MUSC13418 *Music Technology 3: Mixing, Mastering and Distribution*
Term 1 - 2023

Profile information current as at 19/05/2024 02:11 am

All details in this unit profile for MUSC13418 have been officially approved by CQUniversity and represent a learning partnership between the University and you (our student). The information will not be changed unless absolutely necessary and any change will be clearly indicated by an approved correction included in the profile.

General Information

Overview

In this unit, you will study the art of audio mixing and mastering, with a focus on the historical, technical and aesthetic aspects of the production process. You will apply concepts of mixing and mastering in the preparation of two production portfolios for digital distribution. You will explore and analyse current and historical industry trends in the distribution of popular music and how these have impacted the listening behaviour of consumers. You will also explore the mechanics of current distribution platforms and examine the copyright, licensing and financial implications of each including sync licensing, publishing and sample libraries.

Details

Career Level: *Undergraduate*
Unit Level: *Level 3*
Credit Points: *6*
Student Contribution Band: *8*
Fraction of Full-Time Student Load: *0.125*

Pre-requisites or Co-requisites

For entry into this unit, you must have completed 72 credit points in this course.
Important note: Students enrolled in a subsequent unit who failed their pre-requisite unit, should drop the subsequent unit before the census date or within 10 working days of Fail grade notification. Students who do not drop the unit in this timeframe cannot later drop the unit without academic and financial liability. See details in the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework).

Offerings For Term 1 - 2023

- Cairns
- Online

Attendance Requirements

All on-campus students are expected to attend scheduled classes – in some units, these classes are identified as a mandatory (pass/fail) component and attendance is compulsory. International students, on a student visa, must maintain a full time study load and meet both attendance and academic progress requirements in each study period (satisfactory attendance for International students is defined as maintaining at least an 80% attendance record).

Website

This unit has a website, within the Moodle system, which is available two weeks before the start of term. It is important that you visit your Moodle site throughout the term. Please visit Moodle for more information.

Class and Assessment Overview

Recommended Student Time Commitment

Each 6-credit Undergraduate unit at CQUniversity requires an overall time commitment of an average of 12.5 hours of study per week, making a total of 150 hours for the unit.

Class Timetable

Regional Campuses

Bundaberg, Cairns, Emerald, Gladstone, Mackay, Rockhampton, Townsville

Metropolitan Campuses

Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney

Assessment Overview

1. **Portfolio**
Weighting: 40%
2. **Portfolio**
Weighting: 40%
3. **Written Assessment**
Weighting: 20%

Assessment Grading

This is a graded unit: your overall grade will be calculated from the marks or grades for each assessment task, based on the relative weightings shown in the table above. You must obtain an overall mark for the unit of at least 50%, or an overall grade of 'pass' in order to pass the unit. If any 'pass/fail' tasks are shown in the table above they must also be completed successfully ('pass' grade). You must also meet any minimum mark requirements specified for a particular assessment task, as detailed in the 'assessment task' section (note that in some instances, the minimum mark for a task may be greater than 50%). Consult the University's Grades and Results Policy for more details of interim results and final grades.

CQUniversity Policies

All University policies are available on the CQUniversity Policy site.
You may wish to view these policies:

- Grades and Results Policy
- Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)
- Review of Grade Procedure
- Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – Domestic Students
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – International Students
- Student Refund and Credit Balance Policy and Procedure
- Student Feedback – Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Information and Communications Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure

This list is not an exhaustive list of all University policies. The full list of University policies are available on the CQUniversity Policy site.

Previous Student Feedback

Feedback, Recommendations and Responses

Every unit is reviewed for enhancement each year. At the most recent review, the following staff and student feedback items were identified and recommendations were made.

Feedback from Staff reflection

Feedback

Develop more learning resources for musicians from non-music technology backgrounds to assist in learning materials and assessment items.

Recommendation

Staff will continue to develop learning resources for musicians from non music technology backgrounds to assist in their understanding of music technology applied to their discipline.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Apply audio mixing techniques in the production of a portfolio of audio works in contemporary popular music styles
2. Apply audio mastering techniques in the production of a portfolio of audio works in contemporary popular music styles
3. Analyse current and historical technological trends in the music industry and their impact upon music distribution.

Alignment of Learning Outcomes, Assessment and Graduate Attributes

— N/A Level ○ Introductory Level ○ Intermediate Level ● Graduate Level ○ Professional Level ○ Advanced Level

Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Learning Outcomes

Assessment Tasks	Learning Outcomes		
	1	2	3
1 - Portfolio - 40%	●		
2 - Portfolio - 40%		●	
3 - Written Assessment - 20%			●

Alignment of Graduate Attributes to Learning Outcomes

Graduate Attributes	Learning Outcomes		
	1	2	3
1 - Communication			●
2 - Problem Solving	●	●	
3 - Critical Thinking			●
4 - Information Literacy			
5 - Team Work			
6 - Information Technology Competence	●	●	
7 - Cross Cultural Competence			
8 - Ethical practice	●	●	
9 - Social Innovation			●
10 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures			

Textbooks and Resources

Textbooks

There are no required textbooks.

IT Resources

You will need access to the following IT resources:

- CQUniversity Student Email
- Internet
- Unit Website (Moodle)
- Ableton Live software

Referencing Style

All submissions for this unit must use the referencing style: [American Psychological Association 7th Edition (APA 7th edition)](#)
For further information, see the Assessment Tasks.

Teaching Contacts

Patty Preece Unit Coordinator
p.preece@cqu.edu.au

Schedule

Week 1 - 06 Mar 2023		
Module/Topic	**Chapter**	**Events and Submissions/Topic**
Mixing: Critical listening		

Week 2 - 13 Mar 2023		
Module/Topic	**Chapter**	**Events and Submissions/Topic**
Mixing: Creating balance in a mix		

Week 3 - 20 Mar 2023		
Module/Topic	**Chapter**	**Events and Submissions/Topic**
Mixing: Creating dynamic in a mix		

Week 4 - 27 Mar 2023		
Module/Topic	**Chapter**	**Events and Submissions/Topic**
Mixing: Creating space in a mix		

Week 5 - 03 Apr 2023		
Module/Topic	**Chapter**	**Events and Submissions/Topic**
Mixing feedback sessions		**Mixing Portfolio** Due: Week 5 Friday (7 Apr 2023) 11:55 pm AEST

Vacation Week - 10 Apr 2023		
Module/Topic	**Chapter**	**Events and Submissions/Topic**

Week 6 - 17 Apr 2023		
Module/Topic	**Chapter**	**Events and Submissions/Topic**

Mastering: Mechanics of mastering -
equalisation

Week 7 - 24 Apr 2023

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Mastering: Mechanics of mastering -
compression		

Week 8 - 01 May 2023

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Mastering: Mechanics of mastering –
metering and limiting		

Week 9 - 08 May 2023

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Mastering: Online mastering platforms		

Week 10 - 15 May 2023

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Distribution: History of music
distribution		**Mastering Portfolio** Due: Week 10
Friday (19 May 2023) 11:55 pm AEST

Week 11 - 22 May 2023

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Distribution: Current distribution
trends		

Week 12 - 29 May 2023

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Distribution: Current distribution
trends		

Review/Exam Week - 05 Jun 2023

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
		Music Distribution Podcast Due:
Review/Exam Week Friday (9 June
2023) 11:55 pm AEST

Exam Week - 12 Jun 2023

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic

Term Specific Information

Music tech students require some very specific equipment to facilitate the production requirements of this unit. This unit provides training in performing, recording and mixing music. Because of this, you will need to have access to the following:

- Ableton Live software
- An audio interface
- Your instrument
- A quick stable internet connection (preferable ethernet)
- Microphone or instrument lead
- Studio headphones and your computer / webcam

About Ableton Live
Ableton Live is an industry standard DAW (digital audio workstation) and learning how to use it is extremely beneficial. You will be required to submit Ableton Live sessions as part of your assessments and therefore need to have access to a copy of Ableton software. As the production classes are based on the Ableton software, no other DAWs are acceptable for this unit. A free 90 day full use trial version of the Ableton Live software is available for download from the Ableton Live website (https://www.ableton.com/en/trial/). If you have already used your free trial version, please email the unit coordinator for an extension code.
If you have any questions regarding these requirements, please contact the Unit Coordinator, Patty Preece (p.preece@cqu.edu.au).

Assessment Tasks

1 Mixing Portfolio

Assessment Type
Portfolio

Task Description
The mixing stage is a critical stage in the production process and requires both technical and creative skills. In this assessment, you will be required to submit a mixing portfolio of two songs. Both songs will be provided to you by your lecturer. The songs should be mixed in Ableton Live software. You will be required to use the tools available in Ableton Live to produce a balanced mix that is comparable to other songs in its genre. Processing will include but is not limited to:

- Level
- Pan
- EQ
- Compression
- Reverb
- Delay
- Deessing

Your mixes should be ready to send to mastering with the following levels:
Peak = no more than -3dBFS
RMS = -no more than -14dBFS

You will submit:

- An Ableton Live Project folder for each mix with the session in the final mix stage.
- A stereo bounce with no SRC or dithering.

Assessment Due Date
Week 5 Friday (7 Apr 2023) 11:55 pm AEST

Return Date to Students
Week 7 Friday (28 Apr 2023)

Weighting
40%

Assessment Criteria
Level balance and pan implemented effectively (20%)
Spectral processing implemented effectively (25%)
Dynamic processing implemented effectively (25%)
Time based processing implemented effectively (20%)
Exports and session handling (10%)

Referencing Style

- American Psychological Association 7th Edition (APA 7th edition)

Submission
Online

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Apply audio mixing techniques in the production of a portfolio of audio works in contemporary popular music styles

2 Mastering Portfolio

Assessment Type
Portfolio

Task Description
The mastering stage is the final stage in the production process and requires both technical and creative skills. In this assessment, you will be required to submit a mastering portfolio of two songs. The songs will be provided by your lecturer.
The songs can be mastered using Ableton Live software and other third-party plugins. You will be required to use the tools available in Ableton Live to produce a balanced, competitive master that is comparable to other songs in its genre. Processing will include but is not limited to:

- EQ
- Compression
- Limiting
- Reverb

Your master should be ready for digital distribution and observe the peak and RMS levels for that medium. These will be supplied to you by your lecturer.
You will submit:

- A stereo bounce of your two songs in audio red book format (16 bit, 44.1kHz).

Assessment Due Date
Week 10 Friday (19 May 2023) 11:55 pm AEST

Return Date to Students
Week 12 Friday (2 June 2023)

Weighting
40%

Assessment Criteria
Spectral processing implemented effectively (20%)
Dynamic processing implemented effectively (40%)
Fades implemented effectively (20%)
Exports, labelling and session handling (20%)

Referencing Style

- American Psychological Association 7th Edition (APA 7th edition)

Submission
Online

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Apply audio mastering techniques in the production of a portfolio of audio works in contemporary popular music styles

3 Music Distribution Podcast

Assessment Type
Written Assessment

Task Description
The music industry has seen a great deal of change over the last century. It can be argued that these changes have been driven by technological advances in music media. In this assessment, you are to create, present, and record a podcast, where you will discuss the impact of the these changes on the distribution of, and access to music.
Your discussion will focus on the impact of two of the following media on the industry at their time of release:

- Wax cylinder
- Vinyl
- CD
- Cassette
- Digital downloads or streaming

You will need to provide examples of how artists and labels have disrupted these distribution practices and contributed to new forms of music consumption.
The duration of the podcast will not exceed 15 minutes. This will task will involve:

- Researching and creating a script for the podcast. This script should be structured like a research essay, and include an introduction, body, conclusion, and a reference list. The script should be up to 1500 words in length.
- Recording the podcast script in Ableton Live
- Using editing and production skills in Ableton Live to create the podcast, ready for submission. You may use audio examples to support your argument. Any audio material must be included in your reference list.

You will submit:

- An audio recording of your podcast production - no more than 15 minutes
- Your podcast script as a Microsoft Word Document (.docx) which (1) must use 12 point Times New Roman font; (2) must use 1.5 spacing for the body of the assignment; (3) may use sub-headings to organise your assignment clearly; and (4) must adhere to the CQUniversity APA Style Guide.

Assessment Due Date
Review/Exam Week Friday (9 June 2023) 11:55 pm AEST

Return Date to Students
Exam Week Friday (16 June 2023)

Weighting
20%

Assessment Criteria
General

- Appropriate structure of podcast (20%)
- Proper use and relevance of research (15%)
- Relevance of material (20%)
- Development of argument or theme (15%)
- Quality of podcast production (15%)

Script specific

- Referencing precision (5%)
- Accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar; clarity of writing style (5%)
- Meeting delivery requirements (presentation, word count*, style guide) (5%)

Referencing Style

- [American Psychological Association 7th Edition (APA 7th edition)](#)

Submission
Online

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Analyse current and historical technological trends in the music industry and their impact upon music distribution.

Academic Integrity Statement

As a CQUniversity student you are expected to act honestly in all aspects of your academic work.

Any assessable work undertaken or submitted for review or assessment must be your own work. Assessable work is any type of work you do to meet the assessment requirements in the unit, including draft work submitted for review and feedback and final work to be assessed.

When you use the ideas, words or data of others in your assessment, you must thoroughly and clearly acknowledge the source of this information by using the correct referencing style for your unit. Using others' work without proper acknowledgement may be considered a form of intellectual dishonesty.

Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in your university study ensures the CQUniversity qualification you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

As a student, you are responsible for reading and following CQUniversity's policies, including the **Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure**. This policy sets out CQUniversity's expectations of you to act with integrity, examples of academic integrity breaches to avoid, the processes used to address alleged breaches of academic integrity, and potential penalties.

What is a breach of academic integrity?
A breach of academic integrity includes but is not limited to plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, cheating, contract cheating, and academic misconduct. The Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure defines what these terms mean and gives examples.

Why is academic integrity important?
A breach of academic integrity may result in one or more penalties, including suspension or even expulsion from the University. It can also have negative implications for student visas and future enrolment at CQUniversity or elsewhere. Students who engage in contract cheating also risk being blackmailed by contract cheating services.

Where can I get assistance?
For academic advice and guidance, the Academic Learning Centre (ALC) can support you in becoming confident in completing assessments with integrity and of high standard.

What can you do to act with integrity?

Be Honest
If your assessment task is done by someone else, it would be dishonest of you to claim it as your own

Seek Help
If you are not sure about how to cite or reference in essays, reports etc, then seek help from your lecturer, the library or the Academic Learning Centre (ALC)

Produce Original Work
Originality comes from your ability to read widely, think critically, and apply your gained knowledge to address a question or problem