

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

### Course record information

Name and level of final award:	<b>MA Audio Production</b>  The Audio Production is a Masters degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma Audio Production Postgraduate Certificate Audio Production
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Westminster School of Media Arts and Design (Harrow)
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month:	One year (full time). September start. Two years (part time). September start.
<a href="#">QAA subject benchmarking group(s)</a> :	Subject benchmark statements Master's degrees in MUSIC
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	Joint Audio Media Education Support (JAMES) Creative Skills Set (SKILLSET MEDIA ACADEMY)
Date of course validation/review:	10 December 2015
Date of programme specification approval:	2016-17
Valid for cohorts:	From September 2016
Course Leader:	Matěj Dimlić
Course URL:	<a href="http://westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate">westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate</a>
Westminster Course Code:	PMMUS02F (FT) PMMUS02P (PT)
JACS code:	J930 (Audio Technology)
UKPASS code:	P035637

## Admissions requirement

There are standard minimum [entry requirements](#) for all postgraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information. For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements. More information can be found here: <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply>.

## Aims of the course

- Provide the opportunity for students at postgraduate level to articulate creative ideas using relevant audio production tools, processes and related visual and interactive technologies.
- Develop specialist knowledge and ability within audio and audio-visual production as a foundation for future professional practice.
- Provide a forum for the artistic exploration of converging technologies and the changing function and meaning of audio production within the creative industries environments.
- Develop specialist knowledge of the entrepreneurial character of the audio and audio related industries and the challenges of operating both independently or as the part of team or larger business structures.
- Provide the opportunity to study, research and evaluate a specialist area within audio production through a large-scale independent and original creative project, informed by current professional standards.
- Prepare students for appropriate study at postgraduate research level.

## Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Students are prepared with relevant theoretical and technical competencies required to engage with employment opportunities internationally as well progress further study opportunities through HE
- Students are presented with a learning environment that cultivates entrepreneurial intelligence which enables students to think critically and independently for more senior roles.
- Key staff assists in the development plan using PDP initiate on the MA to ensure students fulfill their career objective through mapping individual student career trajectories.
- Industry accreditations and long-standing recognition of the course put graduates in more favorable position with employers
- MA Audio Production has a well-established alumni network which filters a number of work and career opportunities to current students and former graduates alike many occupying senior industry roles.

- MA Audio graduates find employment in a variety of destinations including: Music production: Film and Television Production and Post; sound design for interactive games, media and mobile devices; AV location recording & Foley; production management for international corporations; education; new media production; film sound production; research and design, higher programmes of study include doctoral research and supplementary Masters programmes.

## Knowledge and understanding

In all modules students become familiar with the key ideas, techniques, and abilities of the subject specialism through relevant coursework development.

## Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These threshold statements of achievement are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course and broadly fall into four categories:

The overall **knowledge and understanding** you will gain from your course (KU);

- **Graduate attributes (GA)** are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course.
- **Professional and personal practice learning outcomes (PPP)** are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course.
- **Key transferable skills (KTS)** that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course.

Course learning outcomes are not delivered exclusively within individual modules, but the learning outcomes in individual modules map to course learning outcomes as shown in individual module proformas.

Note that individual modules have module-specific learning outcomes (identified in Module Proformas, which are published in the Course Handbook).

Upon completion of the MA Audio programme the successful student will be able to:

1. Apply advanced audio recording, sound design, mixing, manipulation and post-production techniques in the process of creating original audio and/or audiovisual artworks adhering to professional release/broadcast standards; **(PPP)**
2. Integrate a range of digital, analogue and hybrid approaches in software and hardware, mastering contemporary industry paradigms of working in a variety of studio environments and media formats; **(PPP)**
3. Synthesize converging technologies and production approaches in the creation of interactive and interdisciplinary media works; **(KU)**
4. Manage and complete independently-produced and industry-focused creative projects, demonstrating a high level of artistic innovation and technical specialism during the process of a client brief; **(KTS)**
5. Articulate complex relationships between sonic art forms, technologies and audiences,

identifying stylistic signatures and critically evaluating creative productions in their social context; **(KTS)**

6. Critically examine branding, marketing and project management structures in the global context of the creative industries, demonstrating effective leadership, networking and team management skills; **(GA)**
7. Develop sustainable business plans with a particular emphasis on music and audio-related industries, exploring innovative revenue models and financial planning; **(GA)**
8. Research and critically examine the historical, sociological and cultural contexts surrounding audio production and the musicology of record production. **(KU)**

More specifically at each level students need to demonstrate knowledge as described and highlighted below:

### **Postgraduate Certificate (60 credits)**

At PGCert level students should be able to demonstrate studies to personal values; to collect and analyse ideas and information from a range of sources and relate those to recognized categories; to contribute effectively to group work tasks such as production, or research teams; to take responsibility, with staff support, for their own learning. This also includes the ability to demonstrate a core understanding of audio production, encoding, 5:1 music surround mixing and remixing.

### **Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits)**

Critical and independent thinking with the ability to control assemble ideas, using range of techniques with active awareness and application of associated research methodologies. During Semester 2 or, in the case of part-time students, the second year of study, students are able to control these ideas, techniques and abilities in an increasingly independent fashion, and with an awareness of contradictory methods of work and theories. They have a detailed and diverse knowledge of the subject; can use and evaluate different methods of obtaining and using information; can select appropriate data from varied sources and develop their own criteria and judgements; are able to develop working relationships of a professional nature within the disciplines of the audio and audio related industries. During the second semester, or year two, students also identify a personal approach to the ideas and techniques of the subject, and use this as the basis for the large-scale individual projects based on independent activity and research in the major project.

### **MA (180 credits)**

Students begin this mode of study with a comprehensive knowledge of the audio industry, and its various sectors, incorporating professional standards of production, with in-depth knowledge in areas of specialisation; are able to apply abstract knowledge and concepts to specific purposes and find innovative solutions to complex problems; can demonstrate leadership and team management skills; can apply critical approaches to information and to their own work; are able to negotiate the scale and scope of the self-directed period of study in a preferred area of specialism.

**Specific skills (per module)**

<b>Credit Level 7</b>		
<b>Module code</b>	<b>Module title</b>	<b>Skills and knowledge</b>
7MUPR006W	Music Production and Cultural Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Music Recording</li> <li>- Music Producing</li> <li>- Music Mixing</li> <li>- Research</li> <li>- Critical Analysis</li> <li>- Working to Client led brief</li> <li>- Time management</li> <li>- Transferable Skills</li> </ul>
7MUPR003W	Audio Visual Production and Cultural Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Location Recording</li> <li>- Film Sound Production &amp; Post</li> <li>- Audio visual editing &amp; Surround Sound Design and Mix</li> <li>- Dialogue Recording and ADR</li> <li>- Foley and Sound Design for Film</li> <li>- Radio Production</li> <li>- Collaboration and Independent Production Skills</li> <li>- Progressive Research</li> <li>- Innovation</li> <li>- Working to Client led brief</li> </ul>
7MUPR008W	Programming and Sound Design for Animation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sound designing</li> <li>- Sound programming</li> <li>- Synthesis design</li> <li>- Innovation</li> <li>- Sonic Composition</li> <li>- Foley</li> <li>- Critical thinking, evaluation and analysis</li> <li>- Working to Client led brief</li> </ul>
7MUPR001W	Applied Innovation and Interactive Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interactive Design Skills</li> <li>- Innovation</li> <li>- Critical awareness</li> <li>- Assembly of ideas in consumer output</li> <li>- Programming</li> <li>- Critical and independent understanding</li> <li>- Identification of new creative technologies.</li> </ul>

7MUMN003W	Entrepreneurship and Project Management for Creative Industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project management</li> <li>- Entrepreneurship skills</li> <li>- Business plan</li> <li>- Research methodologies</li> <li>- E business and development</li> <li>- Public speaking</li> <li>- Planning and mapping</li> </ul>
7MUPR004W	Major Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project management</li> <li>- Planning and mapping</li> <li>- Large scale production</li> <li>- Entrepreneurship skills</li> <li>- Marketing plan</li> <li>- Research</li> <li>- Networking</li> <li>- Critical awareness</li> </ul>

### Key transferable skills

In addition to the highly specialised learning outcomes achieved by the end of the course, students will have gained a wider set of experiences that will prove of equal value in the workplace and beyond.

