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## Fashion School Q&A: Istituto Secoli

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Established in 1934, Istituto Secoli is the first Italian fashion school. The school specializes in pattern making and applied Fashion Design and has a teaching method that is based on a “learning by doing” approach.

FashionUnited recently spoke to the president of Istituto Secoli Matteo Secoli to discuss the impact of Covid-19, the type of courses the college offers, and the future plans of the institute.

### How has the transition from in-house to remote learning been for the school and students?

Our main goal during the pandemic and the reorganization of the didact of the school was to ensure a quality education within a safe environment. To achieve this goal, we have completely redesigned the way we teach: we built a team dedicated to recording the lessons and sharing them on an online platform. Our teaching method is based on a “learning by doing” approach, which is why we have devised a new learning formula to complement our methodology. We have provided students with digital tools, video tutorials, and recorded online lessons that, alongside textbooks and school papers, are available on-demand on the e-learning platform. Thanks to the new multimedia devices, students could embark on their training before going to the classroom — applying the logic of ‘flipped teaching’ and increasing their autonomy. The classes were then delivered in blended learning, combining remote lessons for the theoretical subjects with face-to-face laboratory sessions.

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## How would you describe the student community at Istituto Secoli?

Our community is wide and diverse, with students from Italy and abroad — with students of 34 different nationalities. We are talking about young high school graduates who want to learn the fashion trades, and fashion design graduates who intend to enhance their specialization; but also many professionals already active in the industry who attend Istituto Secoli to update their skills. A creative, vibrant, and close-knit community that during the first year of the pandemic has continued to work together with the teachers, achieving excellent results despite the difficulties.



## What kind of courses does Istituto Secoli offer? What

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## is the focus area?

The courses we offer to recent graduates are three-year courses (Fashion Design and Fashion Product Technologies) in the two areas of Women's and Men's Wear, completing the Fashion Design training with Patternmaking, Prototyping and Tailoring to provide a comprehensive understanding of the design process.

The courses designed for postgraduate students include Master's degrees (Master in Women's and Men's Patternmaking/ Master in Haute Couture and Bridal Wear/ Master in Men's Tailoring/ Master in Knitting Techniques) and annual intensive courses in Pattern Making (in the Women's and Men's Clothing specializations). These courses are conceived to ensure advanced training in the technical design stages: the Institute is a benchmark in Italy for the study of pattern making.

There are a number of evening or weekend courses designed for fashion professionals: courses in Fashion Design, Patternmaking (Men's, Women's, Underwear, Children's), Prototyping and Tailoring, as well as Executive Masters in Time and Costs Analysis. Furthermore, we also offer short online evening courses with cutting-edge teaching in CAD and CAD3D Patternmaking, Graphic Design and the project based on the "Fundamentals of Patternmaking".

## What do we need to know about Istituto Secoli?

Established in 1934, Istituto Secoli is the first Italian fashion school. Over the years, we have shaped four generations of fashion makers – now key figures in Italian and international brands. Our mission is to equip new undergraduates, graduates, and industry professionals with the knowledge, techniques, methodologies, culture, and manufacturing skills to successfully face the current challenges of the fashion industry.

## What are the plans for this year? Any new things coming up?

The major news is the introduction of new courses. In response to the growing demand for more specialized figures in the knitwear industry, we have introduced the new Master's in Knitting Technology, a course that conveys knowledge and skills useful for developing fully-fashioned garments, starting with the yarn and the study of stitches on hand-operated machines, as well as in cut knitwear for both women and men. A course that explores specific features and design aspects, from research to the finished product.

In addition, the use of new technologies and new remote teaching management tools has made it possible to integrate fully online courses into

the offer, which can be followed remotely: CAD-2D, CAD-3D, GRAPHIC DESIGN courses, and the short courses of FUNDAMENTAL of PATTERNMAKING, both Women's and Men's wear.

## Do you have any tips for future students who want to study at Istituto Secoli?

Be curious, eager, observant, and aware. Don't be afraid to show your personality and prove your talent. Remember that making fashion is much more complex than drawing a collection, and that product skills are what companies are looking for today. Work hard on your digital skills: the fashion industry also relies on digitally skilled people. Be team players and always remember that teamwork is key to achieve your goals.

Images: Istituto Secoli

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