

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Burberry makes diversity push following controversial fashion

February 27, 2019



Burberry debuts Robert Tisci's first campaign. Image credit: Burberry

By STAFF REPORTS

British fashion house Burberry is taking action to increase the diversity within its organization after a runway look drew criticism.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**  
Plus: Just released  
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

During Burberry's recent London Fashion Week show, the brand showed a hoodie with a rope that some thought looked similar to a noose. Following the controversy, Burberry is moving beyond its apology with a series of initiatives aimed at upping its sensitivity to inclusivity.

### Deepening diversity

The label offered its condolences and apologies for the stress it caused by one of its hoodies in the fall/winter 2019 collection. The product, showcased at London Fashion Week on Feb.17, featured a rope-like cord around the neck of a model, initially inspired by the nautical theme, but to viewers, it looked more like a noose.

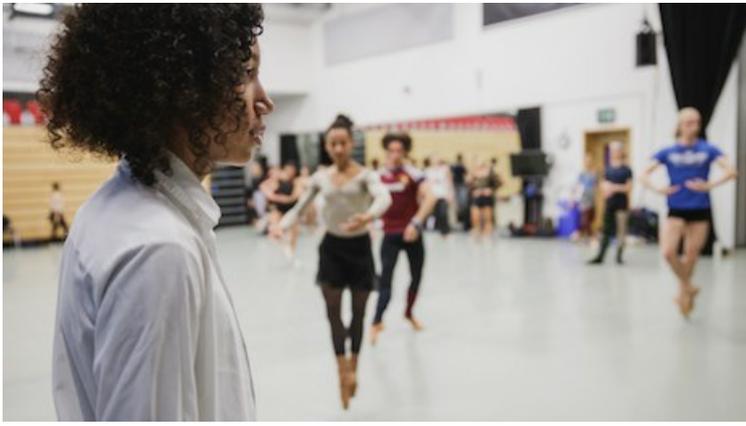
Chief creative officer Riccardo Tisci, along with Burberry CEO Marco Gobbetti released a statement expressing a sincere apology and pulled the item from the collection ([see story](#)).

On Feb. 26, Burberry released a statement announcing its new diversity-centered plans.

The company will be rolling out new training for employees centered on inclusion, and it will also set up councils of employees and an advisory board of external experts to boost its understanding of varying perspectives.

Burberry is also working to increase the diversity of its employees. Along with hiring initiatives, the company will be growing its diversity-focused scholarship program and will give full-time employment to 50 graduates over the next five years.

In addition, the company will be extending its Burberry Inspire school program focused on the arts beyond Britain.



*Burberry Inspire included a dance program. Image courtesy of Burberry*

Burberry will also up its partnerships with organizations that are focused on diversity as well as helping people in crisis.

"At Burberry, we have always sought to build a culture that is diverse, open and inclusive and one where all perspectives are valued," Mr. Gobbetti said in a statement. "The distress we caused with one of our products last week has shown us that we are not where we need or want to be.

"We are determined to learn from this and having spoken with our employees, experts and communities we impacted, we have developed a plan to increase our consciousness and understanding of social issues and fully embrace diversity and inclusion," he said. "We have a firm foundation from which to build.

"We have strong values, outstanding people and creativity at our core. Today, we are taking further steps to make real change happen."

Burberry's marketing has also taken an inclusive approach more recently.

After a highly publicized start at the company and heralding a major rebrand, Mr. Tisci recently dropped his first advertising campaign with a multigenerational focus so deep it extends behind-the-scenes.

Starting from the inside out, the British fashion label has assembled a cast of both photographers and models who span generations and countries of origin. The goal was to shine a light on Burberry's ability to transverse between its heritage and modern strategy, exhibiting that it is able to appeal to all people ([see story](#)).

---

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.