

**Hollings Faculty**  
**Department of Clothing Design and Technology**

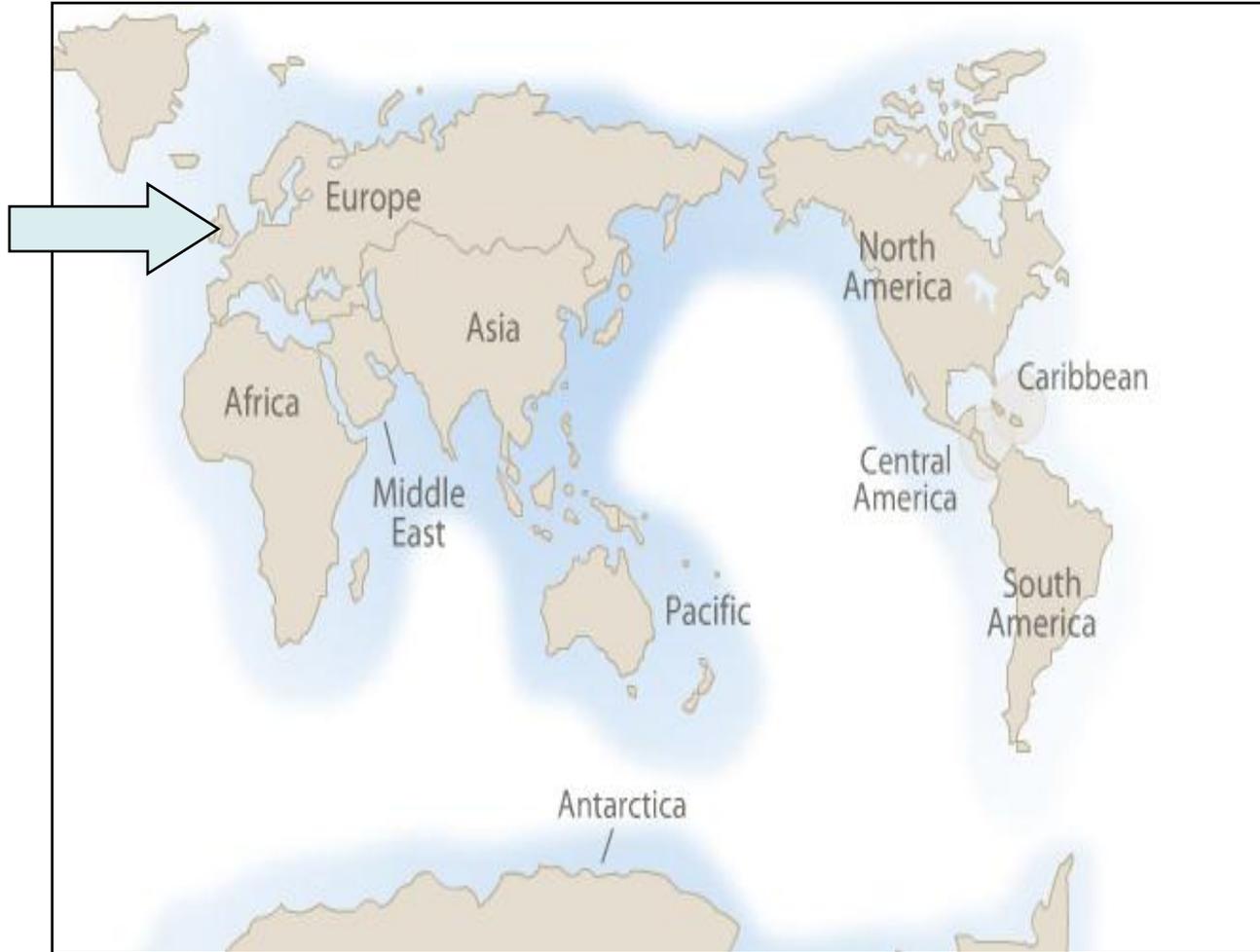


Jane Ledbury & Ron Milam

**Collaborative Product Development  
for Survival**  
Industry and academia working together

# Our Location

Manchester



## Hollings Faculty



We offer one of the most comprehensive collections of apparel related programmes in the UK

Many of our 1600 + students are from the UK, but we are proud of the attraction our courses have for International students



