

## BA (Hons) Commercial Music Production

<b>Department</b>	Creative Technology
<b>Awarding Body</b>	UEA
<b>Additional Accreditations</b>	N/A
<b>Full-time Duration</b>	3 years
<b>Part-time Duration</b>	NS
<b>Full-time Annual Fee</b>	£8,500
<b>Part-time Annual Fee</b>	£4,250 (where applicable)
<b>Entry Requirements</b>	<p>Evidence of study at Level 3, equivalent to 96 UCAS points.</p> <p>A Level: CCC            UAL Extended Diploma: MERIT            BTEC Extended Diploma: MMM</p> <p>Mature students with relevant experience who can provide evidence of a potential to benefit from the programme.</p> <p>Successful completion of Access to Creative Industries</p> <p>Interview with course leader to discuss course requirements, applicant aspirations and current course related experience.</p> <p>Students over the age of 25 may be asked to complete a criminal convictions declaration and a DBS check, which will be paid for by the college.</p>
<b>Study Location</b>	University and Professional Development Centre, 73 Western Way, Bury St Edmunds, and West Suffolk College Sixth Form Campus, Out Risbygate, Bury St Edmunds UK
<b>Subject to Validation</b>	YES
<b>Additional Potential Costs</b>	External SSD Hard Drive (2TB) – est. £60 Closed back headphones – est. £50+ Additional costs may be incurred for visits/trips

## Narrative

The BA (Hons) Commercial Music Production programme will equip you with all the skills necessary to make your mark in the music industry, whether as an artist, studio engineer, composer, producer, or any combination of the wide range of professional roles within the music production industry.

You will explore in detail the fundamentals of the studio production process, learning how to use studio peripherals effectively as well as how to manage and lead creative sessions with bands and artists. Music producers are invaluable within the music industry, whether that is through supporting artists and musicians to achieve their artistic potential or producing and releasing music independently.

Across three years, our expert tutors will guide you through the evolving world of music production in studio and digital music making settings. You will have regular access to our brand-new recording studios and edit suites where you will become familiar with industry-standard hardware in a modern studio set up, plus detailed exploration of software and digital audio workstations such as NI Komplete, Pro Tools, and Logic Pro.

You will develop your skills in a range of areas including studio recording, mixing, mastering, composition, sound design and sound design, and have numerous opportunities to follow your own interests and develop your own professional identity.

Throughout the course you will develop skills to create, produce, launch, and promote commercially ready music, while developing the industry-relevant music business and entrepreneurial skills essential for the modern music industry. You will be encouraged to challenge yourself as you regularly compose, produce, and explore new techniques, styles and genres.

## Key Course Features

Learning takes place in small class sizes, ensuring you receive the necessary time and individual guidance to cater for your specific industry needs within workshops, lectures, tutorials, and seminars. Throughout each year you will have the opportunity and support to

focus in on your own specialism, which will conclude with a substantial production project of your choosing in your final year.

Access to our state-of-the-art resources will be made available to you outside of your timetabled classed to encourage you to continually develop your skills.

### Career Prospects

The course provides a thorough focus on employability routes, ensuring that you have a professional showreel, and appropriate business acumen to succeed in whichever creative pathway you choose to specialise within. Salaries vary based upon employed/self-employed and the nature of different roles within the creative industries. This course will aid a pathway into the following careers:

Producer

Composer

Songwriter

Music Therapist

Orchestrator for Film, TV, and Games

Artist

Audio editor

Recording Engineer

Sound Designer

Studio Manager

Technician

## Module Summary

### Level 4 - *The introduction of core concepts, techniques, and skills*

The approach to teaching level 4 modules is to introduce fundamental concepts and techniques of music production through a mixture of lectures, seminars, and workshop demonstrations. This is combined with set tasks where you will explore and experiment to help build understanding and knowledge.

During the first year of the programme, you will develop skills in academic writing and research to provide a grounding in academic study which will prepare you for the more rigorous requirements of Levels 5 and 6. Although research and an exploration of music and music production techniques is prevalent throughout the course, the *Creative Industries* module will familiarise you with the conventions of formal academic study and helps improve and strengthen abilities in analysis and writing including the critical evaluation of all sources, such as industry journals and commercial magazines, alongside more standard, academic materials. In addition, this module provides an important overview of contextual areas relating to the world of music and music production within the wider creative industries, to help you gain knowledge and understanding in the historical and contemporary contexts that influence employability routes. Threads of academic writing are subsequently supported at Level 4 through evaluative essays and reviews in modules such as *Songwriting Techniques* and *Music Theory in Practice* which encourages you to begin to critically reflect and evaluate in preparation for study at level 5 and 6.

