

Cambridge TECHNICALS LEVEL 3

Cambridge  
TECHNICALS  
2016

# PERFORMING ARTS

Unit 30

Produce music using technology

J/507/6841

Guided learning hours: 60

Version 1 September 2015

## LEVEL 3

### UNIT 30: Produce music using technology

J/507/6841

Guided learning hours: 60

**Essential resources required for this unit:** learners will need access to appropriate industry-standard DAW sequencing software, a range of dynamic and condenser microphones and standard studio hardware including a mixing console/audio interface and monitor facilities.

**This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated by OCR.**

#### UNIT AIM

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The world of music production is increasingly linked to innovations within technology. To be successful within this field of work, you need to understand the technology and tools that are available to music makers.

By completing this unit you will be equipped with the theoretical and practical working knowledge required when producing an audio/MIDI recording utilising a variety of studio-based equipment. You will familiarise yourself with the main components of current music production techniques and gain a comprehensive understanding of how they are used to create music.

## TEACHING CONTENT

The teaching content in every unit states what has to be taught to ensure that learners are able to access the highest grades.

Anything which follows an i.e. details what must be taught as part of that area of content. Anything which follows an e.g. is illustrative; it should be noted that where e.g. is used, learners must know and be able to apply relevant examples in their work, although these do not need to be the same ones specified in the unit content.

For internally assessed units you need to ensure that any assignments you create, or any modifications you make to an assignment, do not expect the learner to do more than they have been taught, but must enable them to access the full range of grades as described in the grading criteria.

Learning outcomes	Teaching content
The Learner will:	Learners must be taught:
1. Understand the function of technology used in music production	To understand 1.1 Audio technology, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sound recording studio layout, essential equipment (mixing console, DAW, recording medium, channel strip, multi-track recorder/computer based recorder microphones, etc.)</li> </ul> 1.2 MIDI technology, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MIDI compatible controllers, synthesisers, drum machines, MIDI-compatible software, etc.</li> <li>• software instruments, VSTs, soft-samplers, soft-synths, third party plug-ins</li> </ul> 1.3 Creative uses of technology, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the creative potential of this technology and contrasting examples of how it can be used</li> </ul>
2. Be able to plan for the production of music products	2.1 Planning for the product <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nature of product, e.g. dance, electronic, jazz, reggae, classical, alternative, etc.</li> <li>• commission, e.g. soundtrack for an audio-visual product, single music track, music track to be included in an album, etc.</li> <li>• resources, e.g. lyrics, samples, MIDI sequences, recorded instruments, etc.</li> <li>• liaising with performers, e.g. pre-production meetings with artists, artistic intention of recording, working with session musicians, availability of musicians</li> <li>• production schedule, e.g. dates, timings, activities, location, personnel, resources, contingency plans, etc.</li> <li>• responding to the needs of audience/consumer, e.g. demographics, current musical trends, lifestyle, age, gender, etc.</li> <li>• choice of microphones, placement decisions, recording conditions and environment and selection of equipment in order to improve, enhance or alter original recordings</li> </ul>

Learning outcomes	Teaching content
The Learner will:	Learners must be taught:
3. Be able to produce a music product	3.1 Create a music product, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• product, e.g. multitrack recording of a band, soundtrack for an audio-visual product, etc.</li> <li>• capturing performance, e.g. drum kit, guitar, bass, piano, woodwind and brass instruments, orchestral instruments, single and multiple voices</li> <li>• working with performers, e.g. fold back, managing takes, project management, setting up and tidying up</li> <li>• refining the product, e.g. editing, adding dynamic and signal processing, mixing, mastering</li> <li>• delivering the product, e.g. CD master, online streaming, use in a media product, live DJ performance</li> </ul>

## GRADING CRITERIA

LO	Pass	Merit	Distinction
	The assessment criteria are the Pass requirements for this unit.	To achieve a Merit the evidence must show that, in addition to the Pass criteria, the candidate is able to:	To achieve a Distinction the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the candidate is able to:
1. Understand the function of technology used in music production	P1: Describe the functionality of a range of technologies used in music production		
2. Be able to plan for the production of music products	P2: Plan for a music technology product		
3. Be able to produce a music product	P3: Produce a music product using technology	M1: Enhance a music product using post-production techniques	D1: Deliver a music product in a commercially viable format

## ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

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### Assessment and Grading Criteria P1

To achieve **P1**, learners must provide explanations of each item (1.1-1.3 of the teaching content) with reference to examples of its practical application in the creation of a music product. There will be some discussion of the specification of available equipment and suitable terminology should be used when explaining functionality.