## Hollings Faculty

### The Department of Clothing Design and Technology

- Has over 60 specialist full-time academic staff and a number of subject specific Associates
- Many staff members are research active and regularly publish in professional and academic journals
- A number of major book titles have come from the Department recently
- We have excellent links with companies and other universities worldwide

## Department of Clothing Design and Technology



- The Department of Clothing Design and Technology currently provides five undergraduate programmes and three masters programmes in the areas of fashion and clothing technology as well as research degrees at PhD level

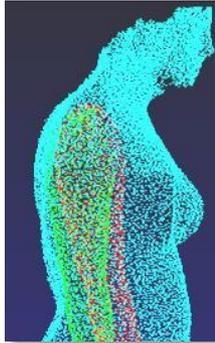
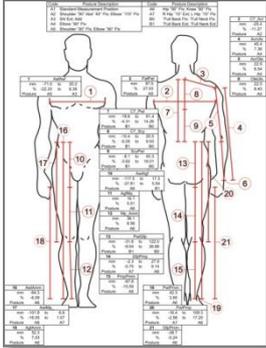
## Academic Enterprise

The Department has a long established reputation and many years association with clothing companies both in the UK and internationally



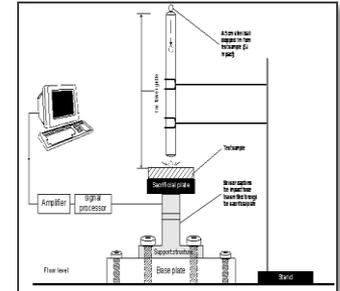
In addition to full-time undergraduate and postgraduate programmes our strong links to industry allow us to provide student placements in industry globally and to offer a broad range of short courses, consultancy and industry based research opportunities

# Key Research Areas



- Anthropometrics: Functional requirements of garments related to body surface change

- Impact Protection of Sportswear and Protective Workwear



- Sustainable organic clothing using natural fibres with specific focus on product serviceability

## The Leitch Review

The Leitch Review – a roadmap directing the UK towards world class skills by 2020 recommendations include:

- Encourage employer/university collaboration
- Strengthened employer voice – demand led system
- Relevant qualifications structure
- Sector specific, not geographic

Result...productivity rise (15%) employment rise (10%)  
with overall benefit of around £80 billion within 30 years

## The Lambert Report (2003, 2004, 2006)

- ‘To celebrate the success of those businesses which are already collaborating successfully with university research departments, to their benefit and to the benefit of the economy more broadly. They are role models for the majority of companies which at present have no links with universities’. (Lambert Report, 2003)
- The Department of Clothing Design and Technology had a strength in the area of functionality and performance clothing
  - RFD Beaufort perceived an opportunity to utilise the innovative ideas of the department’s students
  - Collaboration between RFD Beaufort and the Manchester Metropolitan University evidences the success and potential of business-university collaboration

## Collaboration Between RFD Beaufort & MMU

- MMU student placed at RFD Beaufort in 2009
- Departmental Showcase Day in May 2010
- Award-winning development
- RFD Beaufort recognised potential in MMU Masters Students
- Opportunity for collaboration





