PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Key Information

Programme Title:	BA (Hons) Songwriting and Music Production BA (Hons) Songwriting 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) Songwriting 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
Accreditation details:	n/a
Length of programme:	Three years Four 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):	BASWMUFT / BASWMUFY
UCAS Code(s):	
Approval date:	February 2023
Date of last update:	March 2025

2. Programme Summary

This degree covers the three main areas essential to building a career as a professional songwriter.

- Students will learn how to develop their song writing skills to a professional standard by working on their material with our experienced tutors while also exploring a variety of techniques for writing songs to maximise their creative potential

- Students will also study audio production and recording, so they become confident at producing recordings of their own and other people's work

- The third area of study will enable students to understand how to monetise and promote their creativity. As part of this students will have the opportunity to study some of the key elements of the music business and the business of songwriting. Students will also learn about a number of DIY approaches to the music business, and explore other areas of music entrepreneurship including sources of funding and how to form a business.

Over the duration of the programme students will be guided through the art of songwriting, and be given opportunities to develop their skills in the University's music studios. Students will take part in shared masterclasses and attend guest lectures with industry partners and associates, including professional songwriters, music producers, and music publishers. Songwriting is just one part of a bigger music production picture, and thus students will study modules and collaborate with students from our well-established suite of music programmes.

3. Programme Aims and Learning Outcomes

Programme Aims

This programme aims to:

1. Equip learners with a comprehensive understanding of the key concepts of songwriting and music composition

2. Provide learners with the opportunity to use relevant technologies creatively to record, produce, and compose original audio content

3. Provide students with the knowledge, confidence, and social awareness to apply a variety of business skills within a professional music industry environment

4. Develop students' academic skills enabling them to become active and autonomous learners and critical thinkers

5. Enhance students' personal, leadership, creative, and entrepreneurial skills

Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding (K)

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

ID	Learning Outcome
K1	Define how music and audio interconnect with other disciplines in the arts, humanities, and social and physical sciences as appropriate
K2	Assimilate information and insight from scholarly discourse (including from other arts or sciences) and relate them to the practice and experience of audio production
K3	Explore, through evaluation, application and challenge, associated scholarship, research, or practice

Analysis and Criticality (C)

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

ID	Learning Outcome
C1	Outline with originality the contemporary issues facing practitioners within audio and music production settings, including in the use of technology
C2	Capture, publish, analyse, and edit music and sound using appropriate technological (digital recording) resources
C3	Through critique, appraise the relationship between theory and practice in music, sound, and technology
C4	Evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts, and data to make critically informed judgements, frame appropriate questions, and propose solutions to problems

Application and Practice (P)

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

ID	Learning Outcome
P1	Respond positively to self-criticism and the criticism of others while maintaining confidence in their own creative work
P2	Display the artistic, technical, aesthetical, and expressive skills necessary to communicate audio productions convincingly to a listener
P3	Harness technological resources for music production, performance, composition, and sound design
P4	Collaborate positively with co-creators, including those from different artistic disciplines, to develop creative outputs
P5	Synthesise inputs (knowledge, materials, information) in order to generate outputs in a written, aural, or practical format

Transferable skills and other attributes (T)

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

ID	Learning Outcome
T1	Demonstrate the potential for artistic and creative leadership and innovation
T2	Work independently to understand their own learning style and work regime
T3	Manage their workload, ensuring adequate preparation and the meeting of deadlines
T4	Demonstrate innovative approaches to the application of ICT skills to the areas studied
T5	Demonstrate resilience in developing and sustaining a career path, taking account of personal health and welfare

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.

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On this programme, attributes are developed through a wide variety of teaching, learning and assessment opportunities that allow learners to showcase their fundamental knowledge in the discipline of audio and music production studies, including a detailed grasp of industry-standard practical production techniques (K1, K3, P2, P4). We place a significant emphasis on developing leadership skills for future employment in the creative industries. Learners also get the opportunity to display critical thinking attributes and work collaboratively with peers (P1, T1, T3, T4). Learners will be encouraged to investigate critically analytical approaches to studying and disseminating research in sound, music and associated technologies (C1, C2, C3). Ultimately, we focus on allowing learners the time to expand their creative audio production capabilities through individual and group-based projects tailored toward dissemination within the professional audio production environment (K2, P3, T2).

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[1]	**Core modules:** COM0009 Professional Skills Review (20 credits) COM0010 Final Project (20 credits) PER0007 Live Performance Practice (20 credits) PER0008 Introduction to Popular Music (20 credits) PER0009 Introduction to Composition (20 credits) PER0010 Introduction to Entrepreneurship (20 credits)	**N/A.** No credit is awarded at this Level.
Level 4	**Core modules:** PER4002 Audio Production Technologies (20 credits) PER4009 Entertainment Industry Framework (20 credits) PER4011 Managing Your Brand (20 credits) PER4014 Performance Practice & Reflection (20 credits) PER4036 Industry Issues (20 credits) PER4037 Introduction to Songwriting (20 credits)	**Certificate of Higher Education**, awarded on achievement of 120 credits at Level 4
Level 5	**Core modules:** PER5022 Music Publishing (20 credits) PER5030 Research Methods (20 credits) PER5086 Advanced Recording and Mixing Techniques (20 credits) PER5034 Performance Development (20 credits) PER5051 Songwriting Techniques (20 credits) **Option modules:** *Choose modules to the total of 20 credits:* PER5033 Advanced Performance Practice & Reflection (20 credits) PER5020 The Music Entrepreneur (20 credits) *Other option modules may also be introduced at a later stage enabling the programme to respond to changes in the subject area*	**Diploma of Higher Education**, awarded on achievement of 240 credits, including a minimum of 120 credits at Level 5

[1] Modules on the Foundation Year only apply to learners who are enrolled on the "with Foundation Year" programme.

Level 6	Core modules: PER6035 Extended Independent Work (40 credits) PER6042 Digital Marketing (20 credits) PER6048 Performance Application Strategy (20 credits) PER6065 Composition for Moving Image Media (20 credits) PER6066 Lyrical Analysis (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

A learner studying the Music Production degree, and its pathways, will typically experience the following teaching methodologies:

- **Supervision**, which supports the development of creative skills in production, composition and programming, personal development planning, and self-directed research skills in individual projects

- Other forms of **small group teaching** and learning in which learners can 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 and seminars** encouraging discussion and further reading/listening by which learners can extend their knowledge and understanding.

- **Workshops and Masterclasses**, typically 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 in equipment for production, programming, and composition.

- Use of **virtual learning environment** (Blackboard) for discussion groups, tutorial supervision, and other forms of ICT.

The objective of learning at all levels is to develop learners as independent critical thinkers with professional music production skills. To achieve this a selection of lectures, masterclasses, seminars, and workshops are provided along with a supplementary selection of online learning resources.

Assessment

The following assessment activities are used in this programme:

- **Creative projects**, often assessed by a mixture of continuous assessment, documentation, and final presentation, and especially relevant for interdisciplinary work.

- **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 organise 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.

- **Reports** on empirical work, which may take the form of fieldwork or laboratory 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 contribution clearly.

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

- Tasks aimed at assessing specific **production, performance, programming, and composition skills** 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 students and course administration
- Central student 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, Impact 2022

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**	**K4**	**K5**	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**T1**	**T2**	**T3**	**T4**	**T5**
Demonstrate the ability to explore, evaluate, apply or challenge associated scholarship and research.		X	X		X	X	X					X		X			X			
Demonstrate awareness of the critical debates arising from the placing of music in wider contexts.	X	X		X		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		X	X		X			
Demonstrate critical awareness of issues of debate or uncertainty raised from analysing musical materials.			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	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Demonstrate an individual musical personality or 'voice', through advanced technical skills and deeper levels of interpretative insight.	X	X	X					X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			
Demonstrate the ability to internalise and reconstruct musical materials, whether aurally or in written form.	X	X	X			X			X	X		X			X		X			
Demonstrate qualities of leadership within a creative team.								X			X		X		X		X			X
Demonstrate the potential for artistic and creative leadership and innovation.								X	X	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

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	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Demonstrate advanced skills of teamwork, negotiation, organisation and decision-making.								X	X		X	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		
Demonstrate advanced knowledge of - or innovative approaches to - the application of ICT skills to the area studied.									X	X		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	C4	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Level 4																	
PER4002 Audio Production Technologies	X	X			X	X			X	X		X		X	X		
PER4009 Entertainment Industry Framework	X	X	X			X	X					X		X	X		X
PER4011 Managing Your Brand	X					X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
PER4XXX Performance Practice	X	X			X	X		X	X	X		X		X	X		
PER4XXX Introduction to Songwriting	X		X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X		
PER4XXX Industry Issues (20 credits)	X					X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
Level 5																	
PER5086 Advanced Recording and Mixing Techniques	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
PER5030 Research Methods				X	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	C4	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
PER5051 Songwriting Techniques	X		X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
PER5022 Music Publishing				X	X		X					X		X	X		X
PER5XXX Performance Development	X		X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Level 6																	
PER6035 Dissertation/Independent Work	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X		X	X	X		
PER6XXX Composition for Moving Image Media	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
PER6XXX Lyrical Analysis	X					X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
PER6042 Digital Marketing				X	X		X					X		X	X		X
PER6XXX Performance Application Strategy	X		X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	