
PERFORMING ARTS (MUSIC TECHNOLOGY) DEPARTMENT KEY STAGE 4 CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The Music Technology key stage 4 curriculum is designed to implement the Academy’s vision of “Deepening Learning, Raising Aspiration”, in line with the OAT curriculum strategy of “Teach, Develop, Change”. Our curriculum is carefully designed to build resilience, aspiration and independence in our learners. We carefully design the KS4 curriculum to further develop and build upon prior learning at KS3.

This course aims to develop vocationally relevant skills in popular music production, which allow for progression into a higher level of study and/or the industry. The aim of these qualifications is to provide learners with the knowledge and range of skills needed to progress them towards being able to operate successfully as producers/composers or sound engineers.

Learners will:

- demonstrate knowledge of theoretical and contextual issues relating to music style, audience and the music industry;
- understand relevant aspects of music technology.
- Develop competence in the use of a range of technology associated with sound production

Through developing the skills, knowledge and understanding outlined above, learners are provided with the basis for further development with the ultimate aim being the creation of a producer with the knowledge and skills-set to be able to record music in a professional.

The course is designed to be thoroughly engaging, through the use of old, new, emerging and exciting technologies that students will not have been exposed to before. These skills are useful for a variety of career pathways such as media, sound, production, radio, television etc. Students in this community are unlikely to have access to this type of technology outside of lessons, and therefore the aim is to engage learners in contemporary methods of music making and production, especially if they have not had access to traditional music making, such as traditional instrumental lessons.


 Year
10

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Week 5

Week 6

Week 7

Week 8

Week 9

Week 10

Week 11

Week 12

The Basics of DAWs

Rhythm and Tempo in Music Production

Autumn

What is a DAW, the history of DAW and technology software. Exploring the main features and functions of DAWs. (Digital Audio Workstation)

Mini Project inputting to a DAW and editing sound.

Understanding rhythm and tempo and how to create drum loops using equipment, technology and drum machine MIDI instruments software.

Composing using a DAW

Diversity

Composing using a DAW

Spring

Understanding dance music, minimalist style, melodies and keys in music technology and digital music making. Chords in creating dance music.

Basslines in dance music in music technology. Midi editing techniques.

Melodies in Creating Dance Music
Song Structures in Dance Music

Composing using a DAW (brief)

Setting Up a Studio Recording

Diversity

Summer

Final completion of unit 207
Individual DAW music projects, planning, creating and reviewing based on a set brief.

Evaluate.

Microphone construction/types. History of studio recording. Setting up a studio recording. Learning a mixing desk. Small group recording project.

Autumn Half Term 1 – The Basics of DAWs**Block 1 – Weeks 1 to 3**

- History of DAW
- Overview/layout
- Functions/Features
- Posture
- Use of a keyboard to input

Block 2 – Weeks 5 to 6

- Mini project (microphone and keyboard input)
- Chop
- Time stretch
- Reverse
- Create a short sample

Notes/Links/Interleaving

- Building on understanding of keyboard teaching in KS3

Additional Higher Content

- Using musical skills to record musical pieces of a higher level

Autumn Half Term 2 – Rhythm and Tempo in Music Production**Block 3 – Weeks 7 to 9**

- Overview of dance music and use of rhythmic loops,
- Minimalism in dance music
- Drums bass chords and melody using a sequencer
- Explaining kick, clap, snare, hi hats
- Rhythm, tempo, 4/4 & 3/4 time signatures
- Making Beats – reading a basic drum score with kick, clap, open and closed hi hats, loops, 4 bars of 4/4
- Beat, Tempo, Genre, Backbeats, Bars

Block 4 = Weeks 10 to 12

- Listening and identifying rhythms in different dance/hip hop/pop styles
- Midi Drum notation, reading, editing. Reading a given drum score
- Exploring rhythms in given songs and making own beats and rhythms
- Mouse input a given basic rhythm, loop, develop
- Mouse input an original rhythm, loop, develop
- Keyboard layout for drum notation
- Composing drum loops using keyboard input over a given chord sequence

Notes/Links/Interleaving

- Building on musical theory knowledge and understanding of rhythm from KS3

Additional Higher Content

- Exploring a wider range of drum notation/timbres
- Exploring drum notation for different genres (e.g. South American or African drumming timbres).
- Drum clef notation

Spring Half Term 1 – Composing using a DAW**Block 1 – Weeks 1 to 4**

- Overview of the use of keys and chords in dance music
- Minimalism in dance music
- History of MIDI
- Music theory keys and scales, major and minor, reading notation

Block 2 – Weeks 5 to 6

- Music theory chords, reading notation
- Play with and make some chords
- Major and minor triads
- Play with chords
- Finger techniques for scales and chords on midi keyboard

Notes/Links/Interleaving

- Building on musical knowledge from KS3
- Building on inputting and editing skills developed in term 1

Additional Higher Content

- Exploring higher level minimalist techniques
- Exploring advanced chords and scales/modes
- Reading/writing notation from different clefs

Spring Half Term 2 – Composing using a DAW**Block 3 – Weeks 7 to 9**

- Basslines – Play with and make basslines
- Mini project playing in a bass line over a given chord and rhythm sequence
- Using midi editor to edit velocity, add automation (pedalling on chords)
- Quantisation of mini projects

Block 4 - Weeks 11 to 12

- Melodies – Make Melodies (e.g. Catfish credits theme tune)
- Song Structure – Play with Song Structures

Notes/Links/Interleaving

- Building on musical knowledge from KS3
- Building on rhythmic knowledge
- Developing more advanced DAW and midi editing skills

Additional Higher Content

- Building more complex song structures, using variations, key changes.
- Exploring other automation techniques available

Summer Half Term 1 – DAW Composition Project**Block 1 – Weeks 1 to 5**

- Work through the brief, create planning documentation
- Record, edit and complete DAW project.

