Buckinghamshire New University

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Key Information

Programme Title:	BA (Hons) Audio and Music Production BA (Hons) Audio and Music Production with Foundation Year
Awarding Institution:	Buckinghamshire New University
Teaching Institution(s):	Buckinghamshire New University
Subject Cluster:	Music
Award Title (including separate Pathway Award Titles where offered):	BA (Hons) Audio and Music Production
Pathways (if applicable)	N/A
FHEQ level of final award:	6
Other award titles available (exit qualifications):	Certificate of Higher Education Diploma of Higher Education BA (Hons) Audio and Music Production
Accreditation details:	N/A
Length of programme:	3 years 4 years with Foundation Year
Mode(s) of Study:	Full Time
Mode of Delivery:	In person (on-site) delivery
Language of study:	English
QAA Subject Benchmark(s):	Music (2019)
Other external reference points (e.g. Apprenticeship Standard):	
Course Code(s):	BAAMPRFT/BAAMPRFY
UCAS Code(s):	J930 / J934
Approval date:	01 December 2022
Date of last update:	December 2024

2. Programme Summary

The three-year BA (Hons) Audio & Music Production course delivered at High Wycombe is designed to equip students with the necessary experience to embark on careers relating to audio and music or audio-visual production. This is a practical and creative production-based course, allowing focus on developing the skills demanded of planning, managing, processing, recording and post-producing audio for different purposes and audiences. The course is aimed primarily at those who have successfully completed A levels, a National Diploma or similar, and have a desire to work within creative industries in the context of audio-visual production.

3. Programme Aims and Learning Outcomes

Programme Aims

This programme aims to:

1. Provide access to the development of a range of practical production skills and knowledge relevant to a variety of practices and formats

2. Develop creative skills in relation to the generation and production of practical project work

3. Inculcate the ability to research and write in relation to sound design project work

4. Enable learners to develop a high level of teamwork skills and experiences specifically related to practical production work
5. Develop the ability to critically evaluate work in relation to the technology and contexts of production practice

Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding (K)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
K1	Demonstrate a knowledge of the underlying concepts, practices, and principles associated with sound design and production, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these.
K2	Display critical understanding of the well established principles pertaining to the study of sound design and audio production, and the way in which those principles have developed.
K3	Show systematic understanding of key aspects of sound design, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline.

Analysis and Criticality (C)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
C1	Evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgments in accordance with basic theories and concepts pertaining to the study of sound design.
C2	Apply conceptual understanding that enables you to devise and sustain arguments pertaining to the study of sound design. Solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of this subject discipline.
C3	Develop an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge.

Application and Practice (P)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome

P1	Engage successfully with Sound Design practices within a variety of production environments.
P2	Demonstrate key interpersonal skills pertaining to collaborative production tasks, such as oral and written communication skills and those required to coordinate production projects.
P3	Apply a range of sound design and audio production techniques.
P4	Develop an experience and portfolio appropriate to seeking employment within sound design related industries.

Transferable skills and other attributes (T)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
T1	Apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context.
T2	Deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline.
T3	Manage your own learning, and make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline).

Graduate Attributes

The BNU Graduate Attributes of: Knowledge and its application; Creativity; Social and ethical awareness and responsibility; and Leadership and self-development focus on the development of innovative leaders in professional and creative capacities, who are equipped to operate in the 21st Century labour market and make a positive impact as global citizens.

On this programme, attributes are developed via a variety of practical activities with accompanying reflection, developing knowledge and understanding of Sound Design (K1-3, C1-2). Graduate attributes developed include reflection, investigation using a range of traditional and digital resources, and requiring an application of learning within a variety of settings. Sound Design is taught as a creative pursuit and this will require learners to demonstrate skills in problem solving, innovation, flexibility and commercial awareness in all of their productions and ideas (P1-2). Attributes around social and ethical awareness are developed within all activities on the course. An example would be the challenging of industry stereotypes and norms, the industries served by Sound Design remain dominated by white men and this is something challenged and discussed (T1, P2). Finally, learners in pursuing their project work will routinely require the exhibition of key attributes in leadership and self-development (P2, T1) including the communication, decision making and resilience required of team work within a production setting.

