SLIDE 1 Discourse:
Debating the Future of Fashion as Design

SLIDE 2 Introducing Fashion Research at RCA

- Fashion Research at RCA is carving new landscape/territory through new ideas of fashion thinking (beyond humanities to industry facing research)
- RCA disrupts tradition fashionals masters by introducing platforms which use a research approach within the ma fashion practice
- this offers opportunities for research around problem spaces-eg knowledge and technology skills and new models for pedagogy
- RCA Fashion Research-encourage students to engage intellectually with their discipline and to question and hold to account new industrial models
- Reported issues for example lack of knowledge related to new technologies (BoF 2016) trigger our view, approach and this paper

SLIDE 3
Current and long standing issues:
- We recognise engrained cultures including historical precedence for use of ‘art language’ and distancing from process and production (read quote from ‘CULTURAL THEORIST’ -McRobbie, 1998,and ‘RESEARCHER’ Matilda Tham,2008)
- These longstanding aspects implies/supports need for a move from humanities to industry facing approaches
- Our contextual understanding of navigating Discourses comes from literacy studies. JAMES PAUL GEE Gee,2015 -Importance of acquisition and learning for mastering Discourse
- In the context of fashion education we see value of both acquisition (industry exposure esp production processes) and learning (studio teaching from academics, practitioners and researchers) for enabling students to develop confidence, skills, including language to master the discourse of fashion for industry 4.0
- Our aim is identifying approaches and positioning to challenge the potential to influence industry using new models

SLIDE 4 Platforms
- Fashion Research at RCA sits alongside the Masters programme which provides ripe ground for research- to observe the impact of new models for pedagogy on student development, in particular moving towards industry facing design agendas.
- The findings from this research then contribute to the design of aspects of the fashion programme. The platforms are dynamic and evolving, the two feed from each other.
- One new model introduced to the *First year* Fashion MA is a series of platforms to encourage engagement with new perspectives. (explain options)
- Bio Design which investigates synthetic biology Textile production.
● Digital, which includes AR, VR and physical computing
● Sport – introducing technical textiles and technical fabrication technologies
● Future Systems which explores all the systems that the fashion industry works within from machinery and tooling to sustainability, infrastructure and commerce
● These are not separate but taught in parallel with an understanding that there are shared rationales, areas of interest and synergies, collaboration is encouraged and supported.
● The platforms are led by industry professionals, academics and researchers
● Aim is to equip students with research skills to explore and critically examine Industry 4.0
● These platforms are dynamic, evolving (eg Sports and Future Systems have now merged to have 3 platforms)
● Outcomes of the platforms have influence on fashion research, we are researching this- to assess ways that research findings can inform the development of programs for studio practice- redefining Fashion Thinking

SLIDE 5 New Models for Fashion Thinking(i)
● We are looking at new models for pedagogy, in particular, which encourage research approaches to the MA programme.
● Support students to be able to develop a confidence and skills to be able to look deeper- in the context of this research-into their own industry.
● The aim is for students to develop as designer-practitioner researchers
● Analysing the impact and outcomes of the platforms has led to the three strands of Fashion thinking
● Fashion thinking for Social Change, Fashion Thinking for Applied Speculation, Fashion Thinking through advanced manufacturing'

SLIDE 6 New Models for Fashion Thinking(ii)
● The area we are exploring more deeply in Fashion Research at RCA with Future Fashion Factory is ‘Fashion Thinking through advanced manufacturing’

SLIDE 7
Introducing Future Fashion Factory and RCA Role

£5.4 million R&D partnership exploring new digital and advanced textile technologies to boost the design of high-value creative products

● The Future Fashion Factory is a large scale AHRC research project in which RCA is an academic partner, alongside Leeds and Huddersfield Universities investigating how industry systems can be re-addressed and updated for the new landscapes of Industry 4.0:-
● The role for RCA here as disruptor and creative influence:
● Encourage designers to engage with industry to develop new systems for production
Making definitions, in particular developing ‘Fashion Thinking for Advanced Manufacturing’ by engaging in the design and manufacturing process will lead to new insights where fashion as a discipline makes a commitment to change and developing a new world view.

SLIDE 8 Discourse: A Tool for Debate

- Tool for engaging in dialogue, cards with questions about process and wider aspects of fashion system
- Designed by MA student in response to ‘Future Systems’ program (explores all the systems that the fashion industry works within)
- Themes-
  - Developed in response to a perceived gap in the fashion education experience

SLIDE 9 Discourse: A Tool for Debate timeline

- Student project- peer groups, presented instead of ‘final collection’
- Trajectory
- Developed into cards as research tool
- Findings from academic and students
- First presentation of findings here in Jaipur

SLIDE 10 Discourse: A Tool for Debate (Findings i)
Discourse as a tool eases students into engaging- felt more comfortable

SLIDE 11 Discourse: A Tool for Debate (Findings ii)
- Challenges students faced while engaging with ‘Discourse’: confidence in peer settings, supporting peers in defining the questions (understanding terms)
  - but no actual debate
  - Finding: Lack of knowledge of specific terms, conscious feelings of courteousness with peers and self-reported concern about intellectual capacity

SLIDE 12 Conclusions

- Evidence to support the development of models which disrupt existing and historical patterns and cultures across industry and academia
- Greater emphasis and exposure to industry systems and processes required
- An industry linked research culture can influence Fashion Thinking to provide students with research approaches to generate industry relevant design proposals

SLIDE 12 Implications and Further Research

- Possibility for framing future models for fashion pedagogy using ‘learning’ and ‘acquisition’ for mastery of Discourse
- Need for establishing industry-facing projects, placement and collaboration
With Future Fashion Factory, investigating role of academia for learning in industry settings- meta-knowledge, criticism and reflections through academic research channels