Block 2 – Week 6

- Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of DAW project
- Consider technical features that could further develop/enhance the project.

Notes/Links/Interleaving

- This project is designed to incorporate all skills that have been taught so far.

Additional Higher Content

- Ensuring “distinction” criteria is made very clear
- Allowing the most advanced students to take the project beyond the limits of the brief.

Summer Half Term 2 – Setting Up a Studio Recording**Block 3 – Weeks 7 to 9**

- Analysing a band set up, how is this recorded
- Live sound v studio sound
- Beatles/Pink Floyd early recording techniques
- Requirements of a studio recording
- Setting up a recording

Block 4 - Weeks 10 to 12

- Using a mixing desk, signal routing, sub groups, gain structure, monitoring
- Mini project – record a mini piece (class) – homework small groups to book studio and do a recording outside of lesson time. Must create a short recording for next unit on mixing and mastering.

Notes/Links/Interleaving

- Listening for audio editing skills that may have been explored in previous units when analysing commercial recordings.
- Further developing on microphone/recording techniques
- Applying level/gain structure/mix editor skills to a mixing desk in a recording studio context.

Additional Higher Content

- Opportunities for students to use the recording studio outside of lesson time to create recordings, incorporating musicians from outside of the music technology class, potentially supporting the music performance learners.
- Exploration of different methods of multi-track recording (live, sequenced etc).
- Exploration different methods of monitoring
- Exploration of different microphone/recording techniques (close/ambient/direct inject)

**Year
11**

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12
Autumn	Mixing and Mastering a Studio Recording						Composing using a DAW, Synthesis and Sampling					
	Exploring techniques and conventions in mixing and mastering of recording project from previous term. Final completion of unit 206						Exploring the history of synthesisers. Practical exploration of the features of synthesisers. Mini DAW project incorporating synthesis, sampling. (Unit 207) Final completion of unit 201					
Spring	Controlled Assessment Unit 203						Controlled Assessment Unit 203					
	Utilise skills gained in all previous units of study to plan, create and review a music technology controlled assessment project.						Final completion of unit 203					
Summer	Completion of Outstanding Coursework Unit 201											
	Course completed. Catch up for any outstanding elements.											

Diversity

Autumn Half Term 1**Block 1 – Weeks 1-3**

- Listening to some raw v mixed/mastered commercial recordings
- Understanding the multi-track aspect of a raw recording
- Explain compression, EQ, reverb, effects
- Sidechaining kick and bass, snare and overheads

Block 2 – Weeks 4-6

- Balancing
- Stereo field
- Mastering
- Mini project to mix and master your recording

Notes/Links/Interleaving

- Effects from unit 207 appear here in a different context in terms of live recordings and post mixing.
- Sidechain compression is building on the understanding of compression in previous units.

Additional Higher Content

- Sidechain compression in different context
- Creative use of the stereo field for depth, surround sound recording

Autumn Half Term 2**Block 3 – Weeks 1 - 4**

- Synthesisers through history, exploration of Moog (Delia Derbyshire, Michael Jackson “Thriller” synth bass. <https://www.factmag.com/2016/09/15/14-most-important-synths/>)
- Oscillators, LFO (Low frequency oscillators)
- Modulation
- ADSR envelope
- Creating a synth patch

Block 4 - Weeks 4 – 6

- Creating a synth patch
- Adding a synth patch line to your unit 207 project

Notes/Links/Interleaving

- Time to complete unit 201 presentations based on the varieties of genres/styles studied to date. This can be started in lessons and finished for homework.

Additional Higher Content

- Adding a synth patch/line to further improve unit 207 project

Spring Half Term 1 – Unit 203 Controlled, External Assessment**Block 1 – Weeks 1 - 2**

- Plan a music production project
- Demonstrate use of DAW software to create a music production project
- Reflect on music production project and consider ways to improve future endeavours

Weeks 1 – 2 Plan, Research and Prepare

Block 2 – Weeks 3 - 6

- Create project, to include:
 - Synthesis
 - Sampling
 - Midi and Audio
 - Quantisation and Automation
 - Mixing

Notes/Links/Interleaving

- Building on all skills acquired through the course so far.

Additional Higher Content

- Distinction content to be re-iterated regularly

Spring Half Term 2**Block 3 – Weeks 7 - 10**

- Create project (continued), to include:
 - Synthesis
 - Sampling
 - Midi and Audio
 - Quantisation and Automation
 - Mixing

Block 4 - Weeks 11-12

- Review and Evaluate

Notes/Links/Interleaving

- Building on all skills acquired through the course so far.

Additional Higher Content

- Distinction content to be re-iterated regularly