The explanation must be in the learner's own words and provide evidence of a real understanding of the product or equipment.

### Assessment and Grading Criteria P2

In order to meet **P2**, a learner must be responsible for organising pre-production meetings and for creating a production schedule including equipment and personnel required. The learner will be able to respond to changes to the original production schedule requirements where necessary. The learner must show that they can respond to the required change and communicate the information to all relevant personnel so that the changes can be implemented in an effective manner.

Evidence of the learner's contribution to the planning process, especially if working in a group, should be identified by the learner for instance photographs of the learner setting up and using the equipment, or minutes from meetings from the pre-production process. Evidence of a learner's contribution could be supported by a witness statement from the tutor. Learners should seek to evidence the grading criteria through a variety of media, (i.e. written format, written presentations, verbal presentations, audio content, audio/visual content) which highlight their particular strengths; however, learners should be encouraged to stretch their skills and knowledge by using a range of media to evidence their work.

### Assessment and Grading Criteria P3, M1, D1

To meet **P3**, learners will produce a music product as part of a team or independently. The product will have reached the end of the planned production schedule from **LO2**, e.g. a captured recording, but may not be fully mixed or edited. **M1** may be awarded where the learner has revised and enhanced the product upon culmination of the creative process. For example, in the case of a studio recording, this would involve the editing and mixing down of the track. To achieve **D1**, the learner will take the refined product and deliver the work to an audience in an appropriate format. This could involve the "release" of a CD in a commercially acceptable format, online streaming via a recognised website or perhaps the use in a media product or game.

As with LO2, it is likely that learners will be working as part of a group, so supporting evidence in a variety of media may be necessary. Individual evidence of contributions must be clearly identified in relation to the production or recording process and may involve audio/video evidence, learner logs or notes made during the process and tutor observation records. The final product should be submitted in a suitable format, e.g. CD audio or .mp3 and DAW session data should also be provided in order to authenticate learners' work. Learners working at merit and distinction level will show an ability to work independently and again respond to changes in the planned production process.

## MEANINGFUL EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT - a requirement for the Foundation Diploma and Diploma (Tech Level) qualifications

The 'Diploma' qualifications have been designed to be recognised as Tech Levels in performance tables in England. It is a requirement of these qualifications for centres to secure for every learner employer involvement through delivery and/or assessment of these qualifications.

The minimum amount of employer involvement must relate to at least one of the mandatory, although we encourage you to find ways to engage with employers for other units as well.

Eligible activities and suggestions/ideas that may help you in securing meaningful employer involvement for this unit are given in the table below.

Please refer to the *Qualification Handbook* for further information including a list of activities that are not considered to meet this requirement.

Meaningful employer involvement	Suggestion/ideas for centres when delivering this unit
1. Learners undertake structured work experience or work placements that develop skills and knowledge relevant to the qualification.	Learners could carry out a work placement or job shadow at a local recording studio.
2. Learners undertake project(s), exercises(s) and/or assessments/examination(s) set with input from industry practitioner(s).	Learners could contact local artistic or commercial enterprises with a view to obtaining a commission to create an original production for use in promotional purposes.
3. Learners take one or more units delivered or co-delivered by an industry practitioner(s). This could take the form of master classes or guest lectures.	A seminar or master class from an industry professional will help learners to understand the way(s) in which professionals produce original works. The Musicians' Union or collecting agencies such as MCPS and PRS may be able to help with contacts.
4. Industry practitioners operating as 'expert witnesses' that contribute to the assessment of a learner's work or practice, operating within a specified assessment framework. This may be a specific project(s), exercise(s) or examination(s), or all assessments for a qualification.	See case study above. A situation could be created where the learners are "commissioned" to work to a brief and a professional engineer or producer could take the part of the "client" or perhaps sit on a "panel".

To find out more

**[ocr.org.uk/performingarts](http://ocr.org.uk/performingarts)**

or call our Customer Contact Centre on **02476 851509**

Alternatively, you can email us on **[vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)**



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