Unit Title	Creative Sound Design
FHEQ Level	UG 2 – L5
Unit Code	MSD18203s
Credit Value	15
Unit Type	Subject – Sound Pathway

Learning Hours

Staff – Student Contact Hours		**Independent Study Hours**	
Classes	30	Independent Study	75
Supervised access to resources	7.5	Preparation for Assessment	25
		Unsupervised Access to Resources	12.5
Total			150

Unit Description

Sound Design is a complex term to define succinctly. Its origin stems from the post-production audio sector, with the term initially used as a credit for Walter Murch on *Apocalypse Now*. From this beginning, the use of the term has expanded and changed, and it is now used across many areas of music and sound design practice. The term also suggests a link between Sound Design and other design - focused disciplines, but what does it mean to *design* Sound? What is the process? And how can we approach sound design from a more compositional standpoint? What tools are available to us to create new sounds in the age of computer synthesis and manipulation?

This unit aims to provide students with a space to explore the fundamental principles of sound creation, providing a base skillset that can then be applied to a range of sound design tasks, from commercial work to experimental practice.

The Five Principles underpin the Mindsets and Skillsets Manifesto and are the foundation upon which all course curriculum frameworks and unit specifications are based. The relevant following principles have been mapped against the Learning Outcomes relevant to each course unit and at each level. 1. Cultivate: Where the individual thrives. 2. Collaborate: where disciplines evolve. 3. Integrate: where education engages industry. 4. Advocate where purpose meets practice. 5. Originate: where creativity meets technology.

Unit Indicative Content

The unit covers a range of sound design approaches and techniques, as well as providing a context of their historical development and uses.
Indicative Content:

- **Historical Perspectives**: Musique Concrète, Early Electronic Music, Sonic Arts, Microsound Composition
- **Industry Approaches**: The commercial application of Sound Design techniques and processes

- **Sample-based Sound Design Techniques**: Creative recording, sample editing and layering, sample instruments
- **Sound Synthesis Techniques**: Subtractive, additive, granular, physical modelling, frequency modulation
- **Sound Analysis**: Identifying sonic components, reverse-engineering sounds, critical listening
- **Choosing Tools**: Software vs hardware, commercial vs free/open source
- **Approaches to Design and Composition:** DAW, modular systems, generative techniques, control systems, procedural techniques, patching environments, sound spatialisation

Unit Aims

- To introduce students to the wider field of sound practice around commercial Sound Design
- To equip students with the core skills needed to design sounds across a range of industry areas
- To provide an introduction to a range of sound design approaches
- To develop a deeper understanding of sound terminology, and how ideas for sound can be expressed and explained verbally
- To allow for experimental and original approaches to creating new sounds
- To introduce students to different areas of creative sound design from analogue to digital and beyond.

Unit Learning Outcomes

LO 3 Development

Analyse a range of potential pathways that result in appropriate solutions, informed by an understanding of the principles of the creative process.

INTEGRATE

LO 4 Production

Employ relevant knowledge of production skills alongside a grasp of the creative potential of a selection of processes, materials and methods that inform creative and academic practice.

COLLABORATE

LO 6 Critical and Creative

Analyse conceptions of diverse practice and use this to inform a course of action

ORIGINATE

Learning and Teaching Methods

The unit is delivered through a series of seminars, workshops and work review sessions. The emphasis of the module is putting theory into practice around a creative brief. As an example, a synthesis technique could be presented and discussed in class, then students complete a small creative task applying that technique to a sound design opportunity. Work review is important during the unit – here, peer to peer learning and peer assessment is encouraged.

- Briefings
- Lectures
- Project work
- Workshops
- Group work
- Online learning
- Group presentations and reviews

Assessment methods and tasks

Formative assessment is carried out during small group work presentations from students. Summative assessment involves presentation in pairs or small groups alongside VLE submission of work.
1. Create original sound design
2. Working in pairs, create an original sound library
3. Presentation or Report

Assessment tasks	**Weighting (%)** *(one grade or multi-grade unit)*
1. Practical Work	80%
2. Critical reflection	20%

Indicative Assessment Criteria

- IAC1: Design sounds that successfully support narrative in visual media (LO3, LO4, LO6).
- IAC2: Evaluate and identify the sound requirements for a piece of media or a genre (LO3, LO6).
- IAC3: Explain how complex sounds are constructed (LO6).
- IAC4: Assemble sounds to form a cohesive composition (LO3, LO4).

Essential Reading list

1. Augoyard, J.F., Torgue, H (2014) *Sonic Experience: A Guide to Everyday Sounds.* Montréal: McGill-Queens U Press.
2. Carlyle, A., Lane, C. (2013) *In The Field: The Art of Field Recording.* Uniform Books.
3. Cox, C., Warner, D. (2004) *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*. Bloomsbury

Academic Press.
4. Farnell, A. (2010) *Designing Sound*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
5. Manzo, V. (2011) Max/MSP/Jitter for Music: A Practical Guide to Developing Interactive Music Systems for Education and More. OUP USA.
6. Nyman, M. (1999) Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond. Cambridge University Press.
7. Roads, C. (2004). *Microsound*. Cambridge: MIT.
8. Roads, C. (2015). *Composing Electronic Music: A New Aesthetic*. Oxford: Oxford U Press.
9. Schafer, M. (1994). *Soundscape: Tuning of the World*. Destiny.
10. Sonnenschein, D. (2013). *Sound Design*. Studio City, CA: Michael Wiese Productions.
11. Wishart, T., Emmerson, S. (2002). *On Sonic Art*. London: Routledge.