

# | Middlesbrough College

| Foundation Degree Audio and Music Production

| Programme Specification

September 2023



## Programme specification

*(Notes on how to complete this template are provide in Annexe 3)*

### 1. Overview/ factual information

<b>Programme/award title(s)</b>	Foundation Degree in Audio and Music Production
<b>Teaching Institution</b>	Middlesbrough College
<b>Awarding Institution</b>	The Open University (OU)
<b>Date of first OU validation</b>	2023
<b>Date of latest OU (re)validation</b>	N/A
<b>Next revalidation</b>	2027/28
<b>Credit points for the award</b>	240
<b>UCAS Code</b>	A222
<b>HECoS Code</b>	
<b>LDCS Code (FE Colleges)</b>	
<b>Programme start date and cycle of starts if appropriate.</b>	September 2023
<b>Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)</b>	Music (2019)
<b>Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes. For apprenticeships, the standard or framework against which it will be delivered.</b>	<p>Consultation with audio and music production staff from the following companies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Alrose Productions</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Live events company providing Staging &amp; Sets / AV / Video / Sound / Lighting / Barrier / Project Management / Shell Scheme &amp; Electrics.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">The Arc</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Theatre &amp; arts centre providing arts-based education and entertainment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">Blank Studios</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Professional recording studio</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">Bluebridge Studios</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Recording studio</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">Coatsink</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Game developer and publisher</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">The Empire</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ 3-storey nightclub and live music venue</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">The Forum</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Venue, music education centre and recording studio.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">Foster Sounds</a></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Music composition, voice acting, dubbing mixing</li> <li>• <a href="#">The Globe</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Grade II listed Art Deco theatre</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">KU Bar</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Live music venue and late bar</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">Middlesbrough Theatre</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Theatre</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">Middlesbrough Town Hall</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Municipal facility hosting live music, comedy and corporate events</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">Tees Music Alliance</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Not-for-profit organisation working to develop, promote and enrich local music via two venues (Georgian Theatre and Green Room) and a recording studio (Green Dragon Studios).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">QAA Characteristics Statement: Foundation Degree</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Framework for Higher Education Qualifications</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">QAA Quality Code</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SEEC Credit Level Descriptors for Higher Education</a></li> </ul>
<b>Professional/statutory recognition</b>	N/A
<b>For apprenticeships fully or partially integrated Assessment.</b>	N/A
<b>Mode(s) of Study (PT, FT, DL, Mix of DL &amp; Face-to-Face) Apprenticeship</b>	FT Face-to-Face
<b>Duration of the programme for each mode of study</b>	FT 2 Years
<b>Dual accreditation (if applicable)</b>	N/A
<b>Date of production/revision of this specification</b>	December 2022

**Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.**

**More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content, and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in student module guide(s) and the students handbook.**

**The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.**

## 2.1 Educational aims and objectives

The overall aims of the programme are:

- to deliver the appropriate training for students aspiring to work in the audio and music industry
- to produce graduates with the sector-relevant skills, knowledge, understanding, and professional attitudes required to contribute to the audio and music industry
- to inform and excite students about the variety of opportunities in the audio and music industry
- to develop students' awareness of the applications of audio and music technology in different contexts
- to help students to understand the relationships between practice and theory in audio and music production
- to involve students in an intellectually stimulating and satisfying experience of learning and studying audio and music production
- to provide students with a broad and detailed understanding of key audio and music production concepts
- to develop students' ability to utilise a range of study methods in the exploration of audio and music production
- to develop students' enthusiasm, aptitudes, and interests to bring out their full potential
- to develop students' ability to work independently.

## 2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards

(Where the award is part of a hierarchy of awards/programmes, this section describes the articulation between them, opportunities for progression upon completion of the programme, and arrangements for bridging modules or induction)

The Fd Audio and Music Production programme is related to the BA (Hons) Audio and Music Production programme, with the latter serving as an opportunity for progression upon completion of this programme.

2.3 For Foundation Degrees, please list where the 60 credit work-related learning takes place. For apprenticeships an articulation of how the work based learning and academic content are organised with the award.

The following 20 credit modules have been identified for work-related learning:

Recording Studio Engineering (L4)  
Mixing Engineering (L5)  
Live Events Production (L5)

These modules aim to give students a taste of the role assignment, structures, workflows, and deadlines they can expect when working in the audio and music production industries. Students work on industry-informed projects which follow industry standard workflows and deadlines. The projects are designed by the module leaders: industry active professionals who use the currency of their professional activity to assure the validity of the work-related learning.

2.4 List of all exit awards

Cert. HE Audio and Music Production [120 credits]  
Fd Audio and Music Production [240 credits]

### 3. Programme structure and learning outcomes

*(The structure for any part-time delivery should be presented separately in this section.)*

<b><u>Programme Structure - LEVEL 4</u></b>			
<b>Compulsory modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Is module compensatable?</b>	<b>Semester runs in</b>
Audio and MIDI Sequencing	20	Yes	Year long
Critical Listening	20	Yes	Year long
Music Production	20	Yes	Year long
Music Theory and Composition	20	Yes	Year long
Popular Music Cultures	20	Yes	Year long
Recording Studio Engineering	20	Yes	Year long

Intended learning outcomes at Level 4 are listed below:

<b><u>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 4</u></b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<b>A1:</b> Demonstrate understanding of the relationships between acoustic, electroacoustic, musical parameters and the percepts of sound.	<b>A1:</b> Music lab-based demonstrations/practical sessions - which include written, numerical, diagrammatic and listening exercises - in which acoustic, electroacoustic (including time and frequency domains), musical parameters and the percepts of sound are explored, demonstrated and discussed. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support. Some sessions are used for one-to-one feedback.

<b><u>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 4</u></b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
<p><b>A2:</b> Demonstrate understanding of audio engineering theory, audio/MIDI sequencer/DAW functionality/performance and hardware in the context of creative music production.</p> <p><b>A3:</b> Describe, explain and use key elements of music theory and key concepts of compositional techniques.</p> <p><b>A4:</b> Identify, demonstrate and describe the practical operation of, and technical issues relating to, a range of equipment with respect to creative/corrective recording and production techniques.</p>	<p><b>A2:</b> Music lab-based demonstrations/practical Sessions - which include written, numerical, diagrammatic and listening exercises - in which theoretical concepts are explored, demonstrated and discussed. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support. Some sessions are used for one-to-one feedback.</p> <p><b>A3:</b> Music lab-based demonstrations/practical sessions - which include written, numerical, diagrammatic and listening exercises - are used to describe, explain and utilise key elements of music theory and key concepts of compositional techniques.</p> <p><b>A4:</b> Recording studio/control room-based demonstrations/practical sessions – are used to identify, demonstrate and describe the practical operation of - and technical issues relating to - a range of recording studio equipment with respect to creative/corrective studio recording and production techniques. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support. Some sessions are used for one-to-one feedback.</p>

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p><b>B1:</b> Apply a range of techniques relating to recording, audio manipulation and MIDI data manipulation, to well defined creative goals in a variety of contexts.</p>	<p><b>B1:</b> Recording studio/control Room-based demonstrations/practical sessions – are used to help students to consider, evaluate and apply a range of recording studio techniques to well defined creative goals. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support.</p>
<p><b>B2:</b> Apply knowledge and understanding of musical theory and compositional techniques through experimentation with DAWs.</p>	<p><b>B2:</b> Music lab-based demonstrations/practical sessions - which include written, numerical, diagrammatic and listening exercises - are used to help students apply knowledge and understanding of musical theory and compositional techniques through experimentation with notation software.</p>
<p><b>B3:</b> Experiment with audio applications to demonstrate a range of concepts related to sound and perception.</p>	<p><b>B3:</b> Music lab-based demonstrations/practical sessions in which concepts related to sound and perception are described, discussed and demonstrated. Students practice these techniques in facilitated practical exercises using DAWs and app creation software. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support. Some sessions are used for one-to-one feedback.</p>
<p><b>B4:</b> Recognise the issues arising from personal and collaborative contributions to a group project.</p>	<p><b>B4:</b> Group seminars introduce key features of collaborative workflows. Facilitated group workshops give students the opportunity to recognise the issues arising from personal and collaborative contributions to a group project. Students participate in groups, working together to</p>



3B. Cognitive skills	
<p><b>B5:</b> Recognise and interpret key relationships between music theory rules/concepts and compositional practice.</p> <p><b>B6:</b> Recognise the key relationships between music, technology and popular culture.</p>	<p>formulate the details of a collaborative project, or part thereof and its practical implementation.</p> <p><b>B5:</b> Music lab-based demonstrations/practical Sessions - which include written, numerical, diagrammatic and listening exercises - are used to help students recognise and interpret key relationships between music theory rules/concepts and compositional practice.</p> <p><b>B6:</b> Short Lectures introduce contextual concepts and relationships between music and technology. Group seminars give students the opportunity to recognise the key relationships between music, technology and popular culture.</p>
3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p><b>C1:</b> Operate successfully and efficiently a range of audio capture/signal processing hardware and software in a variety of contexts.</p> <p><b>C2:</b> Act with limited autonomy to operate DAWs to demonstrate digital audio and MIDI concepts such as signal routing, effects processing and audio/MIDI sequencer editing.</p>	<p><b>C1:</b> Recording studio/control room-based demonstrations/practical sessions and tutorials are used to help students successfully and efficiently to operate a range of audio capture and signal processing, hardware and software. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support.</p> <p><b>C2:</b> Music lab-based practical sessions which include facilitated practical exercises (using DAWs and app development software) that provide students with the opportunity to explore test digital audio and MIDI concepts such as signal routing, audio sample rates/bit depth and MIDI sequencer resolution and receive feedback on their attempts. Several sessions are used to provide opportunities to compete practical work</p>

3C. Practical and professional skills	
<p><b>C3:</b> Act with limited autonomy to safely run a recording session, adopting suitable recording protocols.</p> <p><b>C4:</b> Act with limited autonomy to produce an original musical composition, or apply a range of audio/MIDI editing techniques, to well-defined creative goals in a variety of contexts.</p> <p><b>C5:</b> Act with limited autonomy to produce written work/presentations.</p>	<p>associated assignments. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support.</p> <p><b>C3:</b> Recording studio/control room-based demonstrations/practical sessions and tutorials are used to help students to act with limited autonomy and safely to run a recording session adopting suitable recording studio/control room protocols.</p> <p><b>C4:</b> Music lab-based demonstrations/practical sessions in which audio and MIDI sequencer and music scoring application techniques/technical concepts are described, discussed and demonstrated. Students practice these techniques in facilitated practical exercises with limited autonomy. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support. Some sessions are used for one-to-one feedback.</p> <p><b>C5:</b> Short Lectures, group seminars and facilitated group workshops help students to communicate appropriately in the written word to communicate the key aspects of an individual investigation.</p>

3D. Key/transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p><b>D1:</b> Use session planning in a recording context.</p> <p><b>D2:</b> Use communication skills conforming to academic standards of presentation, structure and citation, appropriate to describe technical concepts and to articulate and apply creative intention/motivation where appropriate.</p> <p><b>D3:</b> Engage in group activities and take a co-operative approach to working and learning.</p> <p><b>D4:</b> Communicate the key aspects of an audio/music production based investigation.</p>	<p><b>D1:</b> Recording studio/control room-based demonstrations/practical sessions and tutorials are used to help students to identify and use session planning in a recording studio context.</p> <p><b>D2:</b> Short lectures, practical demonstrations, group seminars and individual tutorials help students to identify and use writing skills conforming to academic standards of presentation, structure and citation. music lab-based demonstrations/practical sessions are used to describe technical concepts in words (and referring to annotated diagrams) with an emphasis on appropriate use of terminology (e.g. perceptual, acoustic, electroacoustic) and citing sources using appropriate standards. In-session socratic questioning is used to help students learn to explain technical concepts using the appropriate terminology and without buffer words.</p> <p><b>D3:</b> Group seminars and facilitated group workshops help students to engage in team activities to enhance a co-operative approach to working and learning. Students participate in groups, working together to formulate the details of a collaborative project, or part thereof and its practical implementation.</p> <p><b>D4:</b> Short Lectures, group seminars and facilitated group workshops help students to communicate appropriately in speech to communicate the key aspects of an individual investigation.</p>

3D. Key/transferable skills	
<b>D5:</b> Demonstrate a range of audio and MIDI software skills appropriate to convey artistic intention.	<b>D5:</b> Music lab-based demonstrations/practical sessions in which audio and MIDI sequencer and music scoring application techniques/technical concepts are described, discussed and demonstrated. Students demonstrate these techniques in facilitated practical exercises with limited autonomy. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support.

**[Cert. HE Audio and Music Production]**

<b><u>Programme Structure - LEVEL 5</u></b>			
<b>Compulsory modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Is module compensatable?</b>	<b>Semester runs in</b>
Experimental Music Cultures	20	Yes	Year long
Game Audio	20	Yes	Year long
Live Events Production	20	Yes	Year long
Mixing Engineering	20	Yes	Year long
Synthesis and Sampling	20	Yes	Year long
Texture-Based Composition	20	Yes	Year long

**Intended learning outcomes at Level 5 are listed below:**

<b><u>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 5</u></b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<b>A1:</b> Demonstrate detailed knowledge of a range of knowledge/techniques/methods/operations in audio/live events/music production.	<b>A1:</b> Music lab-based lectures/practical sessions and control room sessions - which include written, numerical, diagrammatic and listening exercises - in which concepts of various aspects of audio and music production are explored, demonstrated and discussed. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support. Some sessions are used for one-to-one feedback relating to the first assignment.

<b><u>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 5</u></b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
<p><b>A2:</b> Critically analyse/review research/enquiry-based approaches.</p> <p><b>A3:</b> Demonstrate research/enquiry-based skills.</p> <p><b>A4:</b> Demonstrate detailed knowledge of work-related relationships in an audio/music production context.</p>	<p><b>A2:</b> Music lab-based lectures/practical sessions, group seminars and one-to-one tutorial sessions are provided to help students critically to analyse/review research/enquiry-based approaches.</p> <p><b>A3:</b> Music lab-based lectures/practical sessions, group seminars and one-to-one tutorial sessions are provided to help students critically to analyse/review research/enquiry-based approaches.</p> <p><b>A4:</b> Music lab-based lectures/practical sessions and control room sessions are provided to help students prepare for client relationships.</p>
<b>3B. Cognitive skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<p><b>B1:</b> Identify problems encountered in audio/live events/music production contexts and choose appropriate methods/tools for their resolution.</p>	<p><b>B1:</b> Music lab-based lectures/practical sessions and control room sessions are used to help students identify problems encountered in managing recording sessions/creating mixes and chose appropriate methods/tools for their resolution. Formative feedback is provided through practical in-session exercises.</p>

3B. Cognitive skills	
<p><b>B2:</b> Analyse, apply and interpret theoretical understanding of subtractive synthesis, modulation generators, and signal processing to create (and control) imitative and original sounds, sonic textures and music in a range of contexts.</p>	<p><b>B2:</b> Music lab-based lectures/practical sessions in which subtractive synthesis, modulation generators, performance control, and signal processing are analysed and applied. Students practice techniques - and interpret these techniques to create/control imitative and original sounds, sonic textures and music in a range of contexts - in facilitated practical exercises. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support.</p>
<p><b>B3:</b> Choose appropriate methods and technologies for composition, production, sound creation, and sound reinforcement systems in appropriate contexts.</p>	<p><b>B3:</b> Music lab-based lectures/practical sessions/recording studio/control room/live venue sessions in which methods and technologies for composition, production and sound creation, and sound reinforcement systems are analysed and applied. Students practice techniques - and utilise these approaches for sound reinforcement and to create/control/compose imitative and original sounds, sonic textures and music in a range of contexts - in facilitated practical exercises. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support.</p>
<p><b>B4:</b> Demonstrate a range of music software techniques for composition or performance purposes, and an openness to new ideas.</p>	<p><b>B4:</b> Music lab-based lectures/practical sessions and recording studio sessions are provided to demonstrate, explore and assess a range of music software techniques for performance purposes. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support.</p>
<p><b>B5:</b> Interpret and apply information and knowledge from a range of sources.</p>	<p><b>B5:</b> Group seminars, one-to-one tutorial sessions and presentations to/by peers facilitate students to interpret and apply information and knowledge from a range of sources to a work-related learning scenario and/or academic project.</p>

3B. Cognitive skills	
<b>B6:</b> Demonstrate an understanding of the key relationships between music, technology and experimental culture in an appropriate context.	<b>B6:</b> Group seminars, one-to-one tutorial sessions, music lab-based lectures/practical sessions and presentations to/by peers facilitate students to demonstrate intellectual flexibility and openness to new ideas.
3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p><b>C1:</b> Act with increasing autonomy with reduced need for supervision and direction in operating, editing and programming a range of audio/MIDI sequencing software/DAWs/hardware, in a variety of contexts.</p> <p><b>C2:</b> Act with increasing autonomy to operate, edit and programme a range of sound synthesis, MIDI control and signal/audio processing, mixing, and mastering hardware and software to create (and control) imitative and original sounds, sonic textures and music.</p> <p><b>C3:</b> Apply knowledge, practical skills and understanding to operate, edit and programme new and unfamiliar hardware and software sound creation/processing/production devices.</p>	<p><b>C1:</b> Music lab-based lectures/practical sessions and control room sessions help students to act with increasing autonomy with reduced need for supervision and direction in operating, editing and programming a range of audio mixing, audio processing hardware and software.</p> <p><b>C2:</b> Music lab-based lectures/practical sessions which include practical exercises, using DAWs, provide students with the opportunity to operate, edit and programming a range of audio/MIDI sequencing software with increasing autonomy. Several sessions are used to provide opportunities to compete practical work associated assignments.</p> <p><b>C3:</b> Music lab-based practical sessions which include practical exercises using DAWs that provide students with the opportunity to apply knowledge, practical skills and understanding to operate, edit and programme new and unfamiliar hardware and software sound creation/processing/production devices. Several sessions are used to provide opportunities to compete practical work associated assignments.</p>



3C. Practical and professional skills	
<b>C4:</b> Work with increasing autonomy, using initiative with reduced need for supervision and operate safely with awareness of hearing conservation.	<b>C4:</b> Music lab-based lectures/recording studio/control room/live venue practical sessions, group seminars and one-to-one tutorial sessions help students to work with increasing autonomy.
3D. Key/transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p><b>D1:</b> Select and utilise a range of music software techniques appropriate to the context.</p> <p><b>D2:</b> Reflect systematically on personal professionalism (and collaborative contribution where appropriate) to further develop learning.</p> <p><b>D3:</b> Use a range of methods to prepare, deliver and evaluate a presentation to peers.</p> <p><b>D4:</b> Use a range of specialist hardware and software appropriate to the discipline or study topic.</p>	<p><b>D1:</b> Music lab-based lectures/practical sessions and recording studio sessions - which include written, diagrammatic and listening exercises - in which specialist audio and music production software concepts are demonstrated, explored, and discussed with respect to a diverse range of contexts. Sessions provide ample opportunity for ongoing one-to-one demonstrations, formative feedback and tutorial support</p> <p><b>D2:</b> Music lab-based lectures/live venue sessions, control room sessions, group seminars and tutorials are used to help students to reflect systematically on personal and collaborative contribution.</p> <p><b>D3:</b> Group seminars and one-to-one tutorial sessions help students to prepare and deliver presentations to peers using a range of methods.</p> <p><b>D4:</b> Music lab-based lectures/practical sessions and one-to-one tutorial sessions help students to determine the specialist hardware and software appropriate to their proposed study topic/composition.</p>



**[Fd Audio and Music Production]**

#### 4. Distinctive features of the programme structure

- **Where applicable, this section provides details on distinctive features such as:**
  - where in the structure above a professional/placement year fits in and how it may affect progression
  - any restrictions regarding the availability of elective modules
  - where in the programme structure students must make a choice of pathway/route
- **Additional considerations for apprenticeships:**
  - how the delivery of the academic award fits in with the wider apprenticeship
  - the integration of the 'on the job' and 'off the job' training
  - how the academic award fits within the assessment of the apprenticeship

A significant feature of the programme structure is the duration of all modules, all are delivered year-long. There are many reasons for delivering modules over the academic year rather than competing in a single semester. Firstly, most modules involve the use of an industry standard Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) currently Avid Pro Tools and Ableton Live. For students to tackle meaningful industry-relevant, real-world assignments that utilise these DAWs, students need to become proficient in their use: year-long module delivery provides this opportunity.

Secondly, since audio and music production subsumes many disciplines (e.g. acoustics, electroacoustics, psychoacoustics, music, audio specifications, signal processing and sound synthesis) the relationships between the terminology used, specifically the way that subjective (psychoacoustic) parameters map to physical parameters, is best developed over a period of a year. This means that students are more likely to become proficient in the appropriate use of terminology for summative assignments than would be the case if half the modules are completed in the first semester.

Related to this issue is the need to determine which modules to deliver in the first semester, a question to which there is no optimum answer. By delivering all the modules across the academic year, students are exposed to the terminology of multiple sub-disciplines, the programme team continually emphasises these relationships.

More generally, year-long modules help to maintain the students' focus upon learning and teaching and less upon assessment, especially in the first half of the academic year. A year-long delivery model is also better suited to students requiring more support and guidance, and is helpful in developing independent learners.

#### 5. Support for students and their learning.

*(For apprenticeships this should include details of how student learning is supported in the work place)*

##### 5.1 Induction

The following activities are provided in induction week:

- students are introduced to the VLE and any other communication/file sharing tools necessary
- students are given two taster sessions to give them a feel for the course and to get them creating audio and music production content quickly
- alumni speak to new students about their experience of the programme.
- a representative from the Student Union helps to elect student representatives.

### 5.2 Engagement Support

Engagement is monitored closely to ensure that all students are getting the best from the programme. Should a student need to miss a session for any reason, they are required to contact the lecturer beforehand. Where a lecturer notes that a student has not attended with no warning, the student is contacted at the end of the session, asking if the student is well and reminding the student that they are required to let lecturers know if they cannot attend.

Where a student misses three consecutive sessions, the year tutor also contacts the student with an invitation to attend a formal meeting. Where attendance problems persist, the year tutor works with the college student support staff who, where necessary, direct students to the relevant confidential support (personal, financial, etc). Where students are facing difficulties, it is vital to ensure they get the right support and where necessary, decide to withdraw or suspend as the timing of any withdrawal/suspension can affect their student loan.

### 5.3 Tutorial Support

Student tutorial opportunities are embedded in all modules. Practical recording and control room sessions are structured to provide ongoing tutorials from lecturers while students are completing practical work assisted by an instructor/demonstrator or technician. Theory sessions are structured to provide input through demonstration followed by facilitated practical experimentation in which spontaneous tutorials can be held or scheduled for dedicated, timetabled weekly tutorial sessions. Formative and summative feedback tutorial sessions are also designed into each module and feedback tutorial sessions are listed in Module Handbooks.

### 5.4 Encouraging Completion

One of the significant advantages offered by the programme is the amount of time students spend with tutors. This is due to the relatively small number of students and a mode of delivery that includes a significant amount of facilitation. There are, therefore, plenty of opportunities to encourage students to meet assignment deadlines. With respect to assessment, the mantra of 'little and often' is repeated from Induction Week onwards from staff in both formative and written, summative feedback.

### 5.5 Reassessment Period

Tutorials and all essential resources are provided for students who are offered reassessment opportunities by a properly constituted Exam Board.

### 5.6 Year Tutors

The year tutor offers return to study sessions during which students are encouraged to reflect on their performance in preceding programmes and develop support strategies, determine the highest award classification that is attainable, and develop strategies to achieve this best outcome.

#### 5.7 Pastoral Support

In the experience of the course team, the amount of *ad hoc* pastoral support noted above is greatly valued by the students. More challenging are students who don't attend and the effect of non-attendance upon their performance. The programme team have all attended staff development sessions relating to Asperger's and dyslexia (attendance at many of these sessions is mandatory). For students with dyslexia, staff offer dyslexia-friendly versions of lecture notes and include a higher-contrast background on notes/session plans. Students declaring either condition receive a formal assessment after which the programme team are advised on the steps they must take. The Programme Team have received many emails from students offering thanks for sensitive and timely support.

#### 5.8 Academic Support and Skills

The delivery of many modules is based upon individual sessions that consist of demonstrations and practical exercises. This delivery strategy ensures that theory is always applied, that practical skills, knowledge and understanding are regularly checked, and that formative feedback is continuous rather than focussed at specific points in the academic year.

In addition to in-session help, students can also make appointments to get support from:

- members of the programme team: module leaders, lecturers, and technicians;
- the programme leader and year tutors.

The personal tutoring system is in place to support a student's full engagement with their programme of study and gain as much as possible from their time at the college. Though the emphasis is on academic support the meetings are also an opportunity to raise pastoral issues which may be having an impact on a student's academic performance. The tutor can offer support and advice and, if required, direct students to further support services available within the college which they may find of value. Student learning and personal development is supported throughout the programme, and explicitly in the work-related modules.

#### 5.9 Research Skills Development

The modules 'Popular Music Cultures' and 'Experimental Music Cultures' (at levels 4 and 5 respectively) are utilised to comprehensively develop students' research skills and extend the scope of research conducted on this programme and in further study. In the experience of the programme team, research focussed modules at each level are necessary on a vocational course to thoroughly embed the necessary skills to produce well-rounded, practically skilled graduates, who are also well prepared for the rigours of further study and/or research.

#### 5.10 IT Support

Students can also access remote support for learning via the college [Reboot scheme](#) and log IT support requests via the [HALO system](#).

#### 5.11 Technician Support

The specialised music labs and studio facilities containing relevant equipment are supported by excellent technician staff. They ensure that equipment is used and maintained appropriately and oversee all the health & safety and risk management concerns. Students can also access remote support for learning via the college Reboot scheme and log IT support requests via the HALO system.

#### 5.12 Studio Booking

The technician is also responsible for a web-based studio booking system that makes it possible for students to book the Programme's recording studios and control rooms from any PC or smartphone at any time.

#### 5.13 Network Storage

Regarding studio recordings, the Programme's recording studios utilise a Storage Area Network (SAN) system based around sixteen, two terabyte drives configured as into four RAID 5 arrays called 'Pools'. Pools are performance isolated i.e. heavy use of one pool does not affect another pool. Students are arranged into the different pools by surname and are provided with 30GB of storage though more is available upon request.

#### 5.14 Programme Documentation and Online Learning Support

Students are provided with programme and module guides that contain comprehensive information on how their programme and modules are structured and delivered. These documents are also available to students throughout each academic year (and for the duration of their registration) via the college Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). All teaching and learning content is made available via the VLE. This online resource includes lecture notes and a range of audio/video materials. These include video screen capture recordings of audio and music production software (in session demonstrations). Both online synchronous and asynchronous sessions are archived and made available to the student group for further review. Assessments are communicated to and submitted by students using the VLE.

#### 5.15 Module compensation

All programme modules may be compensated. Each student may be compensated to the value of 20 credits per level.

#### 5.16 Library and Learning Resources

Students can access a range of resources through the college Learning Resource Centre (LRC) and associated online services. Online services are listed in section 7 of the background document. Students can access specific sessions with the LRC staff regarding advanced academic and research skills. This activity is introduced as part of the induction sessions at the start of each year but can be revisited again throughout the year through refresher sessions.

#### 5.17 Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

Every programme uses the College VLE which is a key resource to support student learning as well as engagement with the programme and the College in general. All teaching materials and general course information is backed up on the VLE, ensuring

that students can access what they need when they need it. The VLE is also used as a portal to other sources of support. Students can access the programme of informal workshops designed to support their learning, including: improving writing style and referencing, planning assignments, developing critical thinking and other key skills.

#### 5.18 Additional Learning Support

Any student that considers that they have, or may have, additional learning support needs can access a range of support through the college. Initial assessments by the college HE Additional Needs Co-ordinator are provided to support understanding of the range of support that may be needed which will then trigger the provision required.

#### 5.19 Student Services

All students are able to access the college student services which are based in the Dock Street building which has its own reception and drop in facilities. As well as general advice about the college, the student services team also provide: counselling, financial support, learning support and signposting to additional or partner services.

#### 5.20 HE Student Areas

All HE students have areas in the college that are exclusively for their use. In the University Centre, all HE students have access to an open-plan working area, which has access control to retain its exclusivity. As well as the open-access area, students may also use the teaching rooms and meeting/tutorial rooms when they are not in use for a pre-booked activity.

#### 5.21 The 'Job Shop'

The college provides has its own 'Job Shop' which was opened in 2013 and provides a range of support to students. As well as advertising vacancies provided by local employers, the Job Shop also provides a range of support to students, including: help with job applications, CV writing, interview preparation, job searching, writing covering letters and finding work experience. All the support is available either through drop/bookable appointments or via on-line tutorials.

#### 5.22 The Fitness Studio

All students are entitled to free membership of the Fitness Studio. The Techno Gym equipped facility, provides a range of cardiovascular and resistance exercise equipment. Together with the latest innovations in IT wellness programme monitoring, students can engage in regular exercise in a friendly and easily accessible environment. Support and guidance are available during opening hours from experienced staff.

#### 5.23 Other facilities

The college has a wide range of other facilities which students can access either free of charge or at subsidised or nominal rates. Examples include:

- 156 seat theatre which produces several performances throughout the year many of which are free for students to attend
- Hair Salon providing low-cost services
- Beauty Spa facility which offers: jacuzzi, light therapy, sauna, steam room, flotation room, 39 private treatment rooms, and nail bar



#### 5.24 Online Community

Various methods are employed to build a cohesive online community for students. The VLE is used for discussion threads on various topics and an asynchronous video discussion platform is used to afford group discussion, feedback, and reflection.

#### 5.25 Laptop Scheme

Middlesbrough College's MC Click scheme provides all HE students with a Microsoft Surface to assist with their studies. Students who complete the laptop scheme for 2 years get to keep the device. Any student who leaves within 2 years is required to return the device to the College.

### 6. Criteria for admission

*(For apprenticeships this should include details of how the criteria will be used with employers who will be recruiting apprentices.)*

#### 6.1 Admission Criteria - Year 1

There are a range of suitable entry qualifications for this programme. These include, but are not limited to, A-Level Music, Music Technology, BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Music, Music Technology, BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Music, Music Technology, Access to HE (Music), and other related subject fields such as Media, Computing and/or Electronics. In reaching the entry target of 48 UCAS points, the programme team look for a minimum grade of C for A-Level Music or Music Technology and for a BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Music or Music Technology, a minimum grade profile of PPP. However, for applicants who do not meet these minima, the programme team explore the applicant's experience and enthusiasm in interviews.

For applicants whose main relevant subject is in Media, Computing or Electronics, admissions tutors look for evidence of experience with audio and music production. This can include experience with music performance, music production, audio equipment and an interest in audio and/or music.

The Non-Standard Entrants Process (NSEP) encompasses the mechanism via which programme leaders can recommend to an RPL panel that applicants without the standard entry qualifications should be admitted to an HE programme at the normal point of entry without module exemption due to experience, ability, or other factors evidencing their readiness for HE study. In these cases, a recommendation is made to an RPL panel for consideration, including evidence.

#### 6.2 Admission Criteria - Direct Entry to Year 2

Applications are considered for direct entry to year 2 of the programme, in all cases applicants are referred to the [College RPL policy](#).

All applicants require qualifications in English Language and Mathematics to at least GCSE level 4, or have demonstrated adequate skills and competencies in an interview (for example, functional skills assessment).



## 7. Language of study

English

## 8. Information about non-OU standard assessment regulations (including PSRB requirements)

N/A

## 9. For apprenticeships in England End Point Assessment (EPA).

*(Summary of the approved assessment plan and how the academic award fits within this and the EPA)*

N/A

## 10. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

10.1 College HE Teaching and Learning

The College has recognised the importance of having a distinct approach to HE learning and teaching for over ten years. The first HE specific Learning and Teaching process was introduced in 2009. Subsequent reviews and updates in 2011 and 2014 have enhanced the process to reflect the aims of the [UK Professional Standards Framework](#) and prepared the College to meet the expectations of the [Teaching Excellence Framework](#).

Many of the innovations established in the evolution of this process have been subsumed into the current Cross-College Learning and Teaching model for all levels, including a non-graded observation process. The underlying principle is to place the student at the centre of the process to ensure that their learning and attainment of learning outcomes drives the process. Underpinning this has been a focus on ensuring that lecturing staff are fully engaged in the process to match outcomes to professional discussion and peer review. These approaches have been further refined to form part of the college departmental review process.

10.2 Observation of Teaching and Learning (OTL)

The OTL process for HE provision has been contextualised to reflect the differences between HE and FE. The OTL process for FE courses is based upon the expectations of the Common Inspection Framework, whereas the HE model is aligned to the expectations of the [UKPSF](#) and the [TEF](#). Central to the process is the student as an independent learner, developing their academic skills as they progress through their academic career.

The college model distinguishes between different levels of study and differing abilities of the students. At Level 4, teaching staff take a lead role in the student learning process, but as students progress, the balance gradually evolves so that the students become leaders/co-leaders of learning. To facilitate this model, student learning and reflection may not take place at the same time as content delivery, making it difficult for an observer to see the product of the model. To work around this, the OTL process for

HE lessons is based on mapping the observation of the session to the scheme of work and planned assessment tasks.

The outcome of the OTL forms the basis of a professional discussion with a Teaching and Learning mentor as well as with members of the HE teaching team, to ensure that good practice is shared across the College. Any trends identified from OTL reports or staff feedback are used to inform relevant CPD activity.

### 10.3 Feedback from Students

Another input to the process of evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning is feedback from students. Feedback emerges through several routes. The most significant is through module evaluation questionnaires. In addition to five-point Likert scale questions, students are asked to state 'what worked and what could be improved' regarding any aspect of the module. The results and comments from the module evaluation questionnaires feed into module reports. Over the past twelve years this student feedback has been vital in informing the major and minor modifications the programme has undergone. Student feedback is also collected from induction surveys, the Student Reps, the NSS and in both formal and *ad hoc* tutorials.

### 10.4 Staff Workforce Development

Improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning is also a focus of the internal and external workforce development (WFD) sessions. Academic staff attend a range of internal and external staff development events aimed at improving teaching and learning. The academic year 20/21 saw the introduction of Teaching Innovation Groups (TIG). TIG activity for the staff group in recent years includes:

- Reverse engineering as a pedagogical tool in creative technology
  - The intention of this research project was for practitioners teaching multiple disciplines, loosely defined as 'creative technology', to experiment with a session focussed on 'reverse engineering'. It was intended that, through this mode of enquiry, students would be empowered to see learning opportunities in additional circumstances which go beyond the traditional model.
- A short film entitled 'contemporary experiences of isolation manifesting in film and video practice'
  - This is an audiovisual piece which looks at how technology, alongside post Covid tendencies, is increasing levels of isolation, both desired and undesired, in teenagers and young adults. The intention is that the film will be screened at various film festivals and there will be an accompanying website with extracts supported by relevant contextual and theoretical underpinning.

### 10.5 Staff New to HE

All staff new to teaching HE at the College are required to hold a relevant degree and a PGCE as part of the terms of their employment. A higher degree is desirable for all staff and for those teaching Level 6, holding a relevant level 7 qualification or the commitment to study for one is essential. Staff new to teaching HE at the College receive initial tailored CPD to help them to make the transition.

### 10.6 Ongoing Subject and Pedagogic Development

All HE teams share resources and good practice via the HE Staff Zone located in the HEO. The area is set up to encourage HE staff from across the College to meet, both formally and informally, to share good practice and discuss ideas and approaches to module and programme design and delivery. All teaching staff are supported by more experienced members of the team who act as mentors. In addition, cross-college learning and teaching mentors, made up of advanced practitioners, provide 1:1 support to teams as well as tailored CPD sessions. The College has a research and scholarly activity procedure which encourages and supports staff to maintain and annually update both pedagogical and subject expertise.

Staff are engaged with employers and funding councils, including experience of Arts Council funding bids, PRS funding bids, PPL funding bids, Oram Awards, and have secured Youth Music funded and Arts Council funded employment with Tees Music Alliance and Middlesbrough Empire.

#### 10.7 HE Digital Champion

The College is focussed on providing the highest quality online provision to enhance programmes delivered face to face. Each department has been allocated a 'digital champion', who is an expert practitioner using Microsoft 365 for teaching and learning. Digital champions are the first point of contact for any staff member requiring support with online teaching and learning, and they regularly provide in person and online sessions tailored to the specific requirements of staff. Digital champions are managed by the College Director of Digital Innovation who holds regular cross-college meetings where information/updates are shared to be passed on to departments.

#### 10.8 Student Collaboration

Students have the opportunity to meet/collaborate with peers across the College. This has included, but is not limited to, collaboration with BA (Hons) Digital Video Production students on projects, involvement in the College's enrichment programme and the College's Student Radio program.

### 11. Changes made to the programme since last (re)validation

N/A

Annexe 1: Curriculum map

Annexe 2: Notes on completing the OU programme specification template

## Annexe 1 - Curriculum map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering (shaded) and assessing (✓) particular programme learning outcomes.

Level	Study module/unit	Programme outcomes														
		A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
4	Audio and MIDI Sequencing		✓			✓							✓			
	Critical Listening	✓						✓		✓	✓			✓		
	Music Production		✓		✓		✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	
	Music Theory and Composition			✓			✓			✓					✓	✓
	Popular Music Cultures			✓							✓				✓	
	Recording Studio Engineering	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓		✓

Level	Study module/unit	A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	C1	C2	C3	C4	D1	D2	D3	D4
5	Experimental Music Cultures		✓	✓						✓	✓							✓	
	Game Audio	✓					✓		✓			✓	✓			✓			✓
	Live Events Production	✓			✓	✓		✓						✓	✓		✓	✓	
	Mix Engineering		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓			✓		✓		
	Synthesis and Sampling	✓					✓						✓	✓					✓
	Texture Based Composition	✓						✓	✓		✓	✓				✓			✓

## Annexe 2: Notes on completing programme specification templates

- 1 - This programme specification should be mapped against the learning outcomes detailed in module specifications.
- 2 – The expectations regarding student achievement and attributes described by the learning outcome in section 3 must be appropriate to the level of the award within the **QAA frameworks for HE qualifications**: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/Pages/default.aspx>
- 3 – Learning outcomes must also reflect the detailed statements of graduate attributes set out in **QAA subject benchmark statements** that are relevant to the programme/award: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx>
- 4 – In section 3, the learning and teaching methods deployed should enable the achievement of the full range of intended learning outcomes. Similarly, the choice of assessment methods in section 3 should enable students to demonstrate the achievement of related learning outcomes. Overall, assessment should cover the full range of learning outcomes.
- 5 - Where the programme contains validated **exit awards** (e.g. CertHE, DipHE, PGDip), learning outcomes must be clearly specified for each award.
- 6 - For programmes with distinctive study **routes or pathways** the specific rationale and learning outcomes for each route must be provided.
- 7 – Validated programmes delivered in **languages other than English** must have programme specifications both in English and the language of delivery.