Graduates should consequently be able to demonstrate:

- Critical and independent understanding of complex theory and practice.
- Work towards a given brief within a strict constrained time frame.
- Advanced Research methods and information gathering
- The ability to work and operate within a pressurised environment and comply with multiple deadlines through multi-tasking.
- The ability to manage time more effectively through personal diaries and digital technologies
- The ability to assemble complex ideas creatively as well as drawing upon primary and secondary research and understanding of common creative practices within the field.
- The ability to problem solve through PBL gained from the course.
- The ability to have a more reflective approach through critical evaluation and systematic approach moving towards a becoming reflective practitioner.

### Learning, teaching and assessment methods

#### Learning & Teaching

Learning and teaching on the course are defined to be appropriate to the needs of each module, and strategies for teaching and learning are published in every module handbook. The teaching and learning methods on the course include the following:

Lectures: to present information and act as a springboard for students' research and discussion on a given subject; to build on the assigned readings and explore and examine contextual issues, and present an opportunity to engage with the key themes of the module.

Seminars: to support students' learning on the module through small group discussions of detailed theoretical content, techniques and ideas;

Workshops: small and medium size groups of students develop work in progress tutored by specialist staff; practical demonstrations -small and medium size groups of students attend demonstrations of techniques and technologies with active student participation;

Individual projects: projects devised by students and with outcomes and criteria agreed with a tutor.

Tutorials: one to one contact between a specialist member of academic staff and a student conducting independent research; they aim to support individual research and reflection on issues that are presented through the process of module delivery, and also support practical development.

Production Group Tutorials: Aimed to supporting group projects, joint research and provide regular checkpoints on progress of various stages of group productions

Independent research: student led project work involving interviews and other external contact and research activity, leading to assessed project work;

Learning contracts: negotiated plans of learning agreed by the module leader to tailor the student's experience of a module or of specified learning outcomes.

## **Assessment**

MA Audio Production students will engage in all aspects of the production process utilising team-working skills where appropriate or working individually in the production of practical works and several pieces of research. The summative assessment tasks include:

- A band recording and multi-track production, orchestral surround mix, commissioned remixes, research paper (Music Production and Musicology).
- Sound design and composition for two animation works, design of a synth patch library to industry led brief, critical analysis (Animation Sound Design and Programming).
- Recording and production of short radio drama and radio programme, AV edit and surround mix for the film trailer, location recording, audio production and post for the commissioned film, research paper (Audio Visual Production & Theory).
- Guided independent business case study and analysis, group business plan analysis and evaluation (Entrepreneurship and Project Management).
- Interactive design for web and media, sound design for new platforms and interactive digital media (Applied Sound and Interactive Design).
- Guided Independent Study major project productions and analysis (Major Project).
- Assessments are carried through formative and summative feedback, which are delivered on the module through a series of assessment events as part of the teaching and learning methods. Assessment checkpoints are also integrated within the programme of study to ensure student feedback through a summative and integrated process.

## Assessment events

The practical works in music, business, audio, audio-visual and the interactive productions are assessed through a process of peer group presentation - known as assessment events. These involve students individually, and /or in teams presenting their work to their tutors and peers and discussing it. This supports students' ability to present their work in public, and to develop their critical judgement in relation to their own and others' work. In addition, it promotes a culture within the course which regards the completion, and practical realisation of work within tight deadlines as normal, and acts to improve overall work standards through a benchmarking process.

Peer Review: Peer review is a particularly important part of the assessment process with students formally presenting their work to their peer group with feedback being presented by the tutor and group. This presents the student with an opportunity to defend the work under scrutiny, and assess the level of personal input and understanding.

Assessment Procedures: A module programme detailing the content of the module, learning outcomes, and coursework requirement and assessment methods. Details of the assessment methods and criteria for each part of the coursework, the schedule of coursework assignments, including methods and dates of submission, coursework return and tutor feedback deadlines are provided in a separate module document.

## Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year.

