



Programme Name: Master of Business Administration

Module name: Business Development Proposal

Module Code: LCMB7037

Title: The Ted Baker Re-give Programme: Wear. Return. Care. A Business Development Proposal for Circular Fashion and Customer Engagement

Student Name: Carmen Prodan

Student ID: 2223977

Lecturer name: Dr Vasilios Tavlaridis

Supervisor name: Dr Ibrahim Rufai

Number of Words: 3522 (with References)

Submission Date: October 2026

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
1. Business Opportunity	5
2. Methodology	6
3. Market Research and Validation	9
4. Proposed Re-give Programme	10
5. Key Risks.....	12
6. Timeline and Gantt Chart.....	12
Conclusion	13
References.....	14

Introduction

Ted Baker is a British fashion brand founded in Glasgow in 1988 and recognised for its distinctive British style, quality and attention to detail. From a single shirt manufacturer, the company grew into a global fashion brand that sells apparel and accessories for both men and women (MarketLine, 2025).



Figure 1: Ted Baker London Store

Source: [independent.co.uk](https://www.independent.co.uk)

After being purchased by Authentic Brands Group (ABG) in 2022, Ted Baker's ownership and organisational structure underwent substantial modifications. In 2024, its UK and European operating business entered administration, while its North American operators subsequently filed for insolvency proceedings, citing unpaid supplier obligations involving Authentic Brands' operating partners (Biswas, 2024).



Figure 2: Ted Baker Key Historical Events

Source: AI-adapted

Industry commentary also suggests that Ted Baker struggled to adapt its brand and marketing to an evolving customer base. Fashion expert Rochelle White argued that the company became too comfortable with its established approach and failed to invest sufficiently in contemporary campaigns, collaborations and partnerships (Daily Mail, 2024). This reinforces the rationale for exploring Re-give as a future business development opportunity that could create new forms of customer engagement and strategic partnerships while responding to growing interest in circular fashion.

However, Ted Baker's problems existed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The business faced pressure on its conventional retail model, growing competition, and shifting consumer behaviour. As the pandemic increased the strain on fashion retail, the company's financial performance had significantly declined by 2020. Thus, this Business Development Proposal looks into a possible Ted Baker business development opportunity through the Ted Baker Re-give Program: Wear. Return. Care. The proposed initiative would allow customers to return eligible Ted Baker garments that they have previously purchased in exchange for an incentive, such as a voucher. Depending on their state and viability, returned clothing would be evaluated and directed toward textile recycling, repair/refurbishment, charity reuse, or resale or further use.

Aim

To assess the feasibility of introducing a customer garment take-back programme for Ted Baker that supports circular fashion while creating potential business, environmental and social value.

Objectives:

1. To examine Ted Baker's current position and historical business challenges and identify the potential for a customer garment take-back programme.
2. To evaluate the market, competitors and operational feasibility of the proposed Ted Baker Re-give Programme.
3. To assess the potential business, environmental and social benefits, risks and financial feasibility of the proposed programme.

1. Business Opportunity

The business opportunity arises from the relationship between Ted Baker's historical challenges and changes within the fashion industry. Ted Baker's decline should be understood as the result of several interconnected challenges rather than a single financial or management problem. Although the company retained a strong and recognisable brand identity, its traditional retail model became increasingly exposed to changing consumer behaviour, digital disruption and intense competition within the UK fashion market. Ted Baker's 2020 annual report acknowledged changing customer demand, pressure on physical retail, increased promotional activity and discounting, while demand for important categories such as formalwear and women's occasion wear was also declining (Ted Baker PLC, 2020).

These external pressures were accompanied by internal disruption. Founder and CEO Ray Kelvin resigned in March 2019 following allegations of misconduct, which he denied. Further leadership changes followed, including the departure of chief executive Lindsay Page and chairman David Bernstein later in 2019. These developments occurred alongside deteriorating financial performance and operational difficulties. The significance of these challenges is that Ted Baker's problems were not simply the result of declining sales; they also demonstrated the difficulty of adapting an established brand and traditional retail model to changing market conditions and consumer expectations.

This provides the strategic justification for the proposed Ted Baker Re-give Programme: Wear. Return. Care. Rather than being presented as a solution to Ted Baker's historical financial difficulties, the programme represents a potential business adaptation to changing consumer expectations and the need for stronger customer engagement. Customers would return eligible Ted Baker garments in exchange for an incentive, such as a voucher, with returned items assessed for resale, charity reuse, repair or recycling.

The programme could potentially strengthen customer retention, encourage repeat purchasing and extend the relationship between Ted Baker and its customers beyond the initial sale. It could also support a more circular business model while building on the brand's existing association with quality and previous sustainability activities. However, these potential benefits must be considered against the additional costs and complexity associated with collection, transportation, sorting, storage and processing.

To reduce these risks, Re-give could initially be tested through a controlled UK pilot using online registration and selected collection points or retail partners. The pilot could measure customer participation, processing costs, voucher redemption, repeat purchasing and the proportion of garments successfully reused, repaired, resold or recycled. These results would provide evidence for deciding whether the programme should be expanded, modified or discontinued.

Baker and Welter (2020) argue that entrepreneurship is context-dependent and can generate both opportunities and challenges; therefore, innovation should not automatically be assumed to create positive outcomes. Applied to Ted Baker, the value of Re-give will depend on whether its commercial, environmental and social benefits outweigh its financial and operational demands. The proposal will therefore critically assess the programme's feasibility as a strategic adaptation rather than a financial rescue strategy.

2. Methodology

The methodology for this Business Development Proposal is designed to provide a structured and academically robust approach to analysing Ted Baker's strategic challenges and evaluating the feasibility of a proposed business development solution. As this outline precedes the full 15,000-word submission of the Business Development

Plan, the methodology of this proposal will rely exclusively on secondary research, with no primary data collection. Academic literature will be used to explore circular economy theory, sustainable fashion, consumer behaviour, customer retention, and sustainable business model innovation. Industry sources, including WRAP publications and fashion-sector reports, will provide evidence on UK textile consumption, reuse, recycling and emerging circular business practices. Company-specific insights will be drawn from Ted Baker's publicly available information and relevant corporate disclosures, while competitor websites, reports and sector analyses will be reviewed to understand existing takeback and circularity initiatives.

The gathered evidence will be critically evaluated, not merely summarised. The final proposal will apply the required business analysis frameworks, including PESTLE, SWOT, Competitor Analysis, Porter's Five Forces and the Ansoff Matrix. These will be complemented by the Business Model Canvas, alongside marketing and sales evaluation, operational assessment, HR considerations and financial analysis.

Research Approach

A qualitative research approach will be adopted to explore Ted Baker's organisational context, sustainability practices, and market positioning. This approach is appropriate for understanding complex strategic issues, interpreting industry trends, and evaluating business development opportunities within a real-world organisational setting. Qualitative analysis also supports the integration of academic theories, industry insights, and organisational data.

Research Design

The research will follow a secondary data-driven design, drawing on credible academic, industry, and organisational sources. This is suitable for a business development project focused on analysing an existing company, where publicly available data provides sufficient depth for evaluating strategic gaps and potential solutions.

Key components of the research design include:

Company analysis using annual reports, sustainability statements, press releases, and industry commentary.

Market analysis using industry reports (e.g., Mintel, McKinsey, Statista, Euromonitor).

Competitor benchmarking using publicly available data on brands such as Reiss, AllSaints, Hobbs, Zara, and H&M. For example, consumer-based brand equity metrics, including awareness, associated image, perceived quality, loyalty, willingness to pay a premium, and exclusivity, have been validated as useful indicators for benchmarking brand performance. These metrics reveal that brands differ notably in awareness and perceived quality, and international brands often have higher perceived value than national ones. This strategy could be employed to compare the consumer perceptions of Ted Baker against Reiss, AllSaints, Hobbs, Zara, and H&M, especially when direct financial or market data are unavailable (Porto, 2019).

Academic literature review focusing on circular economy models, sustainable fashion, customer engagement, and business development frameworks.

Data Sources

The research will rely on the following categories of secondary data:

Academic literature: peer-reviewed journals, books, and theoretical frameworks relevant to sustainability, circularity, and strategic management.

Industry reports: market trends, consumer behaviour insights, and sector forecasts.

Company documents: Ted Baker's annual reports, sustainability updates, and corporate communications.

News and trade publications: Drapers, Fashion Network, Business of Fashion, and other credible sources.

Government and regulatory data: retail statistics, UK sustainability guidelines, and sector regulations.

These sources will provide triangulated evidence to validate the identified organisational challenge and support the feasibility assessment of the proposed solution.

Analytical Techniques

The full BDP will apply five mandatory business analysis models (PESTLE, SWOT, Competitor Analysis, Porter's Five Forces, Ansoff Matrix). Within the outline, these models will be referenced conceptually to justify the research direction, but full application will be completed in the final submission.

Additional analytical techniques will include:

Thematic analysis of sustainability and circularity trends

Comparative analysis of competitor initiatives

Gap analysis of Ted Baker's current practices versus industry expectations

Ethical Considerations

As the project relies on secondary data, ethical risks are minimal. All sources will be cited using UWTSD Harvard referencing, and data will be interpreted objectively and responsibly.

3. Market Research and Validation

The research will analyse the UK fashion and textile sector, focusing on changing consumer trends, sustainability expectations and behaviours related to clothing reuse, resale, repair and recycling. Upadhyay, Kumar and Akter (2022) suggest that environmental awareness, stakeholder pressure and regulation are encouraging retailers to move away from the traditional linear produce-use-dispose model towards more circular approaches based on reuse and recycling. WRAP (2025) further suggests that circular business models can support business resilience, growth and customer retention; however, their relatively limited adoption within the textile sector indicates continuing uncertainty around scalability and commercial viability. Moreover, Deutz (2024) emphasises that circular economy implementation depends on collaboration across public, private and third-sector stakeholders. Therefore, while Re-give could provide strategic value for Ted Baker, its success would depend not only on customer participation but also on effective partnerships with charities, recyclers and other organisations responsible for managing returned garments.

Additionally, changing consumer demand is particularly relevant to Ted Baker's previous difficulties. Honkanen (2022) highlights that the company's inventory was

overstated by approximately £58 million, involving inappropriate inventory values, non-existent stock and unadjusted stock figures. This demonstrates the importance of effective inventory management within a fashion industry characterised by rapidly changing consumer preferences and demand. Therefore, while Re-give could support a more circular approach to product lifecycle management, returned garments would require effective tracking, valuation and inventory controls to avoid creating further operational complexity.

Ted Baker's competitive position also provides justification for exploring the proposed initiative. Mathew (2025) identifies Zara as a close competitor in terms of quality, price and product variety, while Kate Spade demonstrates stronger performance in brand loyalty and environmental friendliness. Ted Baker was also identified as weaker in accessibility and brand status. These findings suggest that Re-give could potentially contribute to stronger customer loyalty and environmental positioning, although it would not independently resolve broader weaknesses in brand perception or accessibility.

Competitor analysis will further examine circular initiatives such as M&S Shwopping, H&M Garment Collecting, Levi's Buy Back and Patagonia Worn Wear. Morgan (2022) demonstrates that although sustainability initiatives within M&S's Plan A contributed to business model innovation, some were closely linked to the company's existing competitive advantages and may not be directly transferable to other businesses. Similarly, Pastore et al. (2022) show that H&M's approach to circularity extends beyond garment collection to include sustainable materials, production monitoring, lower-impact distribution and stakeholder engagement, indicating that an effective circular strategy requires a broader organisational commitment. These findings suggest that Ted Baker can learn from established competitor initiatives, but Re-give should be adapted to its own brand, resources and market position rather than simply replicating existing models. The comparison will therefore assess collection approaches, customer incentives, eligibility criteria and processing methods, while critically considering logistics, storage, processing capacity, incentive costs and whether the programme could generate sufficient customer and commercial value to justify implementation.

4. Proposed Re-give Programme

The proposed model will follow a simple process:

1. Customer
2. Return
3. Condition Assessment
4. Appropriate Destination

The programme will investigate suitable eligibility criteria and customer incentives rather than assuming these in advance. Returned garments would be assessed according to their condition and directed towards the most appropriate route: high-quality items for potential resale or continued use, suitable garments for charity reuse, repairable products for refurbishment, and unsuitable items for textile recycling. This hierarchy aims to extend product life and reduce waste rather than treating garment collection itself as evidence of circularity.

Research provides support for these routes but also identifies important limitations. Bahl et al. (2023) recognise the potential for high-quality discarded garments to be reused or repurposed, although consumer acceptance of second-hand clothing may restrict demand. Similarly, Gray et al. (2022) suggest that resale models can extend garment lifetimes and reduce demand for new resources, but their environmental benefits depend on factors such as transportation, storage and cleaning. Furthermore, Mizrahi and Sharon (2025) indicate that purchasing second-hand fashion does not necessarily replace new clothing consumption, challenging the assumption that resale automatically produces environmental benefits.

Repair and refurbishment could provide an alternative route for garments unsuitable for immediate reuse. Evidence from Patagonia and Eileen Fisher demonstrates how repair, refurbishment and customer take-back can extend product lifecycles and support consumer engagement (Michel et al., 2019; Talley, 2023; Sundar et al., 2022). Charity reuse could also provide social and reputational value, with research suggesting that responsible reuse and CSR activities may strengthen consumer trust and brand identification (Ekström et al., 2014; Abid et al., 2022). However, these benefits depend on garments being genuinely useful to recipient organisations rather than simply transferring unwanted textile waste elsewhere.

Recycling would therefore represent a later option where further use is not practical. Although textile recycling can contribute to carbon reduction, its environmental effectiveness depends on the recycling process and product design (Muthu et al., 2012). The proposed pilot will therefore assess the financial, operational and environmental viability of the complete return pathway, rather than assuming that every collected garment creates circular value, before wider implementation is recommended.

5. Key Risks

The proposed Re-give Programme presents financial, operational, consumer and reputational risks. These include low customer participation, collection and transportation costs, unsuitable returned garments, sorting and storage requirements, limited resale or recycling value, charity capacity and voucher-related expenses. Consumer perceptions also represent an important barrier. Norris (2019) identifies concerns around the quality, cleanliness and possible contamination of clothing produced from recycled textile fibres and highlights the very limited proportion of discarded clothing currently recycled back into new garments. This challenges the assumption that all returned products can easily re-enter a circular system. Ted Baker would therefore require clear eligibility and hygiene standards, reliable reuse and recycling partners, and transparent communication about how returned garments are processed and their eventual destination. Demirbaş and Deniz (2026) and Farrukh et al. (2026) suggest that clear sustainability information and digital supply-chain visibility can strengthen consumer awareness while helping businesses respond to stakeholder and regulatory expectations. For Re-give, this transparency could reduce uncertainty and strengthen the credibility of sustainability claims. Measurable environmental and commercial KPI's, such as voucher redemption rate, percentage of returned garments successfully reused or recycled, and cost per garment processed, would then be required to assess whether the programme creates credible value rather than additional cost, waste or reputational risk.

6. Timeline and Gantt Chart

The project will follow the staged timeline presented in Figure 2, progressing from research and programme design through partnership and operational planning to pilot

implementation, evaluation and potential wider roll-out. This phased approach will enable the feasibility of Re-give to be assessed before any recommendation for broader implementation is made.

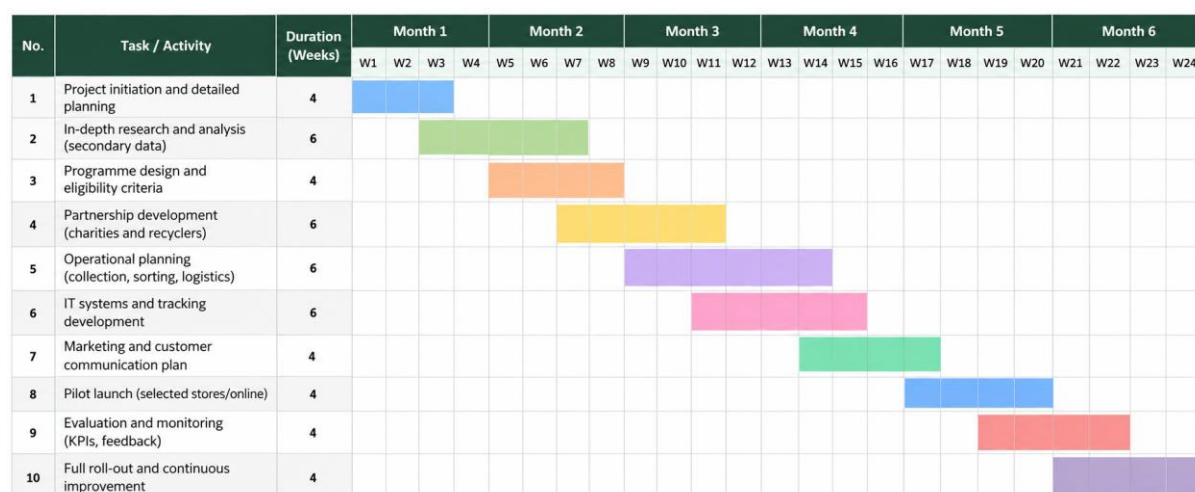


Figure 2: Proposed Implementation Timeline for the Ted Baker Re-give Programme

Source: AI- adapted

Conclusion

This proposal has identified the Ted Baker Re-give Programme as a potential business development opportunity that responds to both the brand's need for adaptation and the wider transition towards more circular fashion models. While the programme could strengthen customer engagement, extend garment lifecycles and create environmental and social value, the research also identifies significant financial, operational and consumer-related challenges. The full BDP will therefore determine whether Re-give can create sufficient value to justify its costs and operational requirements. Rather than assuming that the programme should be implemented, the research will use secondary evidence, competitor analysis, business models and financial evaluation to establish whether a controlled pilot is feasible and under what conditions wider implementation could be considered.

References

Abid, T., Abid-Dupont, M. and Moulins, J. (2020) "What corporate social responsibility brings to brand management? The two pathways from social responsibility to brand commitment," *Corporate social-responsibility and environmental management*, 27(2), pp. 925–936. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1856> (Accessed 24 September 2026).

Bahl, R. *et al.* (2023) "Are Australian Consumers Ready to Wear Recycled Clothing to Practice Sustainable Consumption?," *Sustainability*, 15(21), p. 15451. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su152115451> (Accessed 26 September 2026).

Baker, T. and Welter, F. (2020) *Contextualizing Entrepreneurship Theory*. 1st edition. Edited by F. Welter. New York: Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351110631> (Accessed 27 September 2026).

Biswas, S. (2024) 'Ted Baker's North American Arm Follows U.K. Business Into Bankruptcy', *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 April. Available at: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/ted-bakers-north-american-arm-follows-u-k-business-into-bankruptcy-3608910d> (Accessed: 28 September 2026).

Chiorando, M. (2024) *Where did it all go wrong for Ted Baker?* Daily Mail. Available at: <https://www.dailymail.com/lifestyle/article-13756737/Where-did-wrong-Ted-Baker-Proudly-British-brand-beloved-celebrities-royals-failed-new-trends-blighted-harassment-allegations-forced-founder-set-close-UK-stores.html> ([dailymail.com](https://www.dailymail.com) in Bing) (Accessed 28 September 2026).

Demirbaş, M. and Deniz, N. (2026) "The role of marketing in sustainable textile supply chains," *Environment, development and sustainability*, 28(5), pp. 12433–12458. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-024-05444-1> (Accessed 29 September 2026).

Deutz, P. (2024) *Circular Economy Realities : Critical Perspectives on Sustainability*. London: Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003295631> (Accessed 28 September 2026).

Ekström, K.M. and Salomonson, N. (2014) "Reuse and Recycling of Clothing and Textiles—A Network Approach," *Journal of macromarketing*, 34(3), pp. 383–399. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0276146714529658> (Accessed 24 September 2026).

Farrukh, A., Ahmed, A. and Yawar, S. (2026) "Digital Technologies for Transparent and Sustainable Supply Chain Management: A Resource Orchestration-Based View in the Textile Industry," *Business strategy and the environment* [Preprint]. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.70667> (Accessed 28 September 2026).

Fibre2Fashion. (2024) *British fashion brand Ted Baker set to go into administration*. Available at: <https://www.fibre2fashion.com/news/fashion-news/british-fashion-brand-ted-baker-set-to-go-into-administration-294001-newsdetails.htm> (Accessed 24 September 2026).

Gray, S. *et al.* (2022) "Reducing the Environmental Impact of Clothing: An Exploration of the Potential of Alternative Business Models," *Sustainability*, 14(10), p. 6292. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14106292> (Accessed 29 September 2026).

Honkanen, A.M., 2022. IFRS standards and executive remuneration: The influence on accounting manipulation.

Mathew, S.K., Rathee, S. and Burns, M., (2025). Reinventing Fashion Business: Big Data Analytics. In *Fashion Marketing: The Contemporary Marketing Mix* (pp. 325-358). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.

Michel, G.M. *et al.* (2019) "Stories We Wear: Promoting Sustainability Practices with the Case of Patagonia," *Family and consumer sciences research journal*, 48(2), pp. 165–180. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/fcsr.12340> (Accessed 25 September 2026).

Mizrachi, M.P. and Sharon, O. (2025) "Secondhand fashion consumers exhibit fast fashion behaviors despite sustainability narratives," *Scientific reports*, 15(1). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-19089-1> (Accessed 26 September 2026).

Morgan, E., 2022. 'Plan A': analysing business model innovation for sustainable consumption in mass-market clothes retailing. In *New business models for sustainable fashion* (pp. 73-98). Routledge.

Muthu, S.S. *et al.* (2012) "Carbon footprint reduction in the textile process chain: Recycling of textile materials," *Fibers and polymers*, 13(8), pp. 1065–1070. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12221-012-1065-0> (Accessed 29 September 2026).

Norris, L., 2019. Waste, dirt and desire: Fashioning narratives of material regeneration. *The Sociological Review*, 67(4), pp.886-907.

Pastore, G., Frangiosa, A., Loria, V., Bellomo, M., Di Mezza, P.B., Falcone, M.F., Romeo, M. and De Cazotte, L.M., 2022. Sustainable fast fashion: business case of H&M. In *Cases on circular economy in practice* (pp. 157-179). IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

Porto, R.B. (2019) "Consumer-based brand equity: benchmarking the perceived performance of brands," *Revista brasileira de marketing*, 18(4), pp. 51–74. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5585/remark.v18i4.16383> (Accessed 24 September 2026).

Sundar, A., Pothier, W.G., Pfeiffer, B. and Lei, L., 2022. The renewal workshop: Consumer considerations in a global supply chain. *SAGE Business Cases Originals*.

Talley, E.K., 2023. A Theory of Systems Leadership Illustrated by Eileen Fisher's Efforts to Become a Fashion Industry Leader in Sustainability.

Ted Baker Holdings Ltd. SWOT Analysis. (2025). MarketLine, a Progressive Digital Media business. Available at https://librarysearch.uwtsd.ac.uk/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma99100770391902421&context=L&vid=44WHELF_UWTSD:44WHELF_UWTSD_VU1&lang=en&searchscope=MyInst_and_CI&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=Everything&query=any,contains,Ted%20Baker (Accessed 24 September 2026).

Ted Baker PLC. (2020) *Annual report and financial statements 2020*. Available at: https://www.annualreports.com/HostedData/AnnualReportArchive/t/LSE_TBK_2020.pdf (Accessed 27 September 2026).

Upadhyay, A., Kumar, A. and Akter, S. (2022) "An analysis of UK retailers' initiatives towards circular economy transition and policy-driven directions," *Clean technologies and environmental policy*, 24(4), pp. 1209–1217. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10098-020-02004-9> (Accessed 28 September 2026).

WRAP. (2025) Are UK businesses leaving money on the table? Available at: <https://www.wrap.ngo/media-centre/press-releases/are-uk-businesses-leaving-money-table> (Accessed 29 September 2026).

