



Kirsteen Stewart Graduate Programme

Photoshoot, images courtesy of Verity Davis & Kirsteen Stewart

Kirsteen Stewart is a ready to wear clothing and accessories designer living and working in Orkney, Scotland. After studying fashion and print design at the University of Northumbria and gaining industry experience at fashion houses in New York, Kirsteen established her eponymous fashion brand from her hometown of Kirkwall, Scotland. Kirsteen is a ScotEdge award recipient, and her collections are showcased and sold internationally as far afield as Japan.

“new ideas & fresh blood...the connections the graduates bring to the business are very useful”

When **Adopt an Intern** contacted Kirsteen to ask her to consider a graduate placement, Kirsteen agreed as she was very keen to employ graduates locally on Orkney. An advert was prepared in conjunction with Adopt an Intern and 4 applicants were interviewed by telephone. Two applicants particularly impressed Kirsteen, each had different sets of skills but Kirsteen felt they would both be significant assets to her business. Verity Davis was employed in a marketing position through Adopt an Intern and Ingrid Garrioch was employed in a design and development role through the **Scotgrad** programme with funding from Highlands & Islands Enterprise.

Describing the benefits her company has reaped through employing graduates, Kirsteen explains *‘through being open to their thoughts and suggestions the graduates have developed great ideas in terms of social media, design & marketing. They are also very good at using their networks to develop contacts and opportunities for the business.’*

“a really unique experience, totally different to what I thought I would do”

Verity Davis graduated with an honours degree in Graphic Design from Edinburgh College of Art and sought internships with design companies to gain experience and enhance her curriculum vitae. Despite not having a fashion degree, Verity had worked on fashion orientated projects in ECA and was delighted to be selected to undertake a paid 4 month internship at Kirsteen Stewart on Orkney. Her main areas of responsibility were graphic design, web design and marketing for the fashion label.

“Working in a small close-knit team you learn to communicate your ideas very clearly.”

Among other achievements attained during her internship Verity developed catalogues and look books, a social media marketing programme, product packaging and line sheets for wholesale customers. At the end of the internship Verity accompanied Kirsteen on an **Emergents Go & See** learning journey to Paris.

Contact Sally Maidment, Education Engagement Coordinator, stsp@glasgowclyde.ac.uk to discover how your company could benefit from graduate placement programmes.

Verity now works remotely for the company from Sweden on a part-time basis, alongside managing her own graphic design & art direction company. Describing her experiences Verity says *'Adopt an Intern gives fantastic opportunities to Scottish graduates – I recommend doing something outside of your niche area, broaden your horizons, it worked for me. Living and working on Orkney was such a new experience, I had never been higher than Aberdeen, it brought a lot of opportunity, there is so much going on and the community and other businesses are so supportive'*.

"I got lots of hands on experience, at one of the busiest times of the year."

Ingrid Garrioch, a native of Orkney, graduated with a BA Hons in Fashion & Textiles from Gray's School of Art in Aberdeen and went on to complete a Masters in Fashion & Textiles at the Glasgow School of Art. Ingrid worked in design and sales at Linton Tweed in Carlisle for a year and a half before deciding to explore other opportunities and applied for the Scotgrad Graduate Placement with Kirsteen. The 6 month paid placement brought Ingrid back to Orkney to prepare Christmas orders, research other suppliers, design additions to the accessory range and identify buyers, bloggers and press contacts who could help the Kirsteen Stewart label secure new stockists. She is now a full time employee.

"The event was well organised and went very well for the company, I felt very proud at being trusted."

During her placement Ingrid gained a wealth of experience in everything from visual merchandising and organising trade events to helping to develop new products. Working as part of a small team Ingrid learned to prioritise tasks, be decisive, and gained the confidence and judgement to work efficiently in varied situations. Ingrid comments *'I think placements are a brilliant idea, it really opens your eyes to what the industry is like, and you learn to take more responsibility for yourself. Although I am from Orkney, I made a lot of new friends and am more involved with the creative community here and have industry contacts across the world. It is very inspirational working with Kirsteen, she didn't see a distinction between what she wanted to do and where she wanted to be.'*

www.kirsteenstewart.com www.veritydavis.com