4. Entry Requirements

The University's general entry requirements will apply to admission to this programme with the following additions / exceptions:

Minimum of 2 A-Levels. UCAS TARIFF: 88-112

If you do not meet the entry requirements you may, if you have relevant professional experience, still be invited for interview, where you will be required to demonstrate the necessary knowledge and understanding for entry onto the course.

Previous study, professional and / or vocational experiences may be recognised as the equivalent learning experience and permit exemption from studying certain modules in accordance with our accreditation of prior learning (APL) process.

5. Programme Structure

Level	Modules (Code, Title and Credits)	Exit Awards
Foundation Year	**Core modules:** PER0007 - Live Performance Practice PER0008 – Introduction to Popular Music PER0009 – Introduction to Composition PER0010 – Introduction to Entrepreneurship COM0009 – Professional Skills Review COM0010 – Final Project **Option modules:** No option modules are available at this level.	**N/A.** No credit is awarded at this Level.
Level 4	**Core modules:** PER4002 Audio Production Technologies (20 credits) PER4003 Sound Design for Moving Image (20 credits) PER4004 Computer Programming for Audio Applications (20 credits) PER4005 Recording & Mixing Techniques (20 credits) PER4006 Live Audio (20 credits) PER4034 Audio Production Practice (20 credits) **Option modules:** No option modules are available at this level.	**Certificate of Higher Education**, awarded on achievement of 120 credits at Level 4
Level 5	**Core modules:** PER5015 Location Sound & Post-production (20 credits) PER5016 Sound Design for Non-linear Media (20 credits) PER5017 Creative Audio Production (20 credits) PER5019 Sound Design Projects (20 credits) PER5030 Research Methods (20 credits)	**Diploma of Higher Education**, awarded on achievement of 240 credits, including a minimum of 120 credits at Level 5

	PER5086 Advanced Recording & Mixing Techniques (20 credits) **Option modules:** No option modules are available at this level.	
Level 6	**Core modules:** PER6034 Sound Design & Sonic Installation (20 credits) PER6035 Dissertation/Independent Work (40 credits) PER6036 Immersive Audio Techniques (20 credits) PER6052 Game Audio: Theories and Practices (20 credits) **Option modules:** PER6037 Professional Production Practice (20 credits) PER6038 Sound Design Final Portfolio (20 credits)	**Ordinary Degree**, awarded on achievement of 300 credits, including 60 credits at Level 6 and 120 credits at each of Levels 4 and 5 **Honours Degree**, awarded on achievement of 360 credits, including 120 credits at each of Levels, 4, 5 and 6

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. Other option modules may also be introduced at a later stage enabling the programme to respond to changes in the subject area.

6. Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning and teaching

Teaching in the BSc Sound Design (Hons) degree will involve a substantial component of individual or small-group teaching. Much of the best education is an interactive process, with learners, professional practitioner-teachers and academics gaining mutual benefit within research and a professionally informed environment. The interaction between teaching, research (which includes the informed expertise of creative practitioners), and scholarship is a crucial element.

A learner studying for the Sound Design (Hons) degree will typically experience a range of varied teaching drawn appropriately from the following:

- Seminars or other forms of small-group discussion, sometimes involving individual or group learner presentations to develop oral presentation, negotiation and communication skills.

- Other forms of small group teaching and learning in which learners have the opportunity to work together as a team.

- One-to-one interaction, mainly supporting the development of self-direction, intellectual independence and research skills through dissertations, analysis and individual projects.

- Lectures that stimulate thought, discussion and debate and encourage further reading, listening and research by which learners can extend their knowledge and understanding.

- Workshops and master classes, usually addressing the acquisition of creative skills and techniques within a group context and often benefiting from the experience of visiting specialists.

- Writing (essays, learning journals, etc.) as a means of developing research techniques, acquiring knowledge, and presenting ideas and arguments in written form.

- Practical exercises are usually connected with developing creative, analytical and aural skills.

- Independent learning, whether as directed reading and listening related to essay writing, dissertation/project work, or as practice for developing creative skills.

- Studio or laboratory work, including hands-on experience using electronic equipment for sound design, composition and recording.

- Use of computer-assisted learning (Blackboard), of email for discussion groups or tutorial supervision, and of other forms of ICT.

