Unit Content

Using the learning outcome as the main point of reference, a scheme of work for this unit will include opportunities for learners to develop the following:

Using a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW)
Layout of a DAW (key functions and windows)
Key commands, screen sets and customisation

Synthesis
Background of synthesis
Context of synthesis within music production
Key synthesisers
Functions of a synthesiser

- Oscillators
- LFO
- Envelope (ADSR)
- Modulation
- Pitch

Creation of a synth patch

Sampling
Historical background of sampling
Context of sampling within music production
Key functions of a sampler
Creation of a drum patch
Creation of a melodic patch

Audio Editing
Practical applications for audio editing
The process of editing audio (chopping, time stretching, and reversing)

Midi editing
Practical applications for midi editing
The process of editing midi (hyper editor, velocity, and programming)

Quantisation
The creative and corrective uses of quantisation

Automation
Automation of mixer parameters, plug-in parameters, and instrument parameters.
Different automation modes.

Mixing
Key effects and their functions
The use of sends (send effects, side chaining)
Basics of mixing (stereo image, depth)

Critical Listening & Programming
Identifying the programming of drumbeats, the use of synthesis, and the use of effects through critical listening.

Suggested Delivery Ideas

It is recommended that the teacher demonstrates the technical processes involved within sequencing prior to the learners kinaesthetically implementing the process themselves.
It is recommended that hand-outs (interactive) accompany processes to aide retention of information. Teacher feedback is essentially for development of sequencing skills, feedback should be constructive and inform skill progression.
On sequenced projects teachers should give praise and constructive feedback discussing areas for development and how they can be developed.
Teachers should signpost further reading for gifted and talented learners.
Teachers should facilitate collaboration between producers and also session musicians (where possible).

Suggested Activity Ideas

The fundamental activity that learners should undertake is the implementation of the technical skills within the area of sequencing. Coupling the application of step-by-step instruction with creativity.
Learners should undertake drum and rhythm programming exercises to aide with their sequencing skills.
Learners should be encouraged to work in teams and work individually to develop both their specialist skills and wider skills. This could manifest itself in peer teaching, collaboration, and working within production teams.
Teacher demonstration coupled with the kinaesthetic implementation will be important in areas such as synthesis, sampling, editing, automation and quantisation.
The completion of worksheets to improve critical listening skills, the use of just one synthesiser to make a whole song, and the use of just one sampler to make a whole song are possible extension activities.
The completion of quiz, timed activities incorporating technical skills, competitions to win prizes such as sample packs, and the encouragement of learners to practice a sequencer in the same way as a guitarist would practice his instrument.

Summative Assessment Methods

Upon completion of the unit learners should have a sequenced project that incorporates the key skills associated with the field of sequencing.
The project should evidence the implementation of synthesis, sampling, quantisation, audio and midi editing, automation, the use of inserts and send effects, deletion of unused audio, and the summation of the project using bouncing. A written report including screenshots should explain the process undertaken by the learner and the thought process behind it. An evaluation discussing the success of the project should include strengths and areas for development in both the undertaken project and the area of sequencing.

Recommended Evidence

- 1.1: Sequenced track (MP3 and DAW project file)

- 1.2: Project log (including screenshots), Unit evaluation

Grading Criteria

Distinction	To achieve a **distinction**, learners must have evidenced all the skills required for level 1, plus:
	1. Displaying skills, which demonstrate highly effective use of a DAW at this level. This should include creative and developed automation usage including automation control, use of quantisation beyond basic snap parameters, more complex programming of drum patterns, efficient use of editing, clear and effective DAW layout and presentation of the arrange page. Being very creative with synth and sample patches. Show greater insight into the architecture (including internal routing) of the software to be able to perform more complex operations.
	2. Annotated screenshots of the project that are detailed, relevant and clear.
	3. Identify strengths and areas for development showing a greater understanding of progress, with a self assessment style evaluation offering solutions to areas for development.
Merit	To achieve a **merit**, learners must have evidenced all the skills required for level 1, plus:
	1. Displaying skills, which demonstrate effective use of a DAW at this level. This should include creative automation usage including automation control, use of quantisation correctively using snap parameters, effective and creative programming of drum patterns, clear use of editing, effective DAW layout and presentation of the arrange page. Being creative with synth and sample patches. Show some good insight into the architecture of the software to be able to perform a range of complex operations.
	2. Annotated screenshots of the project that are relevant and clear.
	3. Highlight strengths and areas for development showing an understanding of progress with detailed strengths and areas for development.
Pass	To achieve a **pass**, all learners must have evidenced all the skills required for level 1, plus:]
	1. Displaying skills, which demonstrate basic use of a DAW at this level. This should include simple automation usage including automation control, use of simple quantisation using basic snap parameters, simple programming of drum patterns, use of some editing, DAW layout and presentation of the arrange page maybe a little unorganised but it essentially works. Showing some creativity with synth and sample patches. Show some basic insight into the architecture of the software to be able to some complex operations.
	2. Annotated screenshots of the project that are basic but outline the essentials
	3. Identify strengths and areas for development in a basic bullet point type format.
Unclassified	A learner **not** on course to achieve this unit might evidence the majority of the following:
	1. Ineffective use of a DAW at this level. This may include little or no automation usage, little or no use of quantisation no programmed drum patterns, ineffective use of editing, poor DAW layout and presentation of the arrange page resulting in lost work
	2. No annotated screenshots of the project provided or incorrect screen shots provided
	3. Does not fully identify strengths and areas for development.

MUSPRA Qualifications
Unit Code: 222
Unit Title: Music Sequencing and Production
Credit Level: 1
Credit Value: 8 (80 TQT)
Assessment Framework

Unit Aim

The purpose of this unit is to develop skills in using music sequencing software. The aim of the unit is to produce a two minute piece of music, following the set criteria.

Learning Outcomes

The learner will be able to:

1. Demonstrate use of digital audio workstation (DAW) software to create a project.

Assessment Criteria

The learner can:

1.1 Use digital audio workstation software to create a project demonstrating the following:
   a) the creation of at least eight tracks to include:
      - at least one programmed drum track;
      - a created and saved synth patch;
      - a created and saved patch within a sampler using at least three agreed audio files.
   b) Use the system's internal routing options to create two alternative signal paths (e.g. sends, inserts, CVs, virtual wiring).
   c) use of the sequencer to edit note data and velocity;
   d) use of at least one insert and one send effect;
   e) creation of automation data that controls a minimum of the mixer, one plug-in and one instrument;
   f) save music as a project/self-contained file in one location (including sampler and synth patch) and include an .mp3 mixdown

1.2 Consider the project created in 1.1 in relation to the specified criteria (including screenshots where appropriate), highlighting strengths areas for development.