, types of retailers, multichannel retailing, consumer buying behaviour, retail marketing strategies, selecting retail site locations, supply chain management, merchandising, pricing, store management, store layout & design and customer service.
Textile Humanities

This module traces the historical development of Textiles and consequent political, social and economic transformations across the world, through a survey of literary and historical texts.

Data Analysis with Excel

This module develops a basic and advanced understanding of MS Excel. Students will learn conditional formatting, sorting and filtering techniques, creating custom lists, what-if analysis (scenario manager, sensitivity analysis using goal seek and data tables, solver, Monte Carlo Simulation), and data cleaning techniques. It will also enable students to carry out necessary functions such as search and reference, logical, database, date and time, information, math and trigonometry, statistical and text based functions. After completion, participants will be able to analyze and present data using the most effective formulae, tables and charts.

Project Management

In this module, students will be introduced to the primary processes of project management through key phases of initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and closing; as well as knowledge areas including project integration, scope, time, cost, quality, human resource management, communications and risk management. The course will also introduce MS Project as a tool for project set-up and monitoring.

Business Communication & Negotiation Skills

This first part of this module helps students understand the core concepts for effective communication, it will be highly interactive and will equip participants with the practical skills required for engaging with individuals and in group settings. Students will also recognize the impact of external factors, such as emerging technologies within an increasingly digital world. On completion of this module, participants will be able to identify strengths and limitations in their natural style of communication; recognize communication preferences of others and accurately interpret their meanings; diagnose key sources of misunderstanding and know how to overcome them; flex one's personality and communication style to positively influence others; understand characteristics of a target audience and know how to pivot one's communication to deliver an impactful message, and recognize how communication technologies can impact business strategy and performance.

The second part of the module puts students in simulated business situations to practice effective negotiation exercises. Topics include distributive bargaining (split the pie), mixed motive bargaining (several issues at stake) with two and with more than two parties, auctions and fair division. Students will learn relevant tools to achieve negotiation objectives in a fair and responsible manner.
Master Class in Marketing

This module will provide practical insights, tools and the latest techniques to navigate changes and challenges of contemporary marketing through engaging with real world scenarios. The module includes an overview on developing winning marketing strategies and approaches for building a path for profitable and sustainable growth.

Business Ethics

This module studies ethical problems and foundations for business, managerial and employee conduct. Students will explore normative ethics and their application in the context of business organizations as they conduct their activities in the context of society, environment, customers, employees and all other stakeholders. The world of business with profit maximizing imperative appears at odds with individual morality, societal goals and environmental considerations, business owners, managers and employees encounter the ethical question of ‘what is the right thing to do’ in the everyday life of a business organization. As members of society, as consumers and as concerned inhabitants of planet earth everyone is impacted by the decisions made by business organizations. Hence, an appreciation of ethics in the context of business becomes essential for informed understanding and evaluation of such impacts.

Fashion Culture

Fashion culture explores the apparel industry from a big picture perspective. Each garment has a source of inspiration and there are multiple players involved as it travels from cradle-to-grave, but who are the key stakeholder groups at each of these stages? What are their interests? How do they interact with each other? What are the similarities and differences in these stakeholder groups across the 3 tiers of luxury, fast fashion and e-commerce? As students embark on this course, they will engage in a range of interactive and engaging group assignments to tackle these questions from an applied perspective.

Comparative Labor Rights & Occupational Health and Safety

The module provides an overview of labor and employment law in several countries representing different approaches to the fundamental social and legal aspect of protecting workers’ rights and regulating the relationship between workers and management. Labor and employment laws are rooted in history, political economies, sociocultural and legal systems, students will develop an understanding of the fundamental labor and management challenges confronting contemporary industrial and industrializing societies. The module includes laws pertaining to individual and collective contracts, wages and benefits, working hours and leave entitlements, protection from discrimination and unfair dismissal, the right to organize, bargain collectively, and seek redress of grievances, in a comparative framework. This unit also provides an overview of occupational health, safety and environmental systems in workplace settings for the prevention of injuries and illnesses, as well as the protection and improvement of worker’s health.
Introduction to CAD

The module covers the basics of apparel design using CAD software, it is intended to familiarize students with the commands and functions of CAD for designing apparel using a variety of fabrics.

Strategic Thinking

This module uses an integrated approach for establishing and managing whole business enterprises through strategic thinking – considering relevant factors, making decisions, creating new businesses and positioning existing businesses. The course covers industry analysis, analyzing resources and capabilities, risk analysis and management, complex decision-making and functional strategy making.

Export-Import Documentation

This module enables students to understand the definitions and classifications of exports and imports, documentation, procedures, and policy and institutional frameworks.

Business Plan Writing

In this module, students will be guided through the process of establishing a new venture from idea generation through careful business planning, acquiring funding and business startup. The topics include preparing a business model canvas, product strategy, brand strategy, market analysis, competitive analysis, management plan, marketing and sales plan, financial plan, operating plan including detailed statements and computations.

Capstone Project in an RMG Company

The Capstone Project provides students with a hands-on opportunity to apply the theories, concepts and tools learned in university in a real-life business situation. The School of Apparel will partner with local RMG companies to provide work experience opportunities where students will be assigned a specific business problem to solve for their Capstone Project. The output of the internship, the Capstone Project Report, will be the culmination of the one year MS program; it will validate learning, provide solutions to real world challenges and improve the students career prospects by showcasing their capabilities to the potential future employers.
A Program Advisory Board composed of leading academics and apparel industry professionals will provide strategic direction and guidance on program design, curriculum, faculty, learning infrastructure, research program, industry engagement and areas for improvement.

An Academic Advisory Committee chaired by Dr. Dipak C Jain, former Dean of Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University, former Dean of INSEAD and current Co-Director of the Social Security and Ageing Finance Institute and Professor of Marketing at China Europe International Business School (CEIBS), will oversee the program design and development. The Academic Advisory Committee will also include Kamal Ahmad, Founder of AUW, Dr. Rubana Huq, Vice Chancellor of AUW and Professor John Storm, Director EMBA, University of Aberdeen.

Dr. Dipak C Jain
Mr. Kamal Ahmad
Dr. Rubana Huq
Professor John Storm

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