

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Creative Music Re-mixing

Unit code: DJ22 34

Unit purpose: This unit is designed to give candidates an understanding of the technical processes and creative methods involved in the editing, manipulation and remixing of audio for music production. It will also enable candidates to develop knowledge and understanding of the role of remixing by studying its development from the mid twentieth century to present day. This Unit is intended for those who wish to develop skills and knowledge in audio engineering and who plan a career in audio production.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

1. Investigate the development of the remix.
2. Apply loop based sequencing skills to create and refine musical ideas.
3. Recreate genre specific production techniques within a remix.
4. Produce a remix from a multi-track master.

Credit points and level: 2 HN Credits at SCQF level 7: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Candidates should have knowledge of Multi-track recording and production and experience using computer based audio software and hardware. This could be evidenced by studying the following units, Sound Production: Multi-track 1, Sound Production: Multi-track Mixing and Digital Audio Workstations 1. It would also be beneficial if the candidate has creative musical skills particularly in modern production techniques.

Candidates should also have good communication skills. These may be demonstrated by the achievement of core skill Communication at Higher level or by possession of Higher English and Communication or a suitable NQ Communication Unit (SCQF level 5/6).

Core skills: There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards core skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components.

General information for centres (cont)

Context for delivery: This is an optional Unit in the frameworks for HNC/D Sound Production group awards. If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

Assessment: This unit could be assessed using four instruments of assessment, which would require the candidate to produce written evidence in the form of a report for Outcome 1 and practical assessments for Outcomes 2, 3 and 4. Assessment for Outcome 1 could be carried out in controlled conditions, or alternatively Outcome 1 could take the form of a report and would require the candidate to conduct industry specific research. There may be opportunities to integrate assessment with the unit Music History 1.

A holistic approach could be taken for the combined assessment of Outcomes 2, 3 and 4. This would encompass all the practical elements of the unit. This should be conducted by the submission of a portfolio of work supplemented by observation checklists. Evidence for Outcome 2 could be demonstrated by the submission of audio material in Outcomes 3 and 4. If the holistic approach is taken an extensive Multi-track production would provide all necessary evidence, or alternatively musical sample exemplars could be used as source material for each production technique.

It is unlikely however that the combined approach for Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 would be successfully implemented without a structured series of formative practice opportunities.

Please note that, candidates must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified for each Outcome, combination of Outcomes or for the Unit as a whole in order to pass the Unit.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Investigate the development of the remix

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Critically evaluate the contribution of a range of practitioners in the development of the re-mix
- ◆ Describe and explain pivotal developments, for example innovative production techniques, new technologies and cultural issues
- ◆ The purpose of re-mixing
- ◆ Copyright issues
- ◆ Re-mix considerations e.g. genre, market

Evidence requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ identify key players in the development of the re-mix
- ◆ explain their contribution to the above developments
- ◆ contextualise significant innovations or events and their impact/influence on music trends
- ◆ show understanding of the remit and purpose of remixing
- ◆ show understanding of copyright issues within re-mixing and sampling
- ◆ evaluate the extent to which re-mixes may be due to genre and/or marketing considerations

The candidate should provide written evidence, under controlled conditions in the form of an open book report. The assessment should be conducted at a single assessment event with each candidate allowed access to his/her own notes.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Creative Music Re-mixing

Assessment guidelines

Assessment should be conducted in conditions where arrangements have been put in place to ensure the authenticity of the candidate's work.

Should there be ambiguity regarding a candidate's response, oral questioning may be used to eliminate any doubt as to the candidate's understanding. The lecturer should note questions and responses.

Outcome 2

Apply loop based sequencing skills to create and refine musical ideas

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Multi-track sampling
- ◆ Apply groove quantising to audio
- ◆ Editing of loop based audio
- ◆ Matching pitch, timing and format of audio within musical piece
- ◆ Matching pitch and timing of MIDI within a musical piece

Evidence requirements

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ demonstrate use of time-stretching to beat match audio elements
- ◆ demonstrate pitch shifting techniques suitable for purpose
- ◆ contain imported audio elements from different sources
- ◆ contain at least 2 audio elements that are looped significantly within the piece
- ◆ be created without technical assistance
- ◆ demonstrate effective editing where required

The candidate will be required to demonstrate their knowledge by showing that they can produce a mix down master on a suitable format of music lasting three to eight minutes to a professional standard. It should comprise of a minimum of six distinct audio elements and a minimum of one MIDI sourced element.

Evidence should be generated through an assessment undertaken in controlled conditions. Candidates will be assessed after an adequate period of tuition and practice. Candidates should submit a backup copy of the multi-track material, along with the mix down master and relevant documentation, such as appropriately labelled track/sequence sheets as evidence. An observation checklist should be used to record achievement of each of the knowledge and/or skills.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Creative Music Re-mixing

Assessment guidelines

This outcome may be assessed in conjunction with Outcome 3 and/or 4 as part of a single holistic assessment for the Unit, details of which are given under Outcome 4 below. However this should only be attempted after satisfactory completion of formative assessment opportunities.

Candidates should be given a series of practical tasks that enable them to demonstrate that the skills required have been achieved. A set of assessment briefs could be set and an appropriate checklist provided to enable the candidates to log their progress. It is recommended that assessment should be on-going throughout the series of tasks and should be such that integrity is maintained. Care should be taken to ensure that enough time is provided for candidates to have sufficient opportunity to meet the evidence requirements. It is possible that this Outcome is combined with Outcome 3 as an extensive Multi-track production, or that musical sample exemplars are used as source material for each production technique.

Should there be ambiguity regarding a candidate's response, oral questioning may be used to eliminate any doubt as to the candidate's understanding. The lecturer should note questions and responses.

Outcome 3

Recreate genre specific production techniques within a remix

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Tempo related modulation effects
- ◆ Analogue tape simulated delay digital effects
- ◆ Analogue simulated saturation effects
- ◆ Reversing audio
- ◆ Audio to MIDI triggering
- ◆ Frequency manipulation: high pass, low pass
- ◆ Pitching effects

Evidence requirements

Candidates will need evidence by applying a selection of audio production techniques involved in remixing music material to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ apply two different tempo related modulation effects
- ◆ create a simulation of analogue tape delay
- ◆ create a simulation of analogue tape saturation
- ◆ reverse Audio
- ◆ trigger MIDI events from an audio source

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Creative Music Re-mixing

- ◆ apply high pass and low pass filtering
- ◆ pitch shift audio

Evidence should be generated through an assessment undertaken in controlled conditions. Candidates will be assessed after an adequate period of tuition and practice. Candidates may bring to the assessment event any notes that they have made personally. These should be submitted as evidence. A backup copy of re-mix material should be submitted as evidence as well as appropriately labelled track sheets. Observation checklist should be used to record achievement of each of the knowledge and/or skills.

Assessment guidelines

This outcome may be assessed in conjunction with Outcome 2 and/or 4 as part of a single holistic assessment for the Unit, details of which are given under Outcome 4 below. However this should only be attempted after satisfactory completion of formative assessment opportunities.

Candidates should be given a series of practical tasks that enable them to demonstrate that the skills required have been achieved. A set of assessment briefs could be set and an appropriate checklist provided to enable the candidates to log their progress. It is recommended that assessment should be on-going throughout the series of tasks and should be such that integrity is maintained. Care should be taken to ensure that enough time is provided for candidates to have sufficient opportunity to meet the evidence requirements. It is possible that this Outcome is combined with Outcome 2 as an extensive Multi-track production, or that musical sample exemplars are used as source material for each production technique. (This method would work well for formative assessing).

Should there be ambiguity regarding a candidate's response, oral questioning may be used to eliminate any doubt as to the candidate's understanding. The lecturer should note questions and responses.

Outcome 4

Produce a remix from a multi-track master

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Plan the production of a remix according to a devised brief
- ◆ Schedule the production
- ◆ Meet deadlines
- ◆ Import audio from multi-track source
- ◆ Record, manipulate, store audio files suitable for purpose
- ◆ Understanding of mixing techniques
- ◆ Correct use of monitoring in context

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Creative Music Re-mixing

- ◆ Mix down to relevant format and at appropriate level

Evidence requirements

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Negotiate and plan effectively, meeting the needs of a given brief
- ◆ Schedule effectively to meet the needs of a given deadline
- ◆ Implement the schedule effectively
- ◆ Produce a mix down master on a suitable format of music lasting three to eight minutes to a professional standard. It should:
 - comprise of audio sourced from a distinct multi-track master
 - incorporate a minimum of four additional rhythmic and melodic elements sampled from other sources or created for the production.
 - be created without technical assistance
 - demonstrate effective editing where required

A backup copy of the multi-track material should also be submitted as evidence as well as brief, plan, schedule and observation checklists.

Evidence should be generated through an assessment undertaken in controlled conditions. Candidates will be assessed after an adequate period of tuition and practice. Candidates may bring to the assessment event any notes that they have made personally. These should be submitted as evidence. A tutor checklist should be used to record achievement of each of the knowledge and/or skills.

Assessment guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 2 and 3 as part of a single holistic assessment for the Unit. This should be carried out in controlled conditions, with the appropriate amount of time allocated for the assessment.

Candidates should be given a brief that requires them to demonstrate, using familiar industry software and/or hardware, that they possess the skills to create, engineer and produce a remixed music track. The genre and purpose of the remix should be negotiated with the candidate before the task is begun. The production and subsequent mix down could be used as evidence for Outcome 2 in the HN Unit Multi-track Mixing. It is recommended that assessment should be on-going throughout the series of tasks and should be such that integrity is maintained.

Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 may also be assessed separately. Assessors are advised that suitable instruments of assessment should be devised for the practical elements of the assessment. Checklists could be used to chart practical progress, along with accompanying physical evidence of achievement.

Administrative Information

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Unit title: Creative Music Re-mixing
Superclass category: LH
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Version	Description of change	Date
02	Removal of Word Count and Presentation Length.	27/05/11

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Creative Music Re-mixing

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

It is desirable that centres offering this unit have enough suitable audio workstations for each candidate during lessons so they can work individually on the practical elements of the Unit. For final mixing and production the availability of recording studio control rooms would be advantageous.

Outcome 1 is intended to allow candidates to explore the historical context and application of remixing within contemporary music. It should reflect remixing as a marketing device for cultural and economic reasons, through to its evolution as a distinct cultural expression and the increased importance of the remix producer as a music artist in their own right.

A wide range of historical examples should be discussed and evaluated, from the rebalancing of multi-tracks for specific media carriers e.g. radio and jukeboxes and, different listening environments/cultures such as nightclub white labels and USA/UK specific mixes. This leads to analysis of the role of remixing in the development of dub, hip hop (the creation of the break-beat) disco, 12 inch extended singles, house music to the proliferation of dance music culture.

In **Outcome 2**, practical exercises should allow candidates to gain competence in the necessary manipulations of audio using appropriate software and/or hardware solutions. The software/hardware used should be able to allow full multi-tracking, time-stretching, pitch shifting and groove quantising for professional output. Examples at the time of writing - Sonic Foundry Acid Pro, Digidesign Pro Tools, Emagic Logic Pro, Steinberg Cubase VST, Propellerheads Reason, Ableton Live, Opcode Studio Vision, Mark of the Unicorn Digital Performer.

It is not necessary that the candidates have prior skills in musical theory, but that they can identify and incorporate musical samples together to make logical sense. Advances in software may simplify the process in matching time and pitch of disparate audio samples but the key skills of creatively combining them should maintain the appropriate level of assessment.

Outcome 3 directs the candidates to recreate a selection of specific production techniques in sound production. This could be devised as a series of detailed briefs. The Outcome is intended to encourage candidates to listen critically to provided music exemplars and be able to identify the production processes and simulate them. A key feature of this Outcome will be in the ability to use modern digital audio tools to recreate analogue effects.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Creative Music Re-mixing

Outcome 4 should be managed to reflect working to a real brief and that the Multi-track used as the source material be provided by the centre or negotiated by the candidate. Throughout the assessment task, the tutor should take on the role of client and check on the progress of the task. While at this stage, the candidates will not be constrained by all the pressures of a real brief; it is desirable that it is as realistic as possible.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

As part of the Sound Production framework, this Unit will be useful in developing the skills and knowledge from other Units such as Audio Sequencing, Sound Production: Multi-track Recording and Sound Production: Multi-track Mixing.

Outcome 1 is theory based and can be delivered and assessed on its own. At this level and time allocation the knowledge gained by the candidates is likely to be cursory, so delivering the Outcome throughout the Unit will allow a deeper appreciation of the history by referencing it to practical examples within the class. Opportunities to enhance the candidate experience may be achieved by the use of video material and audio examples. Candidates should be encouraged to participate in the sourcing of historical examples and for the class to work in self-directed study.

Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 are practical and should follow extensive practical exercises and formative assessments. In particular Outcome 2 can be combined with 3 or 4 and assessed holistically.

Open learning

This unit could be delivered by open learning. However, it would require planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence. Arrangements would have to be made to ensure that the single assessment for Outcome 1 is delivered in a supervised environment under controlled conditions.

For further information and advice please refer to *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning (SQA, February 2001 – publication code A1030)*.

Candidates with additional support needs

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Additional Support Needs (BA 2399, SQA, due 2004)*.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Creative Music Re-mixing

This Unit is designed to enable you to develop the key skills and knowledge involved in the role of remixing music. It is primarily intended to prepare you for modern music production and programming later in your career or assist you if you already hold such a position. You will investigate the development of remixing and then create and produce remixes using a range of professional tools.

You will use recording, processing and editing equipment and learn about production techniques in multi-track mixing. The emphasis of this Unit is in the specialised skills involved in remixing and their underlying cultural reasons. You will learn many specific methods to manipulate audio and especially loop based sequencing skills.

The Unit has 4 Outcomes. In the first Outcome you will analyse how remixing evolved from the rebalancing of mixes for different markets through the reinterpreting of tracks by DJs and hip hop MCs to the rise of the remix producers as successful and influential artists. This Outcome will involve research and discussion and will be assessed by a report.

In Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 you will learn the practical skills in remixing. A wide range of tools will be demonstrated and then practiced such as: looping, time-stretching, groove quantising, pitch shifting, filtering, sample triggering and combining them to create and refine music tracks. The emphasis will be on the ability to learn the technical skills, but also to develop musical creativity. These Outcomes will be assessed by means of observation checklists where your assessor will observe you carrying out all the required tasks, and where you create and then produce remixed multi-tracks, and submit mix down masters.

It is possible that you will be able to utilise these remixes for assessment in other units which look at Audio Sequencing and Sound Production: Multi-track Mixing.

On completion of this Unit you should be able to:

1. Investigate the development of the remix
2. Apply loop based sequencing skills to create and refine musical ideas.
3. Recreate genre specific production techniques within a remix
4. Produce a remix from a multi-track master