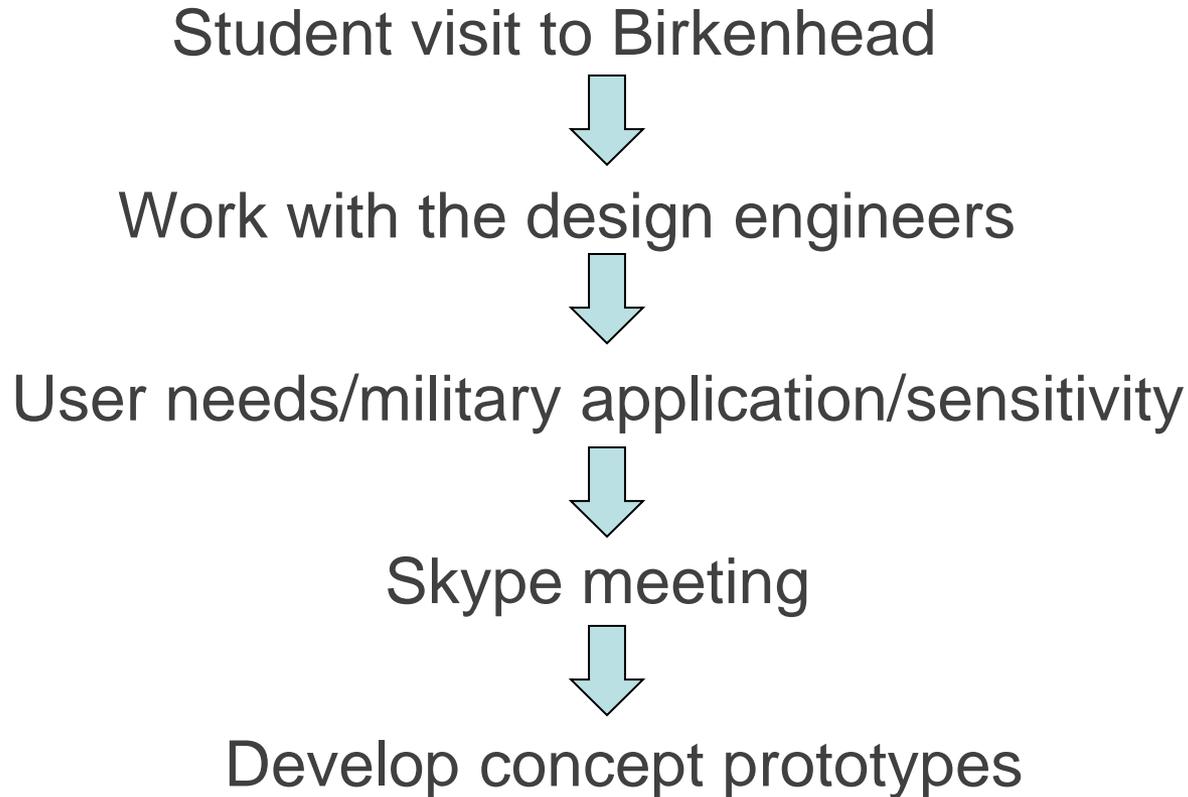
## Synergies – Working Together

- Ways in which the Department of Clothing Design and Technology and RFD Beaufort could work together were explored
- MSc students undertaking the Advanced Product Development (APD) unit focus on functionality and performance
- Consequently, we have a commonality: **seeking solutions to clothing problems**
- It was established that the APD unit would become the vehicle for collaboration
- RFD Beaufort generously offered an award for the best student project

## Seeking Solutions

- Seeking a solution to a clothing problem, Chief Designer, Paul Oliver provided an area for investigation
- The APD team applied this to a clothing product development project
- Paul Oliver provided a design and development brief
- Ron and Paul delivered a guest lecture on RFD Beaufort's specialist survival aviation products...the ultimate challenge!
- The students were captivated by the lecture and inspired by the products

# Project 1 Timeline: January –April, 2011



# Collaborative Projects: Challenges and Pitfalls

## Challenges:

- University restrictions
- Ambitious brief
- Time constraints
- Double submission

## Pitfalls:

- Expectations
- Confidentiality
- IP

# Collaborative Projects: Benefits

## Benefits to Academia:

- Industry based mentorship
- Professional feedback from industry perspective
- Increased awareness of design conflicts & constraints
- Enhanced problem solving skills
- Insight into industry



# Collaborative Projects: Benefits

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## Benefits to Industry:

- Research and Development
- Students/researchers are not bound by meeting industry outcomes and generating profit
- Lateral approaches to problem solving can be employed
- Collaboration provides a platform for recruitment into a niche industry, which requires a unique skills set

## Collaborative Projects: Spin-offs

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### Spin-offs:

- Further collaboration generated from original project
- The second collaborative project has just been completed
- The placement scheme is its fourth year and has been mutually successful
- Bespoke professional development short courses for RFD Beaufort staff provided by the university
- Employment, alumni from MMU is now employed at RFD Beaufort in Birkenhead

## Collaborative Projects: Synergy

Collaboration between the Department of Clothing Design and Technology and RFD Beaufort in the form of action research offers an opportunity to improve product design whilst enhancing the student experience...a truly symbiotic relationship!



# Everyone Wins!

