

EDUCATION

The University of Birmingham Sep 23 - Present | Expected Completion: Sep 2026

PhD in Marketing

Doctoral Research: The Power of the Unreal: Virtual Influencers and Sustainable Consumer Behaviour

The University of Manchester

Sep 21 - Dec 22

Master of Science in International Fashion Marketing (Distinction)

Master Dissertation: Social Media Influencers' Impact on China's Gen Z Upcycled Fashion Purchase (Score: 80%)

Southwest University

Sep 17 - Jun 21

Bachelor's in Management (1st Class)

Undergraduate Dissertation: The Effect of Spokesperson Scandals on Consumer Brand Trust

RECOGNITION

Associate Fellow (AFHEA), awarded by Advance HE.

TEACHING AND WORKING EXPERIENCE

University of Birmingham

Birmingham, UK

Lecturer, PGTA and tutor

Sep 24 - Now

- Delivered teaching as a **PGTA** across **six** undergraduate and postgraduate modules, including *Digital Marketing*, *Marketing Communication* (BSc and MSc), *Introduction to Marketing and Communication*, *Marketing Strategy* (BSc and MSc), *Marketing and New Technology*, and *Services and Retail Strategy*. Contributed to large-cohort seminars (100+ students) and independently led small-group seminars (around 25 students).
- Designed and delivered **guest lectures** in *Marketing Communication* and *Marketing and New Technology*, integrating doctoral research on virtual influencers and brand-consumer relationships to strengthen research-informed teaching and bridge theory and contemporary digital marketing practice.
- Provided **one-to-one** academic and pastoral support through tutorials and office hours, offering structured guidance on assessment expectations, research skills and study strategies. Supported diverse and international groups in developing academic confidence and engagement, referring students to appropriate university services where necessary.
- Developed inclusive, research-informed teaching materials grounded in constructivist pedagogy, incorporating scaffolded tasks, structured discussion prompts and collaborative activities to enhance participation and accessibility for linguistically and culturally diverse learners.
- Creatively designed and delivered a live-client, project-based MSc assessment in Marketing Communication, partnering with UoB alumni start-ups. Facilitated scaffolded workshops, staged feedback cycles and industry-facing presentations, strengthening applied analytical capability, critical thinking and graduate employability.
- Integrated AI literacy into *Marketing and New Technology*, guiding students in the responsible use of **AI** as a tool and collaborative 'teammate' in group assessment. Facilitated AI-supported campaign development, including visual content generation and basic web prototyping, enhancing strategic thinking and critical evaluation of AI-generated outputs.
- Contributed to assessment design, marking and moderation processes within UK higher education quality frameworks (including assessment boards, NSS and PTES), with teaching input reflected in strong student engagement and positive module feedback.

University of Birmingham

Birmingham, UK

Research Assistant

Apr 24 - Sep 25

- Collaborated with interdisciplinary academic teams across Marketing and Finance on multiple research projects, including private equity exit strategies, AI literacy in higher education and sustainable fashion consumption.
- Conducted systematic and structured literature reviews, synthesising theoretical and empirical insights to inform research design and publication development.
- Contributed to qualitative and quantitative research activities, including focus group design, interview data collection, thematic analysis and structured empirical evaluation.
- Produced analytical outputs linking research findings to theoretical frameworks and managerial implications.
- Worked across concurrent interdisciplinary projects, coordinating research tasks, managing timelines and communicating findings effectively within both in-person and online collaborative environments.

University of Birmingham

Birmingham, UK

Workshop Coordinator, Woman in Finance

Apr 25 - Jul 25

- Assisted in planning and organising a **hybrid academic-industry** workshop on finance, gender, and development, engaging academics, entrepreneurs, and early-career researchers. Contributed to the workshop's inclusivity and accessibility, with **20+** participants attending both **in-person** and **online**.

