MUSIC PRODUCTION &
SOUND ENGINEERING
DEGREE BA(HONS)
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Establish yourself as a practising music producer and sound engineer

Making music from day one, our Music Production & Sound Engineering Degree is for creative individuals who want to develop an extensive understanding of the creative process, experiment and innovate in music production and learn the craft of sound engineering.
### Programme Overview

#### Course Length:
2 or 3 Years

#### Entry Requirements:
18+, high school certificate (equivalent to UK A Levels), music production experience (links to work or portfolio required)

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**MPSC01 - Studio Recording Technique**
This is the first of three studio-focused modules, which will teach you the foundations of sound engineering and studio recording skills. A professional studio-based engineer at our facilities in the Funkhaus will lead you through everything from the basic physics of sound and audio electronics, to the use of studio appliances. There will also be discussions on the criteria that defines something as high quality, the various ways these standards can be achieved and the different schools of thought promoting these methods. At the end, you will make a recording that demonstrates the fundamental engineering skills you’ve learned.

**MPSC02 - Creative Music Production Techniques**
Here we introduce you to the core principles of software-based audio recording, editing and mixing including the operational skills you will need. Working with the industry-standard audio recording platform Pro Tools HD, you will learn its range of features as well as the Pro Tools 101 syllabus to prepare you for the certification exam at the end of the semester. Your musical perspective will be widened through practical projects that will also train your ear to recognise production styles. To conclude this module, you will create an original track that demonstrates your contextual understanding of key production techniques and processes.

**MPSC03 - Music Production Analysis**
Explore what it is that makes music have certain characteristics through active listening, class discussion and group analysis. Together we will come to understand which traits point to specific kinds of content, how production contributes to making a genre and what vocabulary helps us identify these things. Specifically we will examine the overtones series and how it influences texture as well as various signal processing techniques, reverb, panning, delay, compression, and tempo. There will be an introduction to music theory and collective investigations will teach you what’s going on behind the music in its structure, instrumentation and composition.
MPSC04 - Studio Recording Practice
Continue your guided practice of recording instrumental and vocal parts live and become more confident in your abilities. More experience in this area means more creativity when setting up your own sessions. We will work with the K3 and K4 Studios and focus on some advanced aspects of multitrack recording in combination with practical exercises and session observation. The collaborative project you will complete at the end of this module, will showcase how your previous knowledge of engineering and recording techniques has been advanced.

MPSC05 - Creative Music Production Practice
The key synthesis and sample based production techniques you’ll be introduced to in this module will support your journey towards fluency with DAW based music and sound creation. Here we will explore essential theoretical practices that inform our debates on music production and cutting edge software development as well as your approaches to making computer based music. Sessions will focus on the use of Ableton Live as a creative production tool, but will also include an introduction to third party software.

FLMC04 - Creative Practitioner I
Music makers are accustomed to the idea of practice in their everyday lives, whether that be in the practice room or studio space. It’s also a fact that a professional in the music world constantly hones their musical and technical abilities. The Creative Practitioner module will tackle developing personal and practical skills head-on, using the particular lens of the music industry to ensure that theoretical discussions and exercises remain grounded and relevant for the fast changing field.
MPSD07 - Optimising Studio Workflow
When time and money are an issue, achieving the desired creative results relies heavily on planning, prioritizing, delegating, and technical efficiency. Although the recording experience is different every time, there are many practical tools in and outside of the DAW that can be used to streamline your workflow and make your life easier. This module is the third to focus on sound engineering and will build upon the previous two. Here we explore organisational tools, practical techniques and other methods that facilitate session management and prepare you for the multitasking nature of production and sound engineering.

MPSD02 - Optimising Creative Music Production Workflow
While perhaps the sources of creativity are a mystery, we can definitely do something about making the creative process efficient. Here we give you the tools to improve your creative output by teaching you how to facilitate constructive exchanges with others. You will also learn how to apply creativity enhancing techniques to your workflow, which will include an overview of the manipulation and misuse of technologies, chance-based operations and communication skills.

MPSD03 - Acoustics for Music Production
This module is designed to complement your practical knowledge of music production with the science of sound. You will learn how to understand and describe the fundamental properties of sound and musical instruments and the technology used to measure it. We will go over the psychoacoustics of how we interpret sound as well as how to use recording spaces. In doing so, you will be able to gain a more detailed understanding of the recording process, the listening process, how to design sound and the nature of acoustic spaces.

MPSD04 - Critical Listening & Mastering
Here we will develop the critical and analytical skills necessary for musicians, audio engineers and producers. Simultaneously, we will also go through the technical and creative aspects of mastering audio. Because “there is no black magic used when mastering audio, only knowledge and practice-based experience”, there will be a lot of listening practice and employment of self-evaluation and objectivity to make the right decisions on how to balance the finished product. We will also consider how to set up an effective listening environment that includes an overview of gear handling, measurement and formats and stem & mix mastering. Discussions will take place about the relevance of mastering today, accompanied by some tales about the ethical and psychological aspects of music production from the perspective of an engineer.
MPSD15 - Production Techniques for Visual Media (choice 1 of 2)
In this module you will learn techniques to make you familiar with how to pair sound and image, and to create meaningful sound for visual media. By the end you will have made a portfolio that showcases your understanding of the most important stages in audio-production for film, video and other visual media. Together we will go over both the technical and creative approaches for different applications like movies, advertisements or art, and your preferences will dictate how you show us your personality in your works.

MPSD25 - Contemporary Music Production Arrangement (choice 2 of 2)
There are a few steps to follow that can help you take an idea, theory or concept and express it through music. Begin with a structure of composition and arrangement which will help generate core material for the cohesive development of your thoughts. This module explores methods that take us from pre-aural stages, through scoring to post-scoring, and also applies these to improvisation. We will look at traditional music theory and also modern techniques while reviewing notation. Procedures to prepare midi for export from a DAW system into a score-based notation software and the use of instrumentation in creating sonic textures, will also be covered. The ultimate point is to guide you on how to think creatively before beginning your production stages.

FLMD04 - Creative Practitioner II
Building on your first year’s portfolio, you will refine your goals and professional development aspirations. You will be exposed to a wide variety of industry expertise and input from the creative sector. With real-world project engagement you will learn to design, implement and review practice to enable you to incorporate the proposed philosophical models in your everyday life.
MPSH02 - Working to a Brief part 1: Developing & Modelling
The Working to a Brief project consists of two modules in the final stage of your studies on the degree programme. They are designed to be self-directed and allow you to experience what a real world entrepreneurial undertaking would be like. Along the way you will be guided by your module tutor, your peers and, most importantly, an external third party mentor. In this first part you will begin searching through professional fields and evaluating them in order to plan a project. The goal is to generate at least three proposals for directed study under external guidance, that are of sufficient weight to cover two semesters worth of work.

MPSH03 - Working to a Brief part 2: Negotiated Production
The second part of Working to a Brief focuses on the practical aspects of carrying out the project as well as its evaluation. You will record your progress in a diary and have access to weekly tutorials where further guidance can be sought. Here we carry out the simulation of a genuine scenario of being a self-employed, contemporary music professional. You will plan, conduct and evaluate the full life-cycle of a suitable and professional project/endeavour.

MPSHO1 - Innovation in Music Production
Designed to allow you to take an area of music production that you are passionate about, this module will stretch and develop your production techniques. It is based on the conceptual and practical overlap between “real life / daily experiences” and “professional life / workfield feedback”, and intends to let you develop a better version of yourself through the production of innovative pieces.
MPSHP1 - Research & Practice - Honours Project
We have reached the final stage. The honour’s project is designed to allow you to pick an area you feel could really demonstrate your own passion and drive in music production and/or sound engineering. The expectation is that you produce a detailed research proposal that will identify and articulate either a viable scholarly focus or a production approach for an extended piece of music production. You will then independently research your project either through a creative/practical production project with accompanying research OR through a written thesis. This demonstrates your ability to critically evaluate, devise and implement appropriate methodological frameworks for analysis and debate, and assess a range of intellectually challenging scholarly or creative materials. Your project will exhibit clear and persuasive arguments based on a sound application of theory and/or creative practice that culminates in a written dissertation of 10,000 words or an equivalent practical project with supporting documentation.

A NOTE ON YOUR FINAL YEAR
The overall nature of the final stage of the BA(Hons) Degree program is characterised by themes of independent enquiry, the ability to undertake research in fields of expertise, demonstrating the structured acquisition of high-level skills and knowledge, pushing the envelope of music production techniques and synthesising one’s own creative aspirations with the needs of others.