



Industry praise for University store showcasing original work

Industry experts, fashion bloggers and local businesses put their seal of approval on Southampton Solent University's award-winning Re:So store - which has relocated to a larger, permanent space in the city's Marlands shopping centre.

British Fashion entrepreneur, Barry Laden MBE, came down from London to officially open the new store. A keen supporter of independent designers and passionate about bringing manufacturing back to the Britain, Barry is impressed with Re:So and its ethos of showcasing locally sourced collections made in the UK.

He said, "With so many fashion courses across our universities, it's totally refreshing to see Southampton Solent providing practical commercial experience which will directly benefit them in the real world beyond University."

"This is a rare, excellent provision for students which places Southampton Solent's School of Fashion at the top of its field," he added.

Launched in 2012, Re:So was the first fully student-operated retail initiative in a UK shopping centre. For those bored with the high street, it has been selling a unique mix of fashion, accessories, publications, furniture and art produced by the University's creative students and graduates.

To capitalise on its success and to help promote smaller local companies, the new store will now also be giving new, online and pop up brands a platform from which to showcase their designs.

Lisa Mann, Principal Lecturer from the University's School of Fashion says: "Over the last couple of years Re:So has been giving students the opportunity to explore the commercial side of their creativity and sell their original work. Our expansion means that we can now offer new opportunities to creative individuals looking for a shop window to showcase their designs."

A new 'industrial chic design concept provides a clean theme running all through the retail area and into the creative learning zone on the upper floor of the new store upstairs The Marlands, above Starbucks.

The upper floor 'learning zone' will host guest speakers, workshops, photo-shoots and exhibitions, with an emphasis on developing student retail, enterprise and employability skills.

Gemma Aspland, a Fashion Promotion graduate will have the chance to display some of the products she sells at her store on the Isle of Wight. She said: "I'm really excited to showcase my brand in Southampton. It's an amazing opportunity for the students of Solent University to be able to gain experience in a very difficult industry and for graduates to expose their brands to a wider audience."

Shoppers wanting to buy something truly individual will be able to get their first glimpse of the store and the all-new stock when it opens its doors on Saturday 18 October. To celebrate its grand re-launch there will be live DJs, art and photography, a free giveaway, special guests, and pop-up brands in store.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT THE MEDIA OFFICE ON 023 8201 3040 or press.office@solent.ac.uk

About Southampton Solent University

Southampton Solent University offers more than 23,000 students over 200 qualifications ranging from HND to PhD, in subjects such as maritime education and training, fashion and design, media and television, music, health, sport and leisure, business, IT and technology. The University was

awarded the 2013 Quality Assurance kitemark for quality and standards of teaching and learning. Solent was voted one of the most creative universities in the UK in a Which? University 2013 poll of students. Solent Business School has been awarded the Small Business Charter Award, which is supported by the Association of Business Schools and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and 'gold approval' by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA).