

# Largest-ever UK study into body shapes and sizes

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Every year, 50 percent of online clothes shoppers return fashion items they purchased online, much of this due to incorrect fit and sizing. For the first time in nearly 20 years this is being addressed by an ambitious new nationwide survey profiling 30,000 adults.

The University of Hertfordshire played a major part in the overall preparation and planning of the survey, data from which will help promote diversity in fashion and ultimately improve clothing sizes and fit.

Tony Rosella, Principal Lecturer and Programme Leader for Fashion, School of Creative Arts, at the University of Hertfordshire, spent six months developing the survey with 3-D specialists, Select Research Ltd. Tony helped to secure the agreement of six national retail partners, including Next, ASOS, Tesco's F&F clothing brand, Monsoon Accessorize, New Look and River Island, who are now backing the survey and collecting definitive sizing and [shape](#) data from their customers.

Tony Rosella said: 'The opportunity to work on this project has been extremely rewarding. For far too long the fashion industry has dictated how consumers should look and women in particular have felt that this industry is perpetuating [poor body image](#). Those who do not fit this stereotype, such as plus sizes, have been at a disadvantage due to limited fashion choices and badly fitting design.'

'Whilst many people are already speaking out and advocating a more inclusive approach to [fashion](#), until now, not much has been done to address and cater for the wide variety in body shapes. The ShapeGB survey aims to capture men and women of different shapes, sizes, ages and ethnic backgrounds to accurately reflect society today. The University of Hertfordshire is proud to be participating in a project that is investing in a more diverse future and helping to develop a strategy that will change the way in which consumers select and purchase clothing in the future.'

## Shape GB app

Men and women over 18 years can take part in the [survey](#) by downloading the new innovative ShapeGB app available on any iOS device. The app simply requires some basic personal information and two photographs taken on an iPhone or iPad, which are subsequently deleted.

The app measures the body outlines anonymously from the photographs taken and assesses the weight distribution of seven body volumes – both arms, both legs, chest, pelvis and the abdomen. The images and information are then combined and used to privately and securely create 3-D scientific data. These measurements are added to a secure national database to enable retailers to improve sizing specification and create future clothing that is more reflective of UK consumers' [body](#) shapes.

Provided by University of Hertfordshire

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