- Promoted the workshop via LinkedIn and direct outreach, contacting 83 scholars from 17 UK universities to encourage paper submissions and participation, expanding the conference's reach and impact.
- Managed administration, securing funding approval and overseeing contract execution to ensure efficient and compliant delivery. Coordinated logistics, including process planning, venue arrangements, equipment setup, resource integration, preparation of conference materials, and on-site support to ensure smooth delivery.

Southwest University

Chongqing, China

Research Assistant: *The Sixth Economic Census Report of Chongqing*

Jul 20 - Nov 20

- Contributed to a government-commissioned research project examining regional economic development, collaborating with academic colleagues to conduct large-scale secondary data analysis in line with official reporting and policy standards.
- Produced analytical and visual data reports to support evidence-based policy recommendations, demonstrating strong quantitative analysis, methodological rigour and stakeholder-oriented communication skills.

RESEARCH EXPERTISE

My research examines sustainable consumer behaviour in digital environments, with a particular focus on social media and AI-driven marketing. I am interested in how emerging technologies and marketing strategies influence consumer information processing and decision-making, and how these insights can inform responsible business and management practice.

PUBLICATION AND PRESENTATIONS

- Zhang, X., Hassan, L. and Lamprinakos, G. (2025) Virtual influencers and sustainable consumer behaviours: a systematic literature review and research agenda. *Birmingham Business School Doctoral Conference*, University of Birmingham.
- Zhang, X., Hassan, L. and Lamprinakos, G. (2025) Virtual influencers and sustainable consumer behaviours. *Postgraduate Research Festival*, University of Birmingham.
- Working paper in progress: Co-authored study on AI influencers and consumer financial decision-making (target journal: *ABS 3**, planned submission 2026).
- Working paper in progress: The Power of the Unreal: Virtual Influencers and Sustainable Consumer Behaviour (target journal: *ABS 4**, planned submission 2026).
- Abstracts submitted to *European Marketing Academy Conference (EMAC) 2026*, *British Academy of Management (BAM) 2026* and *Academy of Marketing Science (AMS) Annual Conference 2026*.

NETWORK AND ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

- Active member of the British Academy of Management (BAM), engaging with disciplinary research communities.
- Member of Advance HE Connect, contributing to professional dialogue on teaching and higher education practice.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Xiaohongshu (RedNote)

Shanghai, China

Event Marketing Intern

Mar 21 - Jul 21

- Developed and executed social media content and user engagement strategies, increasing account followers by **350%** within four months. Conducted customer analytics and merchant training using consumer behaviour data, supporting client growth (**8 new** merchants achieved monthly sales of **100,000 RMB**).
- Collaborated with product and marketing teams to translate user insights into platform optimisation initiatives.

Havas Group

Shanghai, China

Digital Marketing Intern

Dec 20 - Mar 21

- Supported digital marketing strategy development for lifestyle and luxury clients, including UGG, Hermès and Breitling. Conducted campaign performance analysis using Google Analytics, 360, and Sougou, contributing to an **18%** increase in multi-channel campaign impressions within one month.

Academic relevance: These industry experiences provide applied insight into digital marketing analytics, platform strategy and consumer behaviour, strengthening the research-informed and practice-oriented nature of my teaching and research, while reinforcing transferable skills in communication, stakeholder engagement and multi-task management.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Volunteer, Green Impact Team, University of Birmingham

Apr 25 - Now

- Supported university sustainability initiatives, contributing to funding applications, budget planning and project coordination, strengthening organisational, communication and stakeholder engagement skills.

Sales in Flannels

Feb 25 - Jul 25

- Delivered high-quality customer service in a fast-paced luxury retail environment. Developed transferable skills in communication, problem-solving, and teamwork capabilities.

Volunteer, Mini Research Program, University of Birmingham School

Jan 25

- Delivered research engagement workshops for Year 10 students, translating my doctoral research into accessible formats and supporting widening participation through mentoring and community outreach.