### FULLTIME MODE

Credit Level 7				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7MUPR006W	Music Production and Cultural Theory	Core	30	15
7MUPR003W	Audio Visual Production and Cultural Theory	Core	30	15
7MUPR008W	Programming and Sound Design for Animation	Core	20	10
7MUPR001W	Applied Innovation and Interactive Design	Core	20	10
7MUMN003W	Entrepreneurship and Project Management for Creative Industries	Core	20	10
7MUPR004W	Major Project	Core	60	30
Award of <b>Masters of Art</b> available ( <b>180 credits required</b> )				

## PART TIME MODE YEAR 1

Credit Level 7				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7MUPR006W	Music Production and Cultural Theory	Core	30	15
7MUPR003W	Audio Visual Production and Cultural Theory	Core	30	15
7MUMN003W	Entrepreneurship and Project Management for Creative Industries	Core	20	10

## PART TIME MODE YEAR 2

Credit Level 7				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7MUPR003W	Audio Visual Production and Cultural Theory	Core	30	15
7MUPR008W	Programming and Sound Design for Animation	Core	20	10
7MUPR004W	Major Project	Core	60	30
Award of <b>Postgraduate Certificate</b> available ( <b>Minimum 60 credits required</b> )				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7MUPR006W	Music Production and Cultural Theory	Core	30	15
Award of <b>Postgraduate Diploma</b> available ( <b>Minimum 120 credits required</b> )				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7MUPR006W	Music Production and Cultural Theory	Core	30	15
7MUPR003W	Audio Visual Production and Cultural Theory	Core	30	15
7MUPR008W	Programming and Sound Design for Animation	Core	20	10
7MUPR001W	Applied Innovation and Interactive Design	Core	20	10
7MUMN003W	Entrepreneurship and Project Management for Creative Industries	Core	20	10

Please note: All MA Audio Production Modules are **CORE**.

*\*To enter the dissertation stage of the programme students must successfully complete all taught modules, (Music Production and Cultural Theory 7MUPR006W, Audio Visual*

Production and Cultural Theory 7MUPR003W, Programming and Sound Design for Animation 7MUPR008W, Applied Innovation and Interactive Design 7MUPR001W, Major Project 7MUPR004W).

### **Professional body accreditation**



MA Audio Production is the first course of its kind to be accredited by the industry in UK in recognition of its excellence and industry relevance.

MA Audio Production is accredited by following industry bodies: JAMES, (APRS) and the SKILLSET.

JAMES accredits education on behalf of the APRS (Association of Professional Recording Services), MPG (Music Producers Guild) and the UK Screen Association. SKILLSET is the industry body which supports skills and training for people and businesses to ensure the UK audio visual and publishing industries maintain their world class position.

### **Academic regulations**

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations](http://westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations)

### **How will you be supported in your studies?**

#### **Course Management**

The MA Audio Production is taught within the Creative Practice and Art Theory Postgraduate Cluster, Westminster School of Media, Arts and Design. The management structure supporting the course is as follows:

- Matěj Dimlić is the Course Leader responsible for the day-to-day running and overall management of the course and development of the curriculum. Matěj can be contacted by email: [M.Dimlic01@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:M.Dimlic01@westminster.ac.uk) .
- Jonathan Stockdale, Head of Graduate Studies, holds academic responsibility for the course and for the other postgraduate courses run within Westminster School of Media, Arts and Design.
- Kerstin Mey, Dean of the School, holds overall responsibility for the course and for the other courses run by Westminster School of Media, Arts and Design.

The Course Leader will be responsible for:

- Admissions
- Approving students' programme of study
- Organising tutorials, supervisory support and pastoral care
- Co-ordinating final project supervision
- Co-ordinating marks for assessment boards
- General management of the course.

### **Academic Support**

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Faculty Registry Office. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students

### **Learning Support**

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students<sup>1</sup> can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

### **Support Services**

The University of Westminster Student Affairs department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University.

### **How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?**

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2016. The panel included internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers.

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<sup>1</sup> Students enrolled at Collaborative partners may have differing access due to licence agreements.

The course is also monitored each year by the Faculty to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from Course Committees, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. Each Faculty puts in to place an action plan. This may for example include making changes on the way the module is taught, assessed or even how the course is structured in order to improve the course, in such cases an approval process is in place.

A Course review takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with review panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years e.g. from Course Committees is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

### **How do we act on student feedback?**

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through Course Committees students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to Committee to expressly represent the views of their peer. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.
- Each Faculty also has its own Faculty Student Forum with student representatives; this enables wider discussions across the Faculty. Student representatives are also represented on key Faculty and university committees.
- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.
- The University also has an annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey or PTES which helps us compare how we are doing with other institutions, to make changes that will improve what we do in future and to keep doing the things that you value.

**Please note:** This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks, which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.

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