For learners completing the BSc (Hons) in Sound Design, intellectual and technical development links four critical areas of study across three years. The development of technical skills and understanding studio-based audio production takes place from Level 4 (Recording and mixing Techniques) to Level 5 (Creative Audio Production) with a self-guided project integral to the Level 6 equivalent (Professional Production Project). These modules link with and often overlap with the equivalent live audio module from Level 4 (Live Audio).

Studio-based audio production skills link similarly to the sound design modules that are introduced at Level 4 (Sound Design for Moving Image) and developed further at Level 5 and 6 (Sound Design for Non-Linear Media and Sound Design & Sonic Installation), albeit with a linked requirement for the development of contextual understanding via critical study of this academic field over both years.

Some modules divide emphasis between technical and intellectual aspects, such as Audio Production Technologies at Level 4, which focuses on how key principles are applied often with a scientific and engineering focus, while others emphasize the latter via the academic theorization of audio; this is manifest with the development of key research methods at Level 5 that underpin the dissertation equivalent in the final year.

At all levels, the objective is to develop learners as independent critical thinkers with professional sound design and audio production skills. A selection of lectures, master classes, seminars, and workshops are provided, along with a supplementary selection of online learning resources.

Assessment

Assessment methods are those considered most appropriate to the nature of the programme, the learner profile and the requirements of future employers in terms of the knowledge, understanding and skills required. These will include formative and summative assessments (some coursework elements fall into both categories). Formative assessment methods allow tutors to deliver learners written and/or oral feedback. Throughout their learning journey, learners are prepared for the assignments through seminars and workshops. Informal formative assessment takes place on an ongoing basis through seminars structured to include activities that assist learners in developing the knowledge and skills required to fulfil the module learning outcomes.

Approaches include:

- Creative projects, often assessed by a mixture of continuous assessment, documentation and final presentation, and especially relevant for interdisciplinary work (for example, sound and music in combination with theatre, gaming, film & video, etc.).

- Essays and other coursework enable learners to display a broader knowledge of subject matter than in examination papers and test their ability to investigate a topic and organize their material and ideas to a prescribed deadline.

- Extended dissertations, individual projects and portfolios as products of advanced understanding, knowledge, research skills and/or creative achievement.

- Oral presentations for testing presentation and communication skills in an individual or group situation.

- Reports on empirical work, which may take the form of fieldwork or experiments, might include audio-visual or other documentary evidence, and should demonstrate the learners' ability to apply appropriate analytical methods, whether qualitative or quantitative, and to plan and carry out a research project in a manner appropriate to its cultural context.

- Group and individual portfolios of written work and audio content will include research, pre-production, production and post-production work submissions. Where group work is undertaken, there will be a requirement for individuals to define their own contribution clearly. For group-based presentations, annotated PowerPoint slides with a delineated workload would be a specified standard requirement.

- Critical self-evaluation and role analysis in individual reflective written evaluations.

- Tasks aimed at the assessment of specific production skills which will target each individual's career aspirations.

Contact Hours

Learners can expect to receive up to 12 hours of scheduled learning activities per week. This may include lectures, seminars, workshops, or practical demonstration. A full breakdown of contact hours can be found in individual module descriptors.

7. Programme Regulations

This programme will be subject to the following assessment regulations:

- *Regulations for Taught Degree Programmes (2023)*

8. Support for learners

The following systems are in place to support you to be successful with your studies:

- The appointment of a personal tutor to support you through your programme
- A programme handbook and induction at the beginning of your studies
- Library resources, include access to books, journals and databases - many of which are available in electronic format – and support from trained library staff
- Access to Blackboard, our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which is accessible via PC, laptop, tablet or mobile device
- Access to the MyBNU portal where you can access all University systems, information and news, record your attendance at sessions, and access your personalised timetable
- Academic Registry staff providing general guidance on University regulations, exams, and other aspects of learners and course administration
- Central learner services, including teams supporting academic skills development, career success, student finance, accommodation, chaplaincy, disability and counselling
- Support from the Bucks Students' Union, including the Students' Union Advice Centre which offers free and confidential advice on University processes.