Level 4 ensures you acquire a broad range of skills and techniques which will be further explored throughout the knowledge and skills thread of the degree. The focus on acquiring a strong and broad set of skills and techniques at this level, will allow for greater application and ownership at levels 5 and 6. The introduction of fundamental music theory skills in Level 4 modules *Songwriting Techniques* and *Music Theory in Practice* is applicable to all spheres of music and music production. Providing a strong foundation in the first year, will enable you to build upon these techniques at a higher level, allowing you to specialise within a specific creative pathway. These skills are a universal language, transferrable across

composition, production, and performance, providing a strong bedrock upon which you will develop appropriate communication and application skills when undertaking practical activities independently and with others.

Workshops play a greater role at Level 4 than they do at levels 5 and 6. An example of this is the *Studio Production Techniques* module which seeks to teach key theoretical and practical skills in the studio environment. At this stage, abilities and knowledge in practical processes varies within the diverse mix of the class and so teaching during workshops is targeted to enable you to improve and develop your skills through individual support in combination with group demonstrations. The focus of Level 4 study is on core techniques, workflows and industry standards approaches, with the introduction of a wide range of tried and tested methods and techniques. At this level, you are not expected to develop a resolved 'style' or defined career-direction but will look to explore all available opportunities. Due to the nature of music production, there is a need for you to access specialist equipment outside of timetable sessions. As such, you will be expected to book additional recording studio sessions to help develop skills outside of workshops/lectures. Modules at level 4 are clearly scaffolded to provide you with the opportunity to continually build upon your technical skills, ensuring that by the end of level 4 study, you will have a strong foundation in studio production techniques, mixing, composition and electronic music production. This will provide a platform for you to start to specialise in one, or more, disciplines at Level 5 and 6 study.

In addition to acquiring academic and theoretical / music and music production skills, you are also introduced to the concept of peer appraisal, while at the same time being encouraged to develop confidence in your abilities and creative ideas. This is an important aspect of creative education as it enables the sharing of knowledge & discussion of ideas to inform and guide creative outcomes and build up. It also enables you to take pride in your work and develop resilience for higher level study.

You will be expected to start thinking about your employment journey at Level 4. The development of a personal showreel will be implemented at Level 4 study, as part of the *Creative Industries* module. This showreel will

be developed throughout the duration of the degree, which will be realised as a professional showreel through the Level 6 module 'Self-promotion and Marketing'. In addition, you will be provided with the opportunity to complete the *Career Ahead* course which will provide further opportunities to develop your personal and professional employability skills throughout the degree.

### **Level 5 – *Application of skills and a demonstration of understanding***

At level 5, more emphasis is placed on self-directed study with a greater degree of autonomy and specialising, particularly with regards to the *Personal Portfolio* module which is an opportunity for a you to engage in a creative project of your choosing. The development of critical listening skills, project management and collaborative working will be explored at Level 5 study, with an emphasis on legal, licencing and ethical discourse. Workshop demonstrations play a less significant role and instead lectures and seminars become more prominent to build theoretical skills and strengthen idea generation techniques whilst practical skills are developed with more independence alongside feedback from lecturers and the peer group. Level 5 focuses on application of the skills knowledge and understanding developed at Level 4 in context, with a greater degree of analysis required in both practical and written work. Formative assessment of work is of a more critical nature with an expectation that you will be able to argue your case more robustly. This principle of review and critique will also be carried into individual academic tutorials to assist reflection on progress throughout the modules.

The second year of the programme enables you to take the theoretical understanding and practical knowledge acquired at Level 4 forward, implementing these skills in context with a greater degree of individuality. The *Advanced Mixing and Mastering* module develops the fundamental skills introduced in the Level 4 module *Mixing Techniques* and aims to provide you with an opportunity to refine your approach to mixing and mastering through the exploration of advanced critical listening and application. Furthermore, the ability to produce commercial accurate music will be fundamental in realising the professional showreel at Level 6 whilst also supporting employability routes. In addition, *Sound Design* helps to

consolidate prior learning (composition, electronic music production, studio production, music theory and mixing) and introduces new skills and techniques utilised within the creative industries with a focus on working with real-world briefs, developing your skills in collaborative working, communication, and professional workflow.

The *Specialist Subject Report* module extends upon the academic writing skills and research analysis studied at Level 4 by exposing you to more rigorous research techniques, critical analysis, and discussion. The module provides an opportunity to undertake first-hand experience of a wide range of research methodologies. Through focussing on contemporary industry practice, you will develop a research pitch for a specialist practical topic relevant to your individual career aspirations. Conclusions drawn from the *Specialist Subject Report* will therefore be realised within the adjoining module *Specialist Subject Project*. Emphasis on the importance research plays in ensuring you have the skills to be at the forefront of the creative industries is paramount to continued personal professional development, whilst also preparing you for Level 6 study. An introduction to digital design skills will be introduced throughout this level, to prepare you for the Level 6 *Self-promotion and Marketing* module. Students will maintain their personal showreel throughout level 5, building a wide range of assets for their professional showreel at Level 6.

#### **Level 6 - *Critically refine, experiment, and apply.***

At level 6 you are expected to be a critically reflective and independent learners. Much of the teaching delivery in the third year of study is professionally focused and the projects set at this stage are intended to finalise preparation for self-employment or progression to post-graduate study. This is supported through the assembly of a professional showreel, where you have the opportunity to formulate an independent brief for the 40 credit *Professional Project* module in line with your career aspirations and related interests. Assets created as part of the portfolio and throughout the degree are further explored within the *Self-promotion and Marketing* module, which requires you to research and actively explore potential employment routes, producing a professional showreel and accompanying

marketing materials. It is during Level 6 that you are supported in refining your practice to a level reflective of professionals successfully practising in industry. Sophistication and autonomy are key attributes that you will need to demonstrate in tackling both academic and practical elements in your final year of study. This is further explored within the *Sonic Arts* module. This module encourages you to challenge your sound and professional identity, critically reviewing alternative methods, techniques and experimentation for music creation to consolidate yet challenge all the skills explored throughout previous modules.

In addition to refining your practice in preparation for employment, the *Dissertation* module requires you to synthesise your practice with theoretical perspectives in preparation for further study at post-graduate level. This 40-credit module provides an opportunity to study in-depth an area aligned with their practice, conducting a rigorous enquiry through research and critical analysis.

### Staff Team

Staff consist of working professionals who will draw their experiences from industry into the delivery of each module - modules have been assigned based upon specialisms to ensure you are provided with current, focussed tuition.

### Assessment Methods

A variety of assessment methods are used which include reports, evaluations, literature reviews, logbooks, exams, presentations, and journals.

Due to the nature of the course, there is a strong focus on developing technical skills, and as such most modules have a significant practical element. This ranges from studio productions, compositions and mix portfolios through to songwriting portfolios, sound design projects and sonic arts project. Throughout the course you will be given the opportunity to explore your own sound and develop this through specialist projects of your choosing.



Modules are assessed by the module leader and internally verified by another member of staff.

### Typical Module Diet

All modules are 20 credits unless stated

Year 1 (L4)	Year 2 (L5)	Year 3 (L6)
The Creative Industries	Personal Project	Professional Project
Music Theory in Practice	Specialist Subject Report	Dissertation
Studio Production Techniques	Advanced Mixing and Mastering	Sound Arts
Songwriting Techniques	Sound Design	Self-promotion and Marketing
Mixing Techniques	Specialist Subject Project	
Electronic Music Production Techniques		

### Study Hours

#### Study Hours per 20 credit Module: 200 hours

Lectures and Seminars: 36 – 48 hours

Assessments: 30 hours

Preparation and Independent study: 122 – 134 hours

\*Typically, three 20 credit modules will be studied per Semester. There are two Semesters a year.

*This programme is regulated by the Office for Students under the Quality Assurance Agency framework for UK Higher Education. Where studying may incur additional incidental or optional costs these are listed on the relevant course page on our website. Our Terms and Conditions, Admissions Policy (including baseline English language requirements) can be accessed via the University Studies website at <https://www.universitystudies.wsc.ac.uk/policies>*