9. Programme monitoring and review

BNU has a number of ways for monitoring and reviewing the quality of learning and teaching on your programme. You will be able to comment on the content of their programme via the following feedback mechanisms:

- Formal feedback questionnaires and anonymous module 'check-ins'
- Participation in external surveys
- Programme Committees, via appointed student representatives
- Informal feedback to your programme leader

Quality and standards on each programme are assured via the following mechanisms:

- An initial event to approve the programme for delivery
- An annual report submitted by the External Examiner following a process of external moderation of work submitted for assessment
- The Annual Monitoring process, which is overseen by the University's Education Committee
- Review by the relevant PSRB(s)
- Periodic Subject Review events held every five years
- Other sector compliance and review mechanisms

10. Internal and external reference points

Design and development of this programme has been informed by the following internal and external reference points:

- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- The QAA Subject Benchmark Statement – see detailed mapping below
- The BNU Qualifications and Credit Framework
- The BNU Grading Descriptors
- The University Strategy

Mapping of Subject Benchmark Statement and any relevant Apprenticeship Standard to Programme Learning Outcomes

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard:	Knowledge and understanding (K)			Analysis and Criticality (C)			Application and Practice (P)				Transferable skills and other attributes (T)		
Benchmark / Standard requirement	**K1**	**K2**	**K3**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**
Demonstrate the ability to explore, evaluate, apply or challenge associated scholarship and research.	X	X		X	X							X	
Demonstrate an awareness of the implications of an interdisciplinary approach to music for creation, innovation, and research.	X		X	X	X	X					X	X	X
Demonstrate critical awareness of issues of debate or uncertainty raised from analysing musical materials.		X	X		X	X						X	X
Demonstrate an individual musical personality or 'voice', through advanced technical skills and	X	X	X				X		X	X		X	X

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard:	Knowledge and understanding (K)			Analysis and Criticality (C)			Application and Practice (P)				Transferable skills and other attributes (T)		
Benchmark / Standard requirement	**K1**	**K2**	**K3**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**
deeper levels of interpretative insight.													
Demonstrate the ability to internalise and reconstruct musical materials, whether aurally or in written form.	X		X	X		X					X	X	X
Demonstrate qualities of leadership within a creative team.		X	X			X		X			X	X	X
Demonstrate the potential for artistic and creative leadership and innovation.			X			X		X			X	X	X
Demonstrate the ability to produce independent work of high quality (rigorous, defensible, robust, imaginative).	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Demonstrate advanced skills of teamwork,						X		X			X	X	X

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Benchmark / Standard requirement	**K1**	**K2**	**K3**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**
negotiation, organisation, and decision making.													
Demonstrate confidence in project planning and management.					X			X		X	X	X	X
Demonstrate the ability to adapt and respond creatively to different professional and cultural environments.	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Demonstrate advanced knowledge of - or innovative approaches to - the application of ICT skills to the area studied.	X						X		X	X			X

Mapping of Programme Learning Outcomes to Modules

Programme Learning Outcome	Knowledge and understanding (K)			Analysis and Criticality (C)			Application and Practice (P)				Transferable skills and other attributes (T)		
Module Code (Core)	**K1**	**K2**	**K3**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**
Level 4													
Audio Production Technologies	X	X				X	X		X				X
Live Audio	X	X				X	X	X	X				X
Sound Design for Moving Image	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X				X
Recording & Mixing Techniques	X	X				X	X	X	X				X
Computer Programming for Audio Applications	X	X				X	X		X	X			X
Level 5													
Location Sound & Post-production	X	X	X				X	X	X	X		X	X
Sound Design for Non-linear Media	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X		X	X
Creative Audio Production	X	X	X			X	X		X		X		X
Sound Design Projects	X	X	X		X		X	X	X				X
Research Methods				X	X	X					X	X	X

Programme Learning Outcome	Knowledge and understanding (K)			Analysis and Criticality (C)			Application and Practice (P)				Transferable skills and other attributes (T)		
Module Code (Core)	**K1**	**K2**	**K3**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**
Advanced Recording & Mixing Techniques	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X			X
Level 6													
Sound Design & Sonic Installation	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Immersive Audio Techniques	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Dissertation/Independent Work	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
Sound Design Final Project	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Game Audio: Theories